Psychiatry Research has Moved Past COVID-19

This first issue of the year, brings at least on papers an end to an era – not only in terms of time period but also in terms of psyche and public health challenges. The research and public psyche that was dominated by SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) infection is now replaced by more conventional areas and panic created by the infection is not as pervasive and as intense as it has been in the better part of last 2 years. It is partly because of the ‘familiarity effect’ (Badgaiyan et al., 2001) and also by the fact that the current strain of the virus is not taking as many lives as in the past. It does not mean that it will remain so. The possibility of its emergence as more virulent form is a real, particularly because the current strains Omicron ba 4 and 5 are highly contagious. Despite a record number of people getting infected, there are relatively fewer deaths. There is however no guarantee that the next mutant will not be virulent. If it happens, COVID-19 will come back with a vengeance and will dwarf the public health crisis it created in the last 2 years. An optimistic forecast assumes that the virus will remain low virulent and will no longer be more lethal than the common cold or influenza. That thought is reflected in the current trend of psychiatry research. Investigators are now not disproportionally focused on the study of the effect of COVID-19. They have turned their attention to more conventional topics like mood disorders and psychosis. It is definitely a welcome sign and an indication that optimistic thinking has superseded more pessimistic scenario concerning COVID-19 pandemic. Following this trend, the current issue includes Research articles, Reviews, Clinical trials and Case report that are not on or about COVID-19. It provides us a break from never ending supply of daily doses of COVID-19 in research journals and News magazines.

Mood disorders dominate contents of this issue. It has a mini review to evaluate efficacy of dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) in treatment of depressive disorder. There are two research articles on depression. One on association of hypervitaminosis D on chronicity of depression and the other is a qualitative analysis of relapse. A clinical trial demonstrates benefits of anger management education on aggressive behavior in bipolar patients. A case report that shows effectiveness of lithium and olanzapine combination in treatment of bipolar disorder wraps up topic of mood disorder.

Effectiveness of psychotherapy in psychosis has always been debated at various levels. In recent years increasing number of studies have demonstrated is usefulness in at least a sub-set of patients with schizophrenia. A review showing effectiveness of CBT on these patients adds to this list. The current issue includes another important review on the role of Glycine transporter Subtype 1 inhibitors in management of alcohol abuse disorder.

I hope these papers will help clinicians and researchers who are trying to provide best possible treatment to patients with mental illness.

REFERENCE

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