



COPING MECHANISMS IN SCHIZOPHRENIA PATIENTS: CONCEPT ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Coping mechanisms greatly help schizophrenia patients deal with psychotic symptoms such as hallucinations, delusions, and disorganized thoughts, as well as manage the emotional and social effects of their illness. The purpose of this concept analysis is to gain a more detailed and in-depth understanding of the use of coping mechanisms as part of schizophrenia therapy. This concept analysis uses the Walker and Avant approach with relevant literature findings related to the concept were obtained through concept databases such as Google Scholar, PubMed, Scopus, etc. Keywords used in the literature search include "Coping mechanisms", and "Schizophrenia". The inclusion criteria for articles were articles written in English and Indonesian, full text, and articles published in the last 5 years from 2019-2024 and open access as many as 7 articles. The results Adaptive coping mechanisms, such as problem solving and seeking social support, can help patients deal with stress, reduce symptoms, and improve their quality of life. Conversely, maladaptive coping strategies, such as avoidance or denial, actually risk worsening the patient's condition, increasing social isolation, and increasing the likelihood of symptom recurrence. It is hoped that more in-depth education about effective coping mechanisms needs to be included in nurse training and patient counseling.

Keywords: concept analysis; coping mechanisms; schizophrenia

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INTRODUCTION

Individuals use cognitive and behavioral methods known as coping mechanisms to deal with stress or emotional distress (Yusuf, A.H & , R & Nihayati, 2019). Coping mechanisms greatly help schizophrenia patients deal with psychotic symptoms such as hallucinations, delusions, and disorganized thoughts, as well as manage the emotional and social effects of their illness. When patients have good coping skills, they can maintain emotional stability and improve their quality of life (Stuart, 2016). The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that around 24 million people worldwide suffer from schizophrenia, equivalent to 1 in 300 people, with a higher prevalence in adults (around 1 in 222 people). Schizophrenia is one of the most common mental disorders in the world, with symptoms such as hallucinations, delusions, and disorganized thoughts (WHO Organization, 2019).

Internal factors, such as the patient's level of awareness of the disease, emotional condition, and cognitive ability, greatly influence the patient's ability to use coping mechanisms. Patients who are aware of their condition (insight) tend to be better able to use adaptive coping strategies. However, emotional disorders such as depression or anxiety, along with decreased thinking ability, are often barriers. In addition, the patient's coping ability is also influenced by external elements, such as social support, a safe environment, and the ability to obtain health services (Unayah et al., 2021).

In Tengku Mohd Saifuddin's (2022) study, on coping strategies and social support for schizophrenia patients. This study used emotion-focused, problem-focused, and avoidance coping strategies. The results showed that schizophrenia patients with good social support used problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies (Kamarulbahri et al., 2022). It is essential for health workers, especially nurses, to help patients develop better coping mechanisms in clinical practice. Nurses can teach patients and their families how to manage stress, help them with relaxation techniques, and encourage them to go to therapy or rehabilitation activities. A holistic approach can help patients with schizophrenia manage the stress and pressure they experience. This will improve their overall adaptability and quality of life. Families, communities, and health workers should help in this process (Rohmi et al., 2023).

Through the steps of concept analysis, the purpose of this study is to explore the meaning and implications of the concept of using coping mechanisms as part of therapy for schizophrenia sufferers. Thus, the results of this analysis are expected to provide significant contributions to theoretical and practical understanding in an effort to help individuals manage stress, reduce the impact of symptoms, and improve quality of life.

METHOD

Concept analysis used to clarify the meaning of a concept uses Walker and Avant's concept analysis approach which consists of eight steps. The steps are as follows: 1) selecting a concept to be analyzed, 2) determining the purpose of the analysis, 3) identifying all possible uses of the concept, 4) determining attribute definitions, 5) identifying case models, 6) identifying boundary lines, related, contradictory, constructed, and invalid cases, 7) identifying antecedents and consequences, 8) defining empirical references. (Walker, L & Avant, 2019) Relevant literature findings related to the concept were obtained through concept databases such as Google Scholar, PubMed, Scopus, Science Direct, NCBI, Researchgate, Publish and Perish and ProQuest. Keywords used in the literature search include "coping mechanism" and "Schizophrenia". The inclusion criteria for articles were articles written in English and Indonesian, full text, and articles published in the last 5 years from 2019 - 2024 and open access.

