

Coping strategies by persons with mental disorders in Ghana: A scoping review

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Background

Although evidence points to increasing prevalence of mental disorders in Ghana, little is known about the mechanisms adopted to cope with these disorders. Understanding the coping strategies adopted by persons with mental disorders is important for the provision of appropriate mental health care services in the context of Ghana with an underdeveloped formal health care sector.

Objective

This review seeks to synthesize and analyze existing qualitative evidence on the coping strategies adopted by persons with mental disorders in Ghana.

Methods (Framework Synthesis)

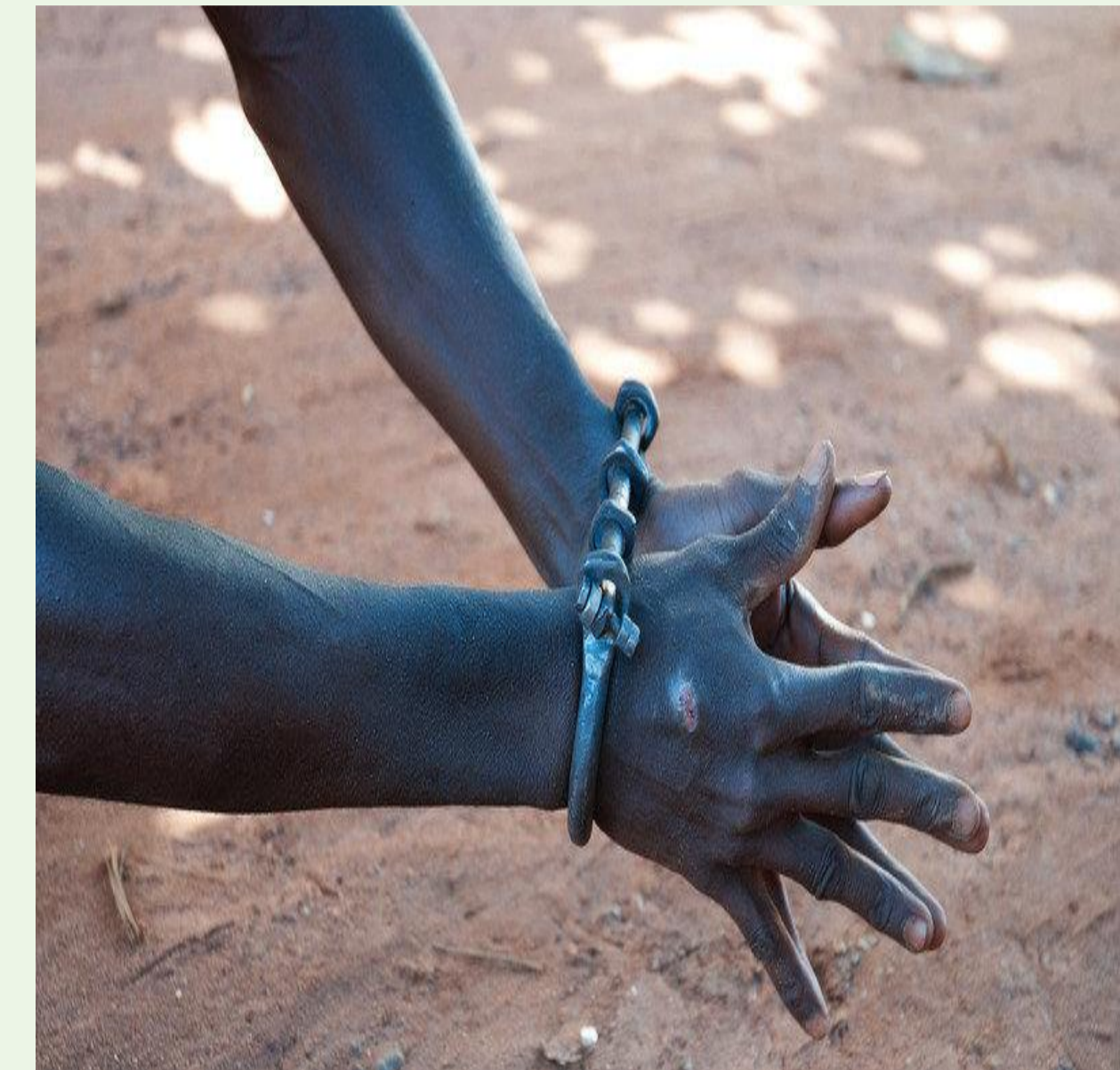
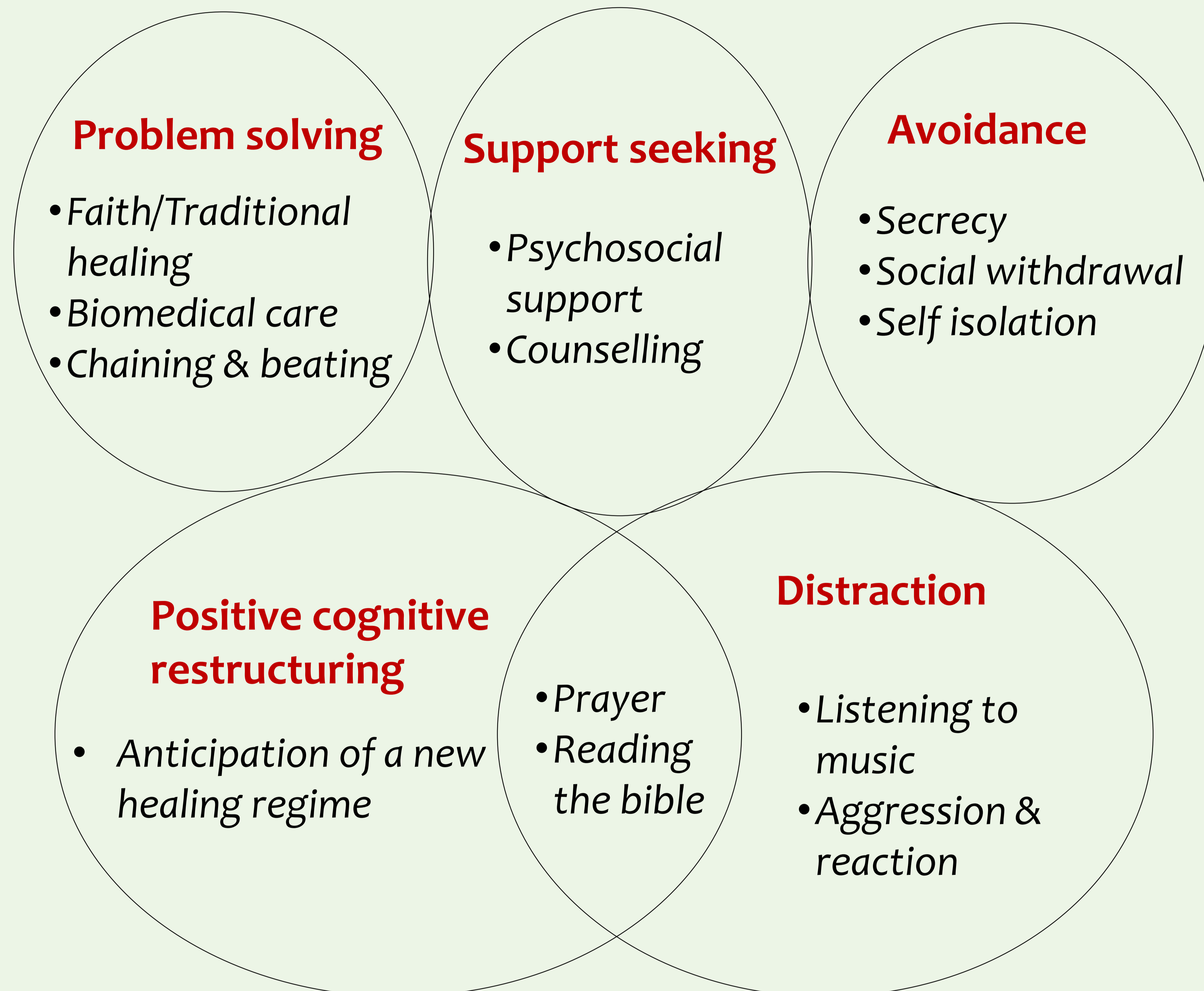
- Databases: CINAHL, EMBASE, PsycINFO, Global Health, and Scopus from 2000 - 2018.
- Keywords: Coping strategies, Mental health, Mental disorders, and Ghana.
- Hand search of key health journals.
- Imported articles into NvivoTM11 and used a coping framework by Skinner et al. (2003) which categorizes coping strategies into 5 main domains: problem solving, support seeking, avoidance, distraction and positive cognitive restructuring.
- Coded the articles deductively into the framework and subsequently conducted inductive thematic analysis.

Results (Descriptive)

- Identified 937 articles at first review, 507 articles after title and abstract screening.
- 8 full text of primary qualitative articles reviewed.

Results (Synthesis of Themes)

Figure 1: Coping strategies organized into themes and sub-themes.



Conclusions

- Prioritization of mental health care in Ghana.
- There is the need for further studies to understand the impacts of the myriad coping strategies adopted by persons with mental disorders.
- The review also highlights the need to eliminate negative problem solving and avoidance strategies and behaviors.
- Future research is needed to identify ways of integrating appropriate coping strategies into the current formal health care system in Ghana.

References available on request.

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