

## **Evaluative Essay on Research Methods**

### **The Efficacy of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in Managing Depression among Inpatients in Psychiatric Wards**

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# **The Efficacy of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in Managing Depression among Inpatients in Psychiatric Wards**

## **Research Question**

What is the efficacy of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in reducing depressive symptoms among inpatients in psychiatric wards?

## **Introduction**

Depression in psychiatric inpatients is a major and enduring public health issue with a highly deleterious impact on a patient's health status and recovery process. Being one of the most widespread mental illnesses, depression not only aggravates the symptoms of the disease and other concurrent disorders but also interferes with the psychotherapeutic processes required to improve the mental state (Singh et al., 2023). One such psychological treatment, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), has become popular due to its mechanistically grounded nature in altering depressive cognitions and behaviors. It has been proven in different populations and contexts, such as outpatient and community-based settings. However, given the high levels of patient need, the intensity of the treatment delivered in inpatient psychiatric wards, and the organized environment of these services, it is essential to evaluate the applicability of CBT in such a setting (Hayes & Hofmann, 2021).

The purpose of this essay is, therefore, to examine to what extent it is permissible to use qualitative, quantitative and secondary research approaches to investigate the effectiveness of CBT in dealing with depression among psychiatric wards in Hong Kong. Every paradigm involves distinct approaches to the research question.



Semi-structured interviews are a qualitative research approach that can be useful in understanding patients' views and attitudes towards CBT. Researchers can have the inside out of such patients as they unveil how they perceive, think, feel, and learn regarding coping with the illnesses during treatment. The research question for this research method is "How do psychiatric inpatients perceive and experience CBT as a treatment for depression, and what factors influence their attitudes toward its effectiveness?"

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### **Strengths**

A strength of using semi-structured interviews in the study is that they provide specifics and an understanding of the patient's attitudes and interactions with CBT approaches. Hence, it allows the researchers to reveal and analyze the different factors that constitute how psychiatric inpatients in Hong Kong interpret and embrace CBT as a treatment form and the spectrum of feelings that participants diffuse towards CBT (Durkin, 2023). Semi-

structured interviews allow the respondents a certain amount of control and direction over their answers. However, the answers received can sometimes be an established numerical value and give qualitative insight into what the patient is considering (Busetto et al., 2020). For example, [REDACTED]

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### **Weaknesses**

A major criticism of applying the semi-structured interview method is that generalizability could be higher due to small sample sizes in qualitative studies (Mthuli et al., 2022). This means that the conclusions that can be made about the psychiatric patients in a particular set cannot be deemed as similar to that of a normal population of psychiatric inpatients found in Hong Kong. The latter contributes to this problem, as the only data source is the patients' opinions, which do not necessarily represent their actual situation and emotions in different psychiatric hospitals. Thirdly, personal interpretation when conducting semi-

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2024).

### **Suitability for the Question**

Semi-structured interviews are suitable for answering the research question within the framework of the chosen qualitative research paradigm. As for the psychiatric wards of Hong Kong, it is beneficial in that it gives healthcare workers firsthand experience in observing patients' CBT skills. It may be helpful to know more about patients' expectations and what they expect in CBT in general, especially about increasing the effectiveness and efficacy of the introduced therapeutic methods in treating patients with mental disorders.

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### **Quantitative Method: Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs)**

#### **Description**

RCT is among the most common quantitative research methodologies that are used to assess the effectiveness of CBT in reducing depression levels among outpatients. The research question for this research method is "How effective is CBT in reducing depressive symptoms among psychiatric inpatients compared to standard treatment methods, as

measured through randomized controlled trials?” In this method, the participants are divided into two groups where the first group is treated with CBT, and the second is given standard treatment. The effectiveness of CBT is further supported by the other measures assessing the degree of the patient’s improvement, for instance, the Hamilton Depression

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### **Strengths**

One of the valuable benefits that RCTs provide in considering the efficacy of CBT in Psychiatric Inpatients is that they offer measurable empirical evidence that can prove a cause-and-effect link between CBT and the alleviation of symptoms. RCTs control confounding variables since participants are randomly selected or choose between the treatment and control groups, so any improvement in the level of depression can be attributed to the treatment (Morriss et al., 2024). Such objective data is quite useful for clinicians working at psychiatric wards in Hong Kong, [REDACTED]

