

A Systematic Literature Review on Wellbeing of Children of Parents with Mental Illness

Bhuvaneswari. S., Dr. T. Lavanya

Abstract:- Parental mental illnesses are a major biological and environmental risk factor to which many children are exposed. Around 15–23% of children globally live with a parent who has a mental illness (Leidesdorff et al.,2017). This high-risk group of people may indeed be greatly affected psychologically and physically, which affects the fellow children as well as other individuals in society. This study aims to address the mental health of children of parents who do have mental illnesses and the interventions that can provided to them, using evidence from a systematic literature review. The PICO approach was utilised to facilitate the search via evidence-based practise. The PRISMA Technique was followed. Springer Link, DOAJ, PubMed, and Taylor & Francis databases were used to find studies. Examined the reference lists of the included research studies to find relevant publications to contextualise the study. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for the study have also been developed. Results of the study was Total data consists 12720 documents, out of which only 28 studies found to be considered to the present study. The data of the studies have indeed been gathered and divided into two sections: one on the mental health of children of parents with mental illness (COPMI), and the other on interventions to prevent the mental health of children of parents with mental illness (COPMI). The Recommendations and Suggestions have been given according to the results.

Keywords:- Children of Parents with Mental Illness (Copmi), Parental Mental Illness, Mental Health of Copmi, Children's Mental Health, Interventions for Copmi.

I. INTRODUCTION

Parental mental illnesses are a significant biological and environmental risk factor for many young individuals. Globally, 12–45% of mental health service users are reported to be parents (Maybery and Reupert,2018). These children are 5.2 times more at risk of depression and 3.7 times more at risk of anxiety disorders compared to their peers (Havinga et al.,2017). Children of parents with mental disorders are also at risk of poorer intellectual and social outcomes (Goodman and Brumley,1990),behavioural problems (Beck 1990),impaired attention, and reduced overall adaptive functioning (Garley et al.,1997). The transmission of parental psychopathology to children can

lead to similar (trans-generational equi-finality) as well as different (trans-generational multi-finality) clinical outcomes than their parent's diagnosis (Downey Coyne,1990). These children have up to 50% chance of developing a mental illness. Parental anxiety disorder sets children at a more specific risk for developing anxiety disorder themselves, where children of parents with other mental illnesses are at high risk of a large variety of mental illnesses. Although preventive interventions in children of mentally ill parents may decrease the risk of problem development by 40% currently, these children are not automatically identified and offered help (Leijdedorff et al., 2017).Globally, 12–45% of mental health service users are reported to be parents (Maybery and Reupert,2018).This high-risk group of people may indeed be greatly affected psychologically and physically, which affects the fellow children as well as other individuals in the society. Often, they are left unnoticed in our society. And according to Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, the child's development is influenced by the environment majorly, in which the parents are significant people in the child's development, when the parents have mental health issues, it eventually affects the child's development as well as mental health wellbeing.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Goals and research question

The current study aims to address the mental health of children born to parents who do have mental illnesses and to identify what the different mental health problems are experiencing by the children due to parents with mental illness. The study also focuses on the questions of what are the interventions developed to overcome such issues.

B. Research protocol

To facilitate the search through evidence-based practice, the PICO process has been used. The researcher has followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA). Literature was retrieved from Databases such as Springer Link, DOAJ (Directory of open access journals), PubMed and Taylor and Francis. The review has been done during September 2021 to December 2021.To identify relevant papers to contextualize the work, inspected the reference lists of the included articles.

C. Eligibility criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion	Justification
Participants	Focuses on Children of parents with mental illness, Parental mental illness and Intervention for children and family with parental mental illness.	Disabled children, children who are already diagnosed with mental disorders, parental physical illness.	Non-COPMI articles does not answer the research question.
Language	Studies wrote or translated into English	Other language articles than English.	To ensure comprehension and accurate representation of the articles.
Access	Can access Full-text	Cannot access Full-text	To ensure a more accurate interpretation of the article.
Methodology	All Qualitative and Quantitative studies except single case study research.	Single case study method	For generalization.
Type of articles	All Articles except Review articles, Opinion papers Articles with only Theoretical explanation.	Review articles, Opinion papers Theoretical Articles.	To get proper empirical evidences for review, in order to analyse statistical outcome.

Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion criteria

D. Information sources and source strategy:

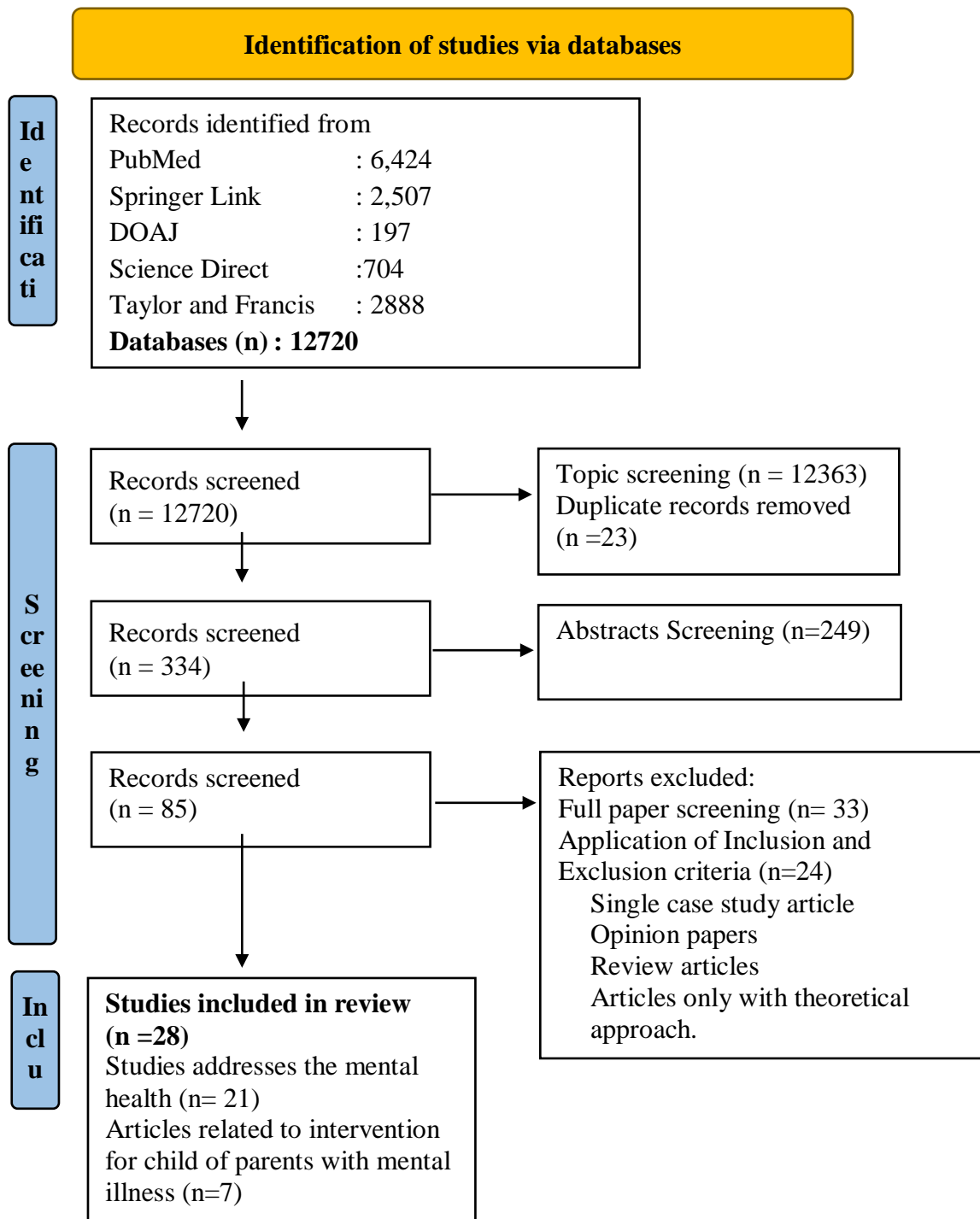
The search string was made with the keywords, children of parents with mental illness (COPMI), parental mental illness, Intervention for children of parents with mental illness.

