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**Learning from India's Success: The Role of Family and Interpersonal Support in Recovery from Schizophrenia**

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**Learning Goal:**

The goal of this presentation is to learn about the WHO studies of the course of schizophrenia around the world and examine a case study from India. Attendees will learn how improvement among schizophrenic individuals in India corresponds to the quality of family and other interpersonal involvement in their lives.

**Abstract Text:**

The World Health Organization's studies of the course and outcome of schizophrenia around the world remain an important challenge to the biomedical model of psychopathology, with its finding that schizophrenia has a more favorable outcome, as measured by degree of functionality and remission of symptoms, in developing countries and that India showed the best outcome of any site in this study. In an attempt to explain why India has a more favorable outcome, I conducted interviews in Kerala, India with people diagnosed with schizophrenia to ascertain what factors enabled those who were considered to have recovered from this diagnosis.

Schizophrenic patients in India usually live with family after hospitalization, and often family members will reside in the hospital with their ill relative during inpatient treatment. In interviews at a hospital and several outpatient clinics in and around the city of Thiruvananthapuram, I was able to discern a clear and consistent contribution from family and other interpersonal support among patients who mental health staff considered significantly recovered. Patients who remained more floridly psychotic and less functional had lower degrees of family and other interpersonal involvement and support. These findings are especially intriguing considering that other research shows that people with schizophrenia diagnoses in the United States--which has a poorer outcome according to the WHO studies--mostly live on their own with fewer interpersonal and affective relations than are seen in the same population in India. This paper will consider implications from this study for improving the care of individuals suffering from psychosis in Europe and North America.

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OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**