

Review of: "Perceptions and Experiences of Human Right Violations of People Living with Mental Illness: A multi-centre descriptive cross-sectional study in Nigeria"

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This is an interesting paper assessing the understanding of human rights of people living with mental illness in Nigeria. It is obvious from the results that people are aware of their human rights, as outlined in table 4, where people scored highly in their perceptions of potential human rights violations both in regards to their treatment (questions 3 & 4) and their right to equality in society and to equal pay for employment. These are considered basic human rights, and it is important that patients are aware of these and should stand up for them.

The challenge, I believe, is in table 5, as the issues discussed there would not be considered by some to be "human rights" (under the definition of the UN Convention). If a family member refuses to visit, is this really considered as depriving somebody of a basic human right, in the same way as access to food, water, and shelter, or as having an input into one's treatment? In some cases, especially in secure mental health, it is recommended that family or friends do not attend, especially if family violence may be one of the causes of the mental illness. So this can be quite complicated. Question 7 - "being the subject of gossip" - is very subjective and is not restricted to mental illness, but is an everyday part of society, so it is difficult to disentangle this from "human rights" issues. Overall, I feel that the issues raised in table 5, and labelling them under the heading of "human rights," actually detracts from the paper as it somehow trivialises some of the important points raised elsewhere in the paper.

In table 6, the authors examine the potential relationship between human rights and socio-demographic values. Firstly, it's unclear as to whether this perception refers to the values in tables 4 or 5 - based upon my previous comments, this would be of particular importance. Secondly, although there are categories where there does appear to be a correlation (marital status, occupation, and income), these are not fully discussed and the implications drawn. For example, civil servants have a good perception of human rights, while students don't. What are the implications of this? This appears to be a statistical exercise without any attempt to draw any meaningful conclusions or decide any next steps for future research or develop policy and practice changes.

Overall, this is an interesting paper that backs up previous studies in this area. However, the term "human rights" has been used rather loosely, and some of the issues raised may be better described as "discrimination" or "inequality"; the authors should consider this in the future.

