

# Determinants of The Utilization of Mental Health Services Among Adults in Jos-North and Jos-South Local Government Areas, Plateau State, Nigeria

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## Abstract:

Appropriate utilization of mental health services has been found to be important in maintaining complete health of the individual. However, determinants such as personal, institutional and environmental factors have been found to significantly shape an individual's utilization of mental health services. This study set out to identify the determinants of the utilization of mental health services among adults in Jos-North and Jos-South Local Government Areas of Plateau State. The study utilized quantitative research design using the descriptive cross-sectional survey method. Purposive sampling was used to select 399 adults from six selected Primary Healthcare Centres in the study setting. a four-section questionnaire was designed to collect information regarding socio-demographic characteristics, personal, institutional and environmental determinants. Data collected were analysed using simple percentages, mean and standard deviation, and inferential statistics of Spearman Rank Correlation in analysing the research hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between the personal, institutional and environmental determinants with utilization of mental health services. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that government should

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enact mental health policy that will make it mandatory for mental health institutions to provide mental health services to people of all ages free of costs to ensure better utilization of mental health services in communities.

**Keywords:** Determinants, Utilization, Mental Health Services, Adults,



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## Introduction

The aim of any healthcare outfit is for patients, clients and community to utilize its services in the community which it is located for the prevention, treatment of illnesses and rehabilitation. In the case of mental illness, recovery is usually short-lived, and prevention obstructed. This could be associated with how mental health services are utilized for mental illness; this is likely to be linked how factors such as inadequate social and community support for people with mental disorders, gender and employment issues, poorly organized mental health service delivery system, access and affordability of services and lack of personnel identified as major determinants shapes a person's decision on whether or not mental health services should be utilized.

Studies on the utilization of mental health services in Nigeria are uncommon. Most of the existing studies on the utilization of mental health services have targeted psychiatric illnesses. However, present context for the assessment and treatment of mental health disorders in Nigeria (National Policy for Mental Health Delivery, 2013) is moving from mental hospitals to primary health care providers (PHC). Mental Health is an essential part of community well-being and a remarkable share of global burden of diseases is related to mental disorders.

Worldwide, mental health disorders stand as a main source of disability and persons with mental health disorders have high death rates in developing countries like Nigeria, and under-developed countries (Gere, 2017). Mental health disorders also rise the likelihood of living in poverty and create significant cost to patients, their families and community in terms of burden of care. Gere (2017) also pointed out that middle income countries such as Nigeria have significantly low levels of resources and qualified personnel for the provision of mental health services. In Nigeria, mental health services are not adequately utilized, this has led to wide treatment gap with the resultant increase in the prevalence rate of mental disorders. It has also been identified that major factors viewed as personal, institutional and environmental determinants found within the individual who seeks to utilize mental health services, the institution that provides the services and the environment that supports the individual and institution plays an important role shaping the individual decision on whether he/she should use a particular mental health service (Ching-Wen, 2015; Jeong, et al, 2019; Murray, 2018).

In Nigeria, the subject of mental illness is often culturally avoided; as many people are not usually interested in discussing it openly (Bakare, 2014; Ndaliaku and Onyebuchi, 2018). The reality however, is that, mental illness statistics in Nigeria are alarming. According to the University of Iowa College of Public Health (2019), in a population of 203.5 million Nigerians, it is estimated that 20-30% of the population suffers from mental health challenges. Agreeing with the high prevalence rate of mental illness in Nigeria, Agofere, et al (2019), state that 20-30% of Nigeria's experiences some form of mental disorders in their lifetime.

Despite government's effort and emphasis on the shift of provision of mental healthcare services to the Primary Healthcare Centres (National Policy for Mental Health Delivery, 2013), utilization of these services seem to achieve very little in the prevention and treatment of mental illness in the study setting. Reasons are not clear but may be due to certain determinants that seem to have significant relationship on how individuals arrived at

the decision to utilize or not utilize mental health services. There has been no known study that has examined the utilization of mental health services among adults in these settings.

Therefore, there is need to identify the determinants that influences utilization of mental health services among the study population in the setting. This, it is hoped would provide a better understanding of what and how mental health service utilization is influence. This study aimed at identifying these determinants of mental health service utilization among adults in Jos-North and Jos-South Local Government Areas in Plateau State, Nigeria. This study specifically:

1. examined the relationship between personal determinants and utilisation of mental health;
2. determined the relationship between institutional determinants and utilisation of mental health; and
3. examined the relationship between environmental determinants and utilisation of mental health.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for this study:

1. What are the personal determinants of utilisation of mental health services among the respondents?
2. What are the institutional determinants of utilisation of mental health services among the respondents?
3. What are the environmental determinants of utilisation of mental health services among the respondents?

### Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated for this study:

1. Personal determinants have no significant relationship the utilization of mental health services among respondents.
2. Institutional determinants have no significant relationship with the utilization of mental health services among the respondents.
3. Environmental determinants have no significant relationship with the utilization of mental health services among the respondents.

### Methodology

This study utilized quantitative cross-sectional survey design. The study was conducted in Jos-North and Jos-South Local Government Areas, Plateau State, Nigeria. The population for the study were adults who are residents of the two local government areas, having a combined population of 422,049 adults according to the estimated projection for the year 2019 by the National Population Commission. These two local government areas are the capital and commercial centre of Plateau State. Jos-North and Jos-South has 36 and 40 Primary Healthcare Centres respectively (PHCs).

A sample of 399 adults both males and females was drawn using Slovin's formula. Systematic random sampling technique was used to select seven PHCs; three from Jos-North and four from Jos-South local government areas respectively; while proportionate sampling technique was used for recruiting the 399 respondents into the study from each of the selected PHCs. A validated self-developed questionnaire was used for the collection of

relevant data from study participants which was pre-tested on 40 adults in Pankshin Local Government Area. Quantitative data was obtained from a cross sectional survey of adults in Jos-North and Jos-South Local Government Areas, Plateau State using six trained research assistants. Informed consent was also obtained from each respondent before data collection. The data collected was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the personal determinants of utilisation of mental health services among the respondents?

**Table 1: Mean Rating of Personal Determinants of Utilization of Mental Health Services**

SN	Statement of Items	n	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Being an adult makes accessing mental health services difficult.	390	1.944	0.963	Disagree
2	My level of education makes it easy for me to utilize mental health services.	390	3.231	0.961	Agree
3	My marital status makes it easy for me to utilization of mental health services very difficult.	390	3.036	0.744	Agree
4	My monthly incomes make utilization of mental health services easy.	390	1.969	0.964	Disagree
5	My gender affects access to mental health services	390	3.272	0.945	Agree
6	There are few trained mental health professionals for provision mental health services.	390	3.254	0.954	Agree
7	My age affects access to mental health service	390	2.141	0.912	Disagree
8	My religion helps me to use mental health services.	390	3.095	0.744	Agree
9	My culture encourage me to use mental health services.	390	1.903	0.935	Disagree
10	Social status does not influence my use of mental health services.	390	1.926	0.928	Disagree

The analysis of personal determinants of utilization of mental health services in Table 1 revealed that respondents agreed that their level of education makes it easy for them to utilize mental health services ( $X=3.231$ ), their marital status makes it easy for them to utilize mental health services very difficult. ( $X=3.036$ ), their gender affects access to mental health services ( $X=3.272$ ), there are few trained mental health professionals for provision mental health services ( $X=3.254$ ), and their religion helps them to use mental health services ( $X=3.095$ ) respectively. However, it was found that the respondents disagreed that being an adult makes accessing mental health services difficult ( $X=1.944$ ).

**Research Question 2:** What are the institutional determinants of utilisation of mental health services among the respondents?

**Table 2: Mean Rating of Institutional Determinants of Utilization of Mental Health Services**

SN	Statement of Items	n	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Mental health services are readily available in the institutions.	390	1.936	0.969	Disagree
2	There are adequate trained professionals who provide mental health services to the public.	390	1.928	0.943	Disagree
3	There is poor investment by government to improve provision of mental health services.	390	3.069	1.036	Agree
4	The mental health services are very expensive and difficult to afford.	390	3.100	1.062	Agree
5	There is delay in attending to clients in the mental health institutions.	390	2.995	0.918	Agree
6	Mental health services are not well organized.	390	2.985	0.959	Agree
7	Mental health services are not readily available for use.	390	3.044	1.047	Agree
8	The mental healthcare institutions do not address the mental healthcare needs of the community.	390	2.992	0.917	Agree
9	Mental health services are expensive.	390	3.149	0.990	Agree
10	Stigmatization of people with mental illness reduces the utilization of mental health services.	390	3.172	1.008	Agree

The findings from the analysis of the institutional determinants of the utilization of mental health services established that respondents agreed that stigmatization of people with mental illness reduces the utilization of mental health services ( $X=3.172$ ), mental health services are expensive ( $X=3.149$ ), the mental health services are very expensive and difficult to afford ( $X=3.100$ ), there is poor investment by government to improve provision of mental health services ( $X=3.069$ ), mental health services are not readily available for use ( $X=3.044$ ), there is delay in attending to clients in the mental health institutions ( $X=2.995$ ), the mental healthcare institutions do not address the mental healthcare needs of the community ( $X=2.992$ ) and that mental health services are not well organized ( $X=2.985$ ) respectively.