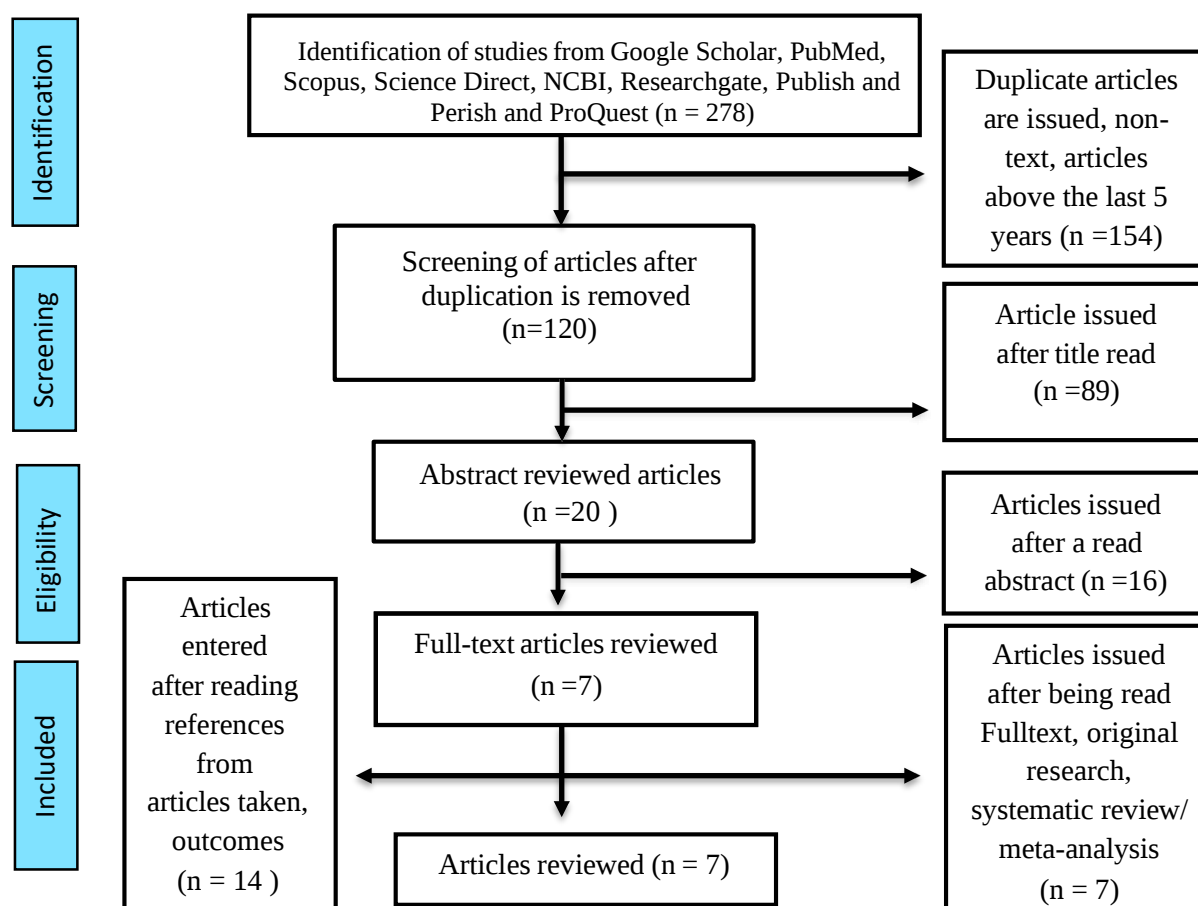


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

RESULT

Concept (Select Concept)