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### **Weaknesses**

While RCTs are effective in providing accurate data, they still have several drawbacks arising from their conceptual framework. Another limitation is the high cost of implementing various measures, as highlighted in the study. Due to their methodology, RCTs are often costly in terms of funding for participant recruitment and selection, implementation of the monitoring process, and data collection, which makes them unrealistic, especially in a naturalistic psychiatric ward setting in Hong Kong (Baker et al., 2022). Such high costs could restrict the capacity of performing RCTs in small hospitals or other poorly funded healthcare settings, thus preventing the utilization of EBPs. Furthermore, RCTs are usually based on the quantitative scale. Also, less attention is paid to qualitative patient parameters like patient satisfaction and emotions that may influence therapeutic response

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### **Suitability for the Question**



RCT is a convenient methodology for sequencing the practicality and clinical applicability of CBT in addressing depression in a psychiatric inpatient. RCTs benefit from using instrumental indicators, the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS), for instance, as

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[REDACTED] effectiveness

in treating depressed patients (Cheung et al., 2024).

### **Secondary Research Method: Systematic Literature Review**

#### **Description**

A systematic literature review is a form of secondary research that involves the identification, critical analysis, and integration of published research studies that attempt to establish the efficacy of CBT in managing depression in inpatient psychiatric patients (Hegedus et al., 2020). The research question in this secondary research is “What does the existing literature reveal about the effectiveness of CBT in treating depression among psychiatric inpatients, and what gaps remain for further research?” This method entails accumulating a variety of investigations to provide an overall perspective on the efficacy of CBT (Gkintoni et al., 2024). Thus, when all the literature is critically appraised systematically, gaps, trends, and areas of uncertainty are highlighted in the literature

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### **Strengths**

The systematic literature review has various methodological advantages. Specifically, it enables one to obtain a broader perspective on the effectiveness of CBT based on the results of a number of qualitative and quantitative studies. From the evaluation of the various sources of information, the review provides an overall view of CBT and its effectiveness in managing depression in psychiatric inpatient centers. Such an approach involves having to determine attributes related to the sharing process and lead to categorization to facilitate understanding of the results of CBT. In addition, during the process of carrying out the systematic literature review, one gets to notice the pattern of

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## **Weaknesses**

One disadvantage of the systematic literature review is that it may be affected by publication bias to a certain extent. This type of bias arises from the situation where negative outcomes are less reported than positive ones, and thus, the success rates are inflated. This bias stems from the fact that it becomes difficult to achieve the desired result whenever one seeks to determine the effectiveness of CBT for depressive disorders in inpatient psychiatric care units. Furthermore, systematic literature reviews can be

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## **Suitability for the Question**

A Systematic Literature Review is relevant for conducting the research question since it takes part in the assessment of primary studies and offers a broader view of the CBT intervention in depression for psychiatric inpatients. It saves time and grants a more extensive perspective on the effectiveness recurring in various investigations, trends, or research deficiencies of CBT. This approach complements the overall evaluation of the impact of CBT in inpatient facilities.

## **Ethical and Project Management Considerations**

### **Ethical Challenges**

The issue of ethical concern emerges as one of the most pertinent factors in researching CBT to treat depression in psychiatric wards. First, respecting the patient's right to consent and remain anonymous is crucial, especially when collecting qualitative and quantitative data (Karunaratna et al., 2024). Consent should be obtained from all participants, and then information about the research and the participants can be obtained. They can withdraw from the study without any reason for withdrawing. Additionally, the information they provide must not be disclosed to the general public to maintain their anonymity and safety. Secondly, there is an issue of source bias that has to be addressed in the process

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### **Project Management Challenges**

One of the difficulties of managing projects in mixed-method research is time and resource control because both shapes of research require different demands. This can be especially difficult in psychiatric environments because patients may not always be readily available and/or because patients' rights must be respected when selecting participants. Further,

[REDACTED]

## Conclusion

As a way of assessing the effectiveness of CBT for depression treatment within psychiatric inpatients, each of the research methodologies possesses its advantages and limitations. The qualitative method, especially the semi-structured interviews, gives a deeper understanding of the patients' reception of CBT. It enables one to record feelings and experiences that may not be measured by survey or evaluation. However, its weaknesses are restricted samples and researcher influence, which hampers external validity. RCTs also give accurate numerical data and essential characteristics to check the causality between CBT and a decrease in depression symptoms. However, these trials are

The value of employing qualitative and quantitative studies alongside systematic literature reviews to investigate the efficacy of CBT in treating depression manifests itself (Bennion et al., 2024). This approach enhances the understanding of how CBT is delivered in inpatient psychiatric units, and thus, it is essential in establishing the effectiveness and appropriateness of CBT to treat depression. To enhance the strength of this study, the

primary data collection is supported by secondary data from the literature. This makes the result more generalized and authentic as it gives a more extensive idea about CBT and its clinical and pragmatic nature. Thus, both methods offer different factors, giving a

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