**Research Question 3:** What are the environmental determinants of utilisation of mental health services among the respondents?



**Table 3: Mean Rating of Environmental Determinants of Utilization of Mental Health Services**

SN	Statement of Items	n	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Lack of social support for people with mental illness in the community make utilization of mental health services difficult	390	3.215	0.973	Agree
2	The mental health institutions are evenly distributed.	390	1.915	1.004	Disagree
3	Lack of community participation reduces utilization of mental health services.	390	2.990	0.881	Agree
4	Stigmatization of people with mental illness reduces the utilization of mental health services.	390	3.110	0.935	Agree
5	Mental illness is culturally defined and interpreted as evil.	390	1.854	0.987	Disagree
6	Mental health services are not well organized.	390	3.200	0.924	Agree
7	Mental health services are not readily available for use.	390	3.023	0.876	Agree
8	The mental health institutions are far from the community.	390	3.182	0.910	Agree

The analysis of the environmental determinants of the utilization of mental health services in Table 3 revealed that the respondents agreed that lack of social support for people with mental illness in the community make utilization of mental health services difficult, mental health services are not well organized ( $X=3.200$ ), the mental health institutions are far from the community ( $X=3.182$ ), stigmatization of people with mental illness reduces the utilization of mental health services ( $X=3.110$ ), Mental health services are not readily available for use ( $X=3.023$ ) and lack of community participation reduces utilization of mental health services ( $X=2.990$ ) as environmental determinants of mental health services utilization.

#### Test of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1:** Personal determinants have no significant relationship the utilization of mental health services among respondents

**Table 4: Spearman Rank Correlation of Influence of Personal Determinants on Utilization of Mental Health Services**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	n	r-cal.	p-value	Decision
<b>Personal Determinants</b>	2.944	0.963	390	.899	.000	Significant
<b>Mental Health Services</b>	3.231	0.961				

$p < 0.05$



The findings from Spearman Rank correlation of the influence of personal determinants of utilization of mental health services revealed that  $r(390)=.899, p=.000$ , which implies that  $p<0.05$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the conclusion drawn was that personal determinants have significant influence on the utilization of mental health services in Jos-North and Jos-South Local Government Areas of Plateau State. The positive coefficient of the correlation which is 0.899 suggests that the correlation is estimated to be 89.9% for every improvement in the determinants.

**Hypothesis 2:** Institutional determinants have no significant relationship with the utilization of mental health services among the respondents.

**Table 5: Spearman Rank Correlation of Influence of Institutional Determinants on Utilization of Mental Health Services**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	n	r-cal.	p-value	Decision
<b>Institutional Determinants</b>	3.069	1.036	390	.977	.000	Significant
<b>Mental Health Services</b>	3.044	1.047				

$p<0.05$

The findings from the analysis of influence of institutional determinants on utilization of mental health services showed that  $r(390)=.977, p=.000$ , which implies that  $p<0.05$ ; the null hypothesis was rejected. The study concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between institutional determinants and the utilization of mental health services in the study Area. The correlation coefficient of 0.977 implies that these factors will account for 97.7% changes in the utilization of mental health services in the study Area.

**Hypothesis 3:** Environmental determinants have no significant relationship with the utilization of mental health services among the respondents

**Table 6: Spearman Rank Correlation of Influence of Environmental Determinants on Utilization of Mental Health Services**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	n	r-cal.	p-value	Decision
<b>Environmental Determinants</b>	3.215	0.973	390	.903	.000	Significant
<b>Mental Health Services</b>	3.110	0.935				

$p<0.05$

The findings from the analysis of influence of environmental factors on the utilization of mental health services in Table 6 revealed that  $r(390)=.903, p=.000$ , which also means that  $p<0.05$ ; hence the null hypothesis was rejected. The conclusion drawn therefore was that environmental determinants have significant influence on the utilization of mental services in Jos-North and Jos-South Local Government Area of Plateau State.