The concept chosen for concept analysis is Coping Mechanism developed based on Lazarus & Folkman's Stress and Coping Theory. The reason for choosing this concept is that schizophrenia patients often face internal stressors such as hallucinations and delusions, as well as external stressors such as social stigma and difficulties in interpersonal relationships. the patient's ability to identify available resources to cope with stress. This includes coping strategies such as problem-focused coping, where the patient attempts to overcome the source of stress, for example, through therapy or medication, and emotion-focused coping, such as using relaxation techniques to reduce anxiety. These strategies are important because schizophrenia patients often experience cognitive and emotional difficulties that affect their coping choices. Schizophrenia patients often face additional stress from the environment, such as social stigma, family tension, or social isolation. The concept of coping mechanisms provides a framework for understanding how patients respond to these stresses, both adaptively and maladaptively. By understanding the coping strategies they use, health workers can design interventions that support more effective stress management (Depodwin, 2019).

Determine the Purpose of Analysis

The purpose of this analysis is to gain a more detailed and in-depth understanding of the Coping Mechanisms in Schizophrenia sufferers. This involves utilizing attributes in the case model, borderline cases, related cases, and opposing cases, explaining antecedents and consequences, considering empirical references for additional information stated as theoretical and operational definitions of the Coping Mechanisms in Schizophrenia sufferers.

Identifying all Possible Uses of the Concept

The process of determining attributes begins with a literature search, specifically for this analysis concept several databases are used, namely: *Google Scholar*, PubMed, Scopus, Science Direct, NCBI, Researchgate, Publish and Perish and ProQuest. The inclusion criteria for articles are articles written in English and Indonesian, full text, and articles published in the last 5 years from 2019 - 2024 and open access. The article that successfully found and analyzed, namely 7 articles.

Defining attribute definitions

Walker and Avant stated that attributes are formed based on the most clusters to provide broader insights, (Walker, L & Avant, 2019) Some attributes in the analysis of coping mechanisms in schizophrenia sufferers are as follows:

Stressor Evaluation

Assessment of both external and internal sources of stress

Adaptive Strategies:

Responses to cope with stressors (e.g., problem solving or emotion regulation).

Flexibility

The ability to adjust strategies based on the situation, including the ability to abandon maladaptive strategies (e.g., avoidance or social withdrawal) and replace them with more productive approaches.

Coping Outcomes

The effects of strategies on the patient's emotional and functional well-being.

Analyzing these attributes helps analyze and evaluate important elements related to Coping Mechanisms in people with Schizophrenia or mental disorders, so that patients can adjust to changing conditions or stressors in their lives.

Case Model

Andi, 27, was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia two years ago. He lives with his family and is undergoing pharmacological treatment and psychosocial therapy. Andi often experiences hallucinations of voices that instruct him not to trust people around him. This situation causes severe stress, conflict with family members, and social isolation. Andi began attending group therapy every week, where he learned problem-solving and emotion management techniques. He participated in community activities to rebuild social relationships that had been disrupted. Andi's family also participated in a psychoeducation program to understand his condition and provide better emotional support. After three months of consistently implementing these coping strategies, Andi reported a decrease in the intensity of hallucinations and anxiety. He began to be more confident in interacting with family and friends, and showed higher compliance with treatment.

Borderline Case

Budi, 30 years old, a schizophrenia patient who has been treated for the past year. He often experiences hallucinations of voices that interfere with his activities. Budi uses avoidance strategies to deal with hallucinations, such as closing himself in his room and not interacting with others. Although this temporarily reduces his stress, this isolation worsens his relationships with family and friends, and increases feelings of loneliness.

Contrary Case

Rina, 25, has been diagnosed with schizophrenia for the past three years. She often experiences delusions that people around her want to harm her. Rina does not have adequate coping mechanisms to deal with her delusions. She refuses medication, avoids social contact,

and exhibits aggressive behavior towards family members who try to help her. When faced with stress, Rina chooses to scream or destroy things around her.

