

Abstract

This is a study on “Family Participation in Promoting Employment Opportunity for Psychiatric Patients”. The objectives of the research were to study the attitudes of the family toward psychiatric patients and toward promoting employment opportunity for the psychiatric patients. The methodology in this qualitative research involved a study of documents, observation and in-depth interviews based on the families of 10 psychiatric cases, together with information from the leaders of the communities in which the psychiatric patients lived and information from personnel of Somdet Chaopraya Institute of Psychiatry.

The results of the study showed that of the ten psychiatric cases four were female and six were male, ranging from 19 years of age (youngest) to 60 (oldest), being in psychiatric conditions between 1 and 33 years. Their status in the family, was son/daughter, younger and elder brother/elder sister or wife. Every patient admitted to having the psychiatric condition and understood the necessity of ongoing continual treatment in order to live a normal life again. The family members of the psychiatric cases were between 40 and 70 years old, the status being mother, elder brother/younger sister or husband. All were single families, with two to five members, earning a monthly income about 10,000-15,000 baht. Most of the family care was a combination of family members making sure that the patients took the medication and self-care by the patients, depending on the chronic nature of the case. In a community in which the leader was a public health volunteer there was more knowledge and understanding of the psychiatric cases, thus allowing the patients and their families to take part in community activities more readily.

The researcher suggested that there should be educational training programs for families of the psychiatric patients as soon as the latter were given treatment, preparing the families with the right knowledge, understanding and support for the patients. Such programs will also promote understanding in the community and for every social member, equipping them with an appropriate attitude towards the

psychiatric patients. In addition, the Institute should encourage skills training and employment on a trial basis to enable the patients to get in touch with real work situations, their own needs and aptitude, thus preparing them for future work.