## Discussion

From the findings of this study, personal determinants of utilization of mental health services revealed that respondents agreed that their level of education makes it easy for them

to utilize mental health services, marital status makes it easy for them to utilize mental health services very difficult, gender affects access to mental health services and that there are few trained mental health professionals for provision mental health services. Williams (2013) stated that enabling of personal factors that can affect mental health services include individual and community resources, accessibility of services, health insurance, and cost. It was also established religion determines the use mental health services. However, the findings revealed that being an adult does not make accessing mental health services difficult and monthly income does not make the utilization of mental health easy, age, culture and social status do not influence the utilization of mental health services. This implies that education, marital status, gender, limited or few trained mental health professionals for provision mental health services and religious beliefs are the major personal determinants of utilization of mental health services in the study Area. The findings from Spearman Rank correlation of the influence of personal determinants of utilization of mental health services revealed that  $r(390)=.899$ ,  $p=.000$ , which implies that  $p<0.05$ . The null hypothesis was rejected and the conclusion drawn was that personal determinants have significant influence on the utilization of mental health services in Jos-North and Jos-South Local Government Areas of Plateau State.

The findings from the analysis of institutional determinants of the utilization of mental health services revealed that stigmatization of people with mental illness, expensive nature of mental health services and difficulties in access these services, poor investment by government to improve provision of mental health services, mental lack of available of mental health services, delay in attending to clients in the mental health institutions, inability of mental healthcare institutions to address the mental healthcare needs of the community and poor organized of mental health services are the major institutional determinants of the utilization of mental health services in the study setting. Buttressing this, Samartzis and Talias (2018) identified the burden of mental health problems, the availability of mental health professionals and the health care system which are all within the environment, and determine the utilization of mental health services as key issues in mental health services. The findings from the Spearman Rank Correlation analysis of influence of institutional determinants on utilization of mental health services showed that  $r(390)=.977$ ,  $p=.000$ , which implies that  $p<0.05$ . The study rejected the null hypothesis concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between institutional determinants and the utilization of mental health services in the study Area.

The results on environmental determinants of the utilization of mental health services revealed that the major environmental determinants of utilization of mental health services in Jos-North and Jos-South Area are lack of social support for people with mental illness in the community, mental health services are not well organized, mental health institutions are far from the community, stigmatization of people with mental illness reduces the utilization of mental health services, mental health services are not readily available for use and lack of community participation. Furthermore, the results revealed respondents disagreed that the mental health institutions are evenly distributed and mental illness is culturally defined and interpreted as evil. This suggests that issue related to the distribution of mental health institutions and cultural definition and interpretation of mental health as environmental

factors have less influence on the utilization of mental health services in the study Area. Oyewunmi, et al (2015) had observed that enabling factors centres on the idea that variables such as income, community and system resources such as social support and service availability and accessibility which are entirely environmental as the main determinants of mental healthcare service utilization in a population.

The findings from the Spearman Rank Correlation analysis of influence of environmental factors on the utilization of mental health services revealed that  $r(390)=.903$ ,  $p=.000$ , which also means that  $p<0.05$ . Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected and the conclusion drawn was that environmental determinants have significant influence on the utilization of mental services in Jos-North and Jos-South Local Government Area of Plateau State. This is in conformity with the view of Patel, et al (2006) that the lack of mental-health professionals and modern medication or treatment options means patients with mental illness are housed in overcrowded, long-term, in-patient facilities, with little attempt at rehabilitation or social integration.

### Conclusion

The study concluded that personal, institutional and environmental determinants influenced utilization of mental health services.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this empirical analysis and the conclusion drawn, the following have been recommended as ways of improving the utilization to mental health services in the study Area:

- i. Government should enact mental health policy that will make it mandatory for mental health institutions to provide mental health services to people of all ages free of costs to ensure better utilization of mental health services in communities
- ii. Government should also ensure that personal determinants of mental health services such as monthly income level and health insurance coverage are enhanced so as to promote effective utilization of mental health services among people in the study Area
- iii. Government should invest heavy of the established and event distribution of mental health institutions in the study Area so as to enhance the utilization of mental health services
- iv. Government and non- State actors like Non-governmental organizations should assist in funding the provision of mental health services so as to the make them affordable and easy to be access by those in need in communities in the study Area
- v. Government should train and employ professional mental health experts so as to ensure that quality services are provided in mental health institutions in the study Area.

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