DISCUSSION

Antecedents

Antecedents are events prior to a concept that help refine an attribute. (Walker, L & Avant, 2019). Antecedents are conditions or factors that influence the use of coping mechanisms. These include internal and external factors that can influence how a patient deals with stress or challenges (Shoib et al., 2021):

1) Internal Factors:

Self-awareness: The ability to recognize symptoms of stress, such as hallucinations or delusions.

Cognitive capacity: Sufficient cognitive function to evaluate stressors and choose coping strategies.

Previous experiences: Coping strategies that have been used in the past, whether successful or not.

Emotional state: The level of anxiety, depression, or fear can influence the choice of coping strategies.

Motivation: The level of desire to cope with stress and achieve well-being.

2) External Factors:

Social support: Relationships with family, friends, or support groups.

Access to health services: Ease of obtaining therapy, medication, or education about coping.

Social environment: The level of stigma experienced by the patient.

Living conditions: Financial stability, housing, and employment that affect stress levels.

a. Consequence

1) Positive Consequences:

Reduced symptoms: Effective coping strategies can reduce the intensity of symptoms such as hallucinations or delusions.

Improved quality of life: Better social and emotional functioning, such as improved relationships with family and friends.

Treatment adherence: Patients are more motivated to follow therapy and treatment.

Increased resilience: Patients have a better ability to cope with future stress (Tuasikal & Retnowati, 2019)

2) Negative Consequences:

Relapse: Maladaptive coping strategies, such as avoidance or social isolation, may increase the risk of relapse.

Decreased social functioning: Patients withdraw from family or community.

Symptom escalation: Unmanaged stress may worsen hallucinations, delusions, or other symptoms.

Decreased physical health: The long-term effects of chronic stress can affect physical health, such as high blood pressure or sleep disturbances (Khalaf et al., 2023).