The search included the papers that was published in the last 20 years (from 2001- 2021).

E. Selection of sources:

To obtain the papers, Springer Link, Science Direct, DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), and Taylor and Francis were used. These databases were chosen in order to incorporate peer reviewed publications.

F. Data charting:



III. SYNTHESIS OF RESULTS

A total of 12720 documents were identified in the database, of which 12363 were retrieved via title screening, 249 were deleted through abstract screening, and 33 were extracted through full paper screening. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 28 articles were identified to be eligible in which 18 quantitative studies, 8 qualitative studies and 2 studies which opted mixed method has been incorporated.

The data of the articles have indeed been gathered and divided into two sections: one on the mental health of children of parents with mental illness (COPMI), and the other on interventions to prevent the mental health of children of parents with mental illness (COPMI).

A. The mental health of children of parents with mental illness (COPMI):

Parents play a crucial role in their children's development. When a parent is diagnosed with mental illness, it has a significant influence on the mental health of

the child. The offspring of parents with mental illness shows higher level of depression, perceived stress than the offspring of parents without mental illness, greater level of PTSD symptoms and psychological problems (Rusengamihigo et al., 2021).

The health-related quality of life seems to be low in children as well as the parent with mental illness (Radicke et al., 2021). When a parent's psychopathological condition interferes with their daily life, they are unable to play a good parenting role in the family, educate the child about daily healthy activities that promote health-related quality of life, and they are unable to care for their own health. When compared to a control group, family dysfunction was consistently higher.

Children's emotional wellbeing, Children's social wellbeing, Children's economic wellbeing, Children's family contexts and experiences, Children's self-esteem and self-actualisation has been a determinant of quality of life of COPMI (Bee et al., 2013). On several domains, parents with a mental illness perceived family functioning to be worse compared to their partners and children. Partners and children did not differ in their perceptions of family functioning (Sell et al., 2021). Child neglect was associated with all types of mental health diagnoses for both the mothers and fathers. However, child abuse and specifically physical abuse were associated only with the mother's mental health diagnoses, the effect of mental health condition is greater for mothers which indicated the special concern need to be taken by mental health professions (Ben David, 2021). Unemployed among parents, lower parental educational level, and a chronic medical condition also lead to effect in mental of their children (Jørgensen et al., 2021). In Denmark one of the study finding concluded that only one third of children receive support after referrals from psychiatry within an average of three months suggests an underserved population of at-risk children (Ranning et al., 2020). The report of health visitors with respect to pre-school children of parents with mental illness reported that the children experiences adverse childhood experience with parental mental illness, Respondents also had witnessed co-occurring domestic abuse, breakdown of the parents' relationship, social isolation of the family and parental incarceration (Condon et al., 2020).

In a qualitative study which was done on preschool teachers who works with COPMI, have articulated certain enablers and barriers to work with this group of people that is, they are in need of proper training, emotional challenges when they work with parents (Laletas et al., 2020). The parent child- interaction also has been affected and was worse when compared to the parents without mental illness (Van Loon et al., 2014). The COPMI has scored higher in difficulties when compared to Non-COPMI (Maybery et al., 2009). The well parents who have spouse with mental illness has reported that they tend to distance the children from parental mental illness, avoids conversation about the illnesses, try to give and receive emotional support and tend to regulate other sources of information about illness (Ballal & Navaneetham, 2018). Children of mother with schizophrenia have scored

significantly high in internal and externalizing behavioural when compared to children of mother without any Mental illness (Malhotra et al., 2015).