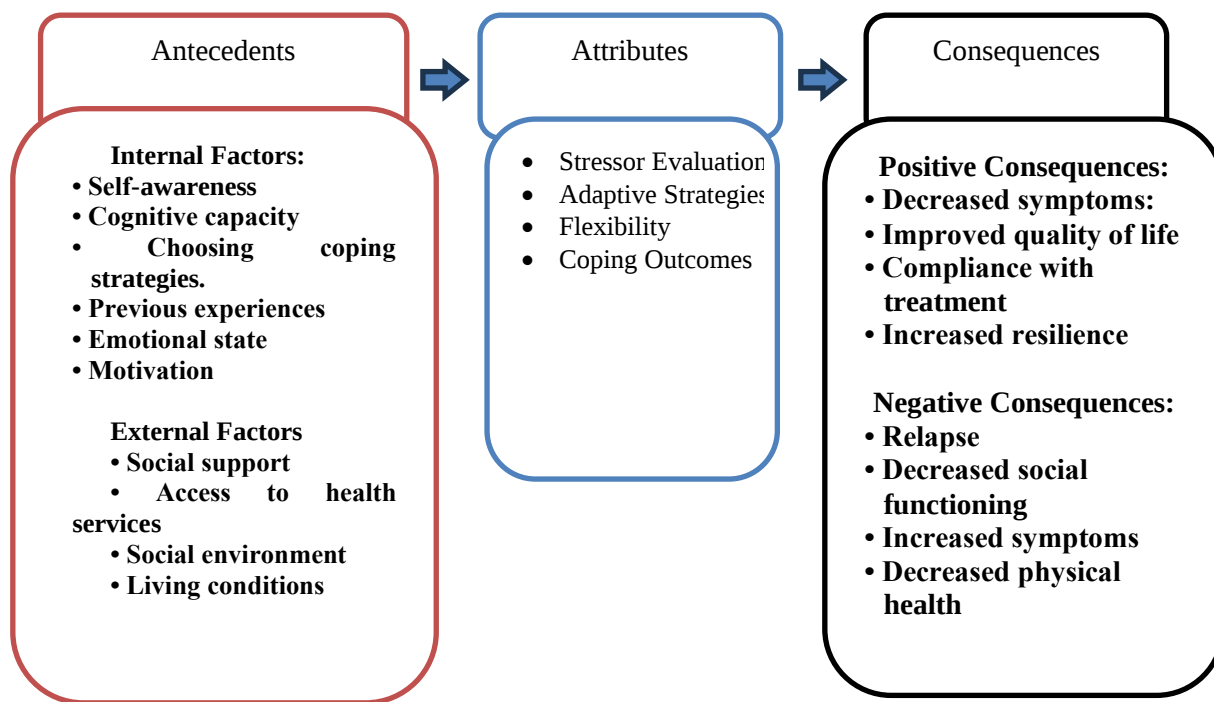


Figure 2 : Antecedents, Attributes and Consequences

Define Empirical Reference

The final stage of the concept analysis method is to determine the empirical reference for the defining attribute. An empirical reference is “a measurable way to demonstrate the occurrence of a concept”. In Walker and Avant’s opinion, “the existence of a concept through measurement must be determined when the existence of a concept is unclear”. (Walker, L & Avant, 2019) The empirical reference to the concept of Coping Mechanism analysis for people with Schizophrenia is based on research that has proven Living with schizophrenia is not easy, but with the right coping strategies and supportive interventions, a person can significantly improve their quality of life. Although stigma and misunderstanding often surround this chronic mental health disorder, there are many effective ways to manage the condition (Laws et al., 2018). Here are some relevant empirical references: According to (Mohamed et al., 2023), family support has a significant impact on the capacity to provide services and care to schizophrenia patients. This support also affects how service providers adjust and deal with their family's illness. Reduced caregiver support and increased awareness of the condition can help caregivers use more flexible coping techniques in schizophrenia patients.

According to (Kamarulbahri et al., 2022) It has been proven that good social support and psychological distress are associated with coping strategies. More prospective and qualitative studies are needed to determine how coping strategies can help caregivers in Malaysia develop a more holistic approach to caring for schizophrenia patients. According to (Shoib et al., 2021), Patients with a history of schizophrenia even in remission live a stressful life. They often need different social support or cognitive assistance. In that view, studying their stress levels, coping abilities, and quality of life will help us to manage them in a better way.

Implications for Nursing Knowledge and Practice

Coping mechanisms are essential for managing stress in patients with schizophrenia, and understanding them is essential for care. Nurses can create more appropriate and effective interventions by using existing coping theories and examining patients’ coping mechanisms.

This evidence-based method not only helps patients manage their symptoms but also improves their quality of life, ultimately reducing the likelihood of relapse and improving the patient's overall well-being.

CONCLUSION

Coping mechanisms in people with schizophrenia are an important element in their adaptation process to stress caused by psychotic symptoms and social challenges. Based on Lazarus and Folkman's theory of stress and coping, individuals with schizophrenia often use various coping strategies to manage their feelings and symptoms. Adaptive coping mechanisms, such as problem solving and seeking social support, can help patients deal with stress, reduce symptoms, and improve their quality of life. Conversely, maladaptive coping strategies, such as avoidance or denial, actually risk worsening the patient's condition, increasing social isolation, and increasing the likelihood of symptom recurrence. It is hoped that more in-depth education about effective coping mechanisms needs to be included in nurse training and patient counseling. By understanding better coping strategies, nurses can be more effective in supporting patients in managing stress. Facilitating patients to connect with family, friends, and support groups can increase the use of healthy coping mechanisms. Interventions that focus on strengthening the patient's social network should be prioritized. It is important to periodically evaluate the patient's coping mechanisms and adjust the treatment plan according to their needs. Nurses must be prepared to provide support and guidance as patients face new challenges in the treatment process.

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