During Covid19, both clinicians and families indicated that most families (60%) reported substantially improved mental health and family relationships during this first lockdown, despite having a mental health diagnosis, and further they also reported that they felt less alone and more normal in expressing anxiety as the whole world is in Crisis. Several clinicians indicated that many parents were now feeling less stigmatised and were more openly discussing their mental health issues (Furlong et al., 2021).

B. The Intervention programs for children of parents with mental illness

There are certain intervention programs has been developed to prevent the mental well-being of COPMI, psychosocial Resilience based intervention which focus on adolescents children of parents with mental illness found to be effective among them helps in developing mental health literacy as well, although doesn't show any significant differences among Non COPMI (Fraser & Pakenham, 2008). Family focused intervention program gives importance to psycho-education and this intervention was found to be useful in psychosocial symptoms and prosocial behaviour (Solantaus et al., 2010). Online group course intervention was developed for parents with mental illness which found to be more favourable in the pandemic (Van Der Zanden et al., 2010). Since the parenting is affected to the parents who are diagnosed with mental illness, parenting skill development program was developed (Phelan et al., 2012). Family focus DVD, this particular program found to be helpful for parents as well as the whole family to understand the mental illness (Marston et al., 2014). A intervention program called Young SMILES, the children and parents with mental illness have shown very positive and enthusiastic attitudes towards the program (Abel et al., 2020).

IV. DISCUSSION

In the present Systematic literature Review, Total 12720 papers were found in database, from which 12363 has been extracted by Title screening, 249 articles have been eliminated by Abstract Screening, then 32 papers were extracted by full paper screening after the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria, 28 eligible articles were retained.

The studies which were excluded due to Duplicity, focuses on physical illness of parents, other language papers other than English, single case study papers, opinion papers, Disabled children, studies related to sibling of individuals with mental illness.

After synthesising the articles and conducting the review, the researcher noticed definite factors of COPMI mental health that were influenced by parental mental illness, and it was evident that the children are in desperate need of interventions that improve their self-esteem and prevent factors that destroy development, children's quality of life, such as children's emotional well-being, children's

social well-being, children's self-esteem and self-actualization. A study revealed the societal stigma also contributes to mental health challenges within the COPMI, inferring a lack of mental health literacy among the community. A study shows that parental mental illness is associated with child maltreatment, child neglect which also hampers the child mental health (Ben David, 2021). There is also a need to protect the mental health of those with whom they interact in society, therefore the COPMI must be treated equally to their parents.

The interventions for COPMI have majorly were psycho education intervention, Family focused programs, online programs to understand the mental illness, to enhance parenting skills and resilience-based programs which helps the children in some elements whereas certain other factors which is important to focus on, has been neglected.

With the factors mentioned above, an integrated intervention programme can be developed and implemented on COPMI, to enhance themselves, to prevent psychological well-being, and to protect the mental well-being of other children and individuals who are related to COPMI.

The findings of this study have led to recommendations for researchers, mental health experts, teachers, the educational system, and community mental health services in order to build a society with healthier individuals.

In comparison to the other countries' studies that were included in the research, it was obvious that Australia and Germany had contributed far more to COPMI research than the rest of the countries as indicated in Table II . It appears that these two major countries have begun working on improving the mental health of these children in a quite advanced manner than other countries, and it was also realised that the majority of the countries were European

countries, however researcher have synthesized only 28 studies eligible out of 12720, hence any research including this target population is strongly recommended. And raising the question of why other countries have not contributed anything to improving COPMI's mental health. It is indeed a red flag for all nations to begin working with these youngsters in order to establish an healthy society in the future. Typically, mental health professionals focus solely on patients, neglecting to consider their parenting role, as well as their children and family members, when offering services. Instead of focusing only on adult mental illness, it is suggested that attention to be paid to other areas of an individual's life and family, which is especially important in countries, which has a collectivistic Culture. The researcher conducted a semi structured interviews with mental health professionals, most claimed that they primarily focus on treating disorders. However, many of them acknowledged after the interview that they also should work with the patients' family members.

Since the COPMI spends the significant amount of time with teachers, in addition to the time with family members, teachers are encouraged to recognize children's lives, empathise, and act appropriately.

As education system lacks any mental health-related subject areas in school, it is recommended that educational programme subjects be introduced which is connected to mental health to increase mental health literacy among students. Teachers can be trained on mental health and how to handle with children whose parents suffer from mental illness through the educational system (COPMI).

Although the view of mental disease is changing gradually, community mental health services must focus on decreasing the stigma that is engrained in society towards mental illness.

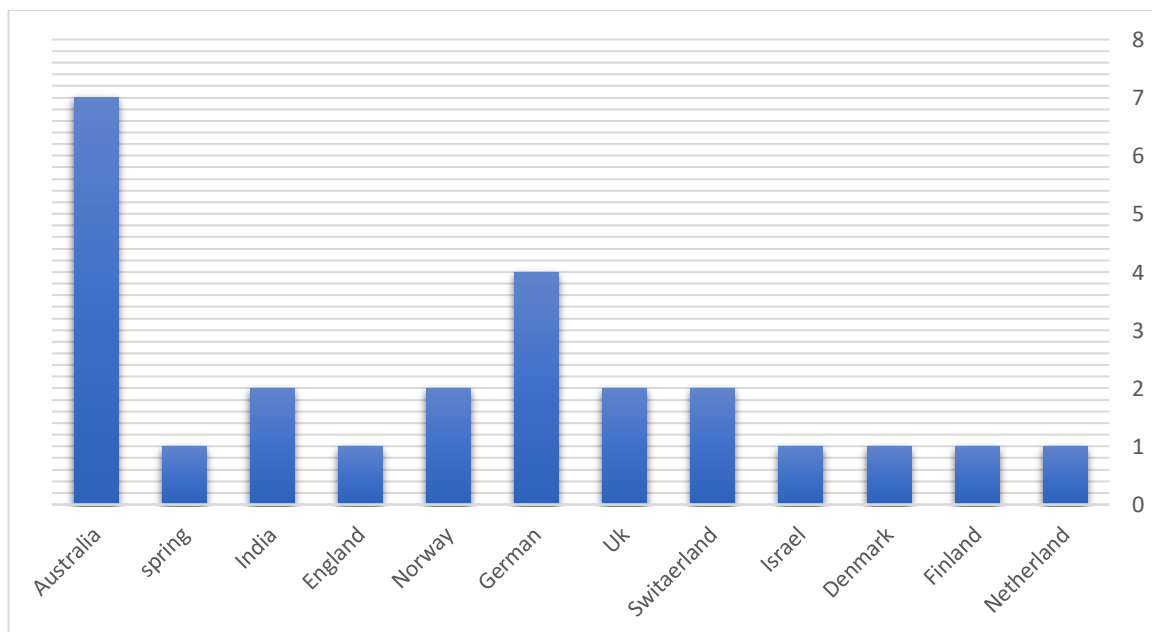


Table 2: Publishing Countries

V. CONCLUSION

With the synthesized 28 articles, thorough literature Review has been done and the present study has highlighted mental health problems of COPMI such as children's quality of life, children's emotional well-being, children's social well-being, Internalizing and externalizing behavioural problems, children's self-esteem, self-actualization, and Lack of mental health literacy. The interventions which is available are Resilience based intervention, Family focused intervention, parenting skill development program, Online course and DVD for family with an individual who have mental disorder and the researcher also noticed that there is lack of studies on COPMI around world. With the above-mentioned results recommendations for Researchers, Education system, Community mental health Services, Teachers, Mental health professionals has been suggested.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All authors have declared no conflict of interest.

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