

Patricia Penas¹
Ioseba Iraurgi¹
M. Concepción Moreno²
Jose J. Uriarte²

How is evaluated mental health recovery?: A systematic review

¹University of Deusto, Bilbao, Spain

²Mental Health Network of Bizkaia (RSMB), Osakidetza, Biocruces, Bizkaia, Spain

There is an increasingly recognition of the concept of personal recovery in the treatment of mental illness. Recovery defined as living a fulfilling, rewarding life, even in the ongoing presence of a mental illness. Consequently, a number of different instruments have been designed to assess recovery-oriented outcomes. The objective of the study was to conduct a systematic revision of the domains and the instruments used to assess personal recovery and mental health services orientation to recovery. After the systematic review, it has been carried out a selection process of the most adequate instruments taking into account different criteria of adequacy, psychometric properties and the validation to the Spanish population. In the results have been obtained 35 instruments for measuring personal recovery and 18 for assessing the orientation of recovery in mental health services. However, many of them have been dismissed for not reaching the adequacy criteria. This review makes clear the lack of consensus on the concept of recovery, as a consequence of the high number of instruments that evaluate the same concept through different domains. In addition, few instruments offer data related to the psychometric properties and only one instrument to assess personal recovery is validated to the Spanish population.

Keywords: Personal Recovery, Service Orientation, Instruments, Outcomes Assessment, Mental Health, Systematic Review

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¿Cómo evaluar la recuperación en salud mental?: Una revisión sistemática

En los últimos años se ha producido un incremento en el reconocimiento del concepto de recuperación personal en la atención a las personas que padecen enfermedades mentales: la recuperación personal definida como la búsqueda de una vida satisfactoria y plena a pesar de las limitaciones causadas por la enfermedad. Consecuentemente, se han creado diferentes instrumentos para evaluar los resultados orientados a la recuperación. El principal objetivo de este estudio ha sido llevar a cabo una revisión sistemática de los dominios e instrumentos que evalúan tanto la recuperación a nivel personal como la orientación de los servicios hacia la recuperación. Tras la revisión sistemática se ha realizado un proceso de selección de los instrumentos más apropiados teniendo en cuenta distintos criterios de adecuación, propiedades psicométricas y su validación al castellano. Como resultado se han obtenido 35 instrumentos que evalúan la recuperación personal y 18 la orientación de los servicios de salud mental, aunque muchos de ellos han sido desestimados por no cumplir los criterios de adecuación. Esta revisión deja clara la falta de consenso en el concepto de recuperación, debido al alto número de instrumentos que evalúan el mismo concepto a través de diferentes dominios. Además, solo unos pocos ofrecen datos de evidencia de las propiedades psicométricas y únicamente un instrumento desarrollado para evaluar la recuperación personal está adaptado al español.

Palabras clave: Recuperación Personal, Orientación de los Servicios, Instrumentos, Evaluación de Resultados, Salud Mental, Revisión Sistemática

Correspondence:
Patricia Penas
Avda. De las Universidades 24
48007, Bilbao (Spain)
E-mail: patricia.penas@deusto.es

INTRODUCTION

The current vision of the recovery concept appeared in the eighties¹, in a context in which people with mental illness themselves start telling about their experiences and the future of the illness stops being considered as an indication of mere deterioration^{2,3}. One of the most cited definitions for this concept is the one proposed by Anthony (1993): 'Recovery is a deeply personal, unique process of changing one's attitude, values, feelings, goals, skills and roles of a person. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life, even with the limitations caused by the illness'⁴.

This vision of personal recovery has become important, to the point in which it has become the main axis when guiding the assistance policies of the current mental health systems in different countries^{4,5}. Therefore, the need to orientate mental health services towards personal recovery requires using measures which allow evaluating both the process of the users' individual recovery and the orientation of the programs and services which promote that recovery⁷. The personal recovery abovementioned differs from the most traditional clinical recovery, in the sense that the latter only refers to the reduction or remission of symptoms⁸, and there are multiple measurement instruments for its evaluation.

In this regard, despite the existence of commonly accepted definitions, the variability concerning the conceptualisation of a process as subjective, complex and multidimensional as personal recovery⁹ hinders the creation and selection of objective measures for its evaluation¹⁰. Moreover, there is a great variability regarding the dimensions used by the current evaluation instruments¹¹.

In recent years, some authors have attempted to identify key processes, phases and characteristics regarding recovery¹², despite it being an individual experience. Some of the factors that have been identified are hope, being responsible for oneself, being supported by others, carrying out meaningful activities and developed a positive identity^{10,13,14}. Additionally, some authors have been working on the establishment of conceptual frameworks, such as CHIME, which include the following factors: Connectedness, Hope and optimism about the future, Identity, Meaning in life and Empowerment^{12,15}.

Therefore, as it has been previously pointed out, it is important to evaluate not only the personal recovery process undergone by people suffering from a severe mental disorder¹⁶, but also the services that assist them and contribute to that process¹⁷. By knowing and assessing how services work and are oriented, they can be adjusted towards the recovery model¹⁸. Furthermore, the inclusion of users who

turn to these services is crucial for both the creation of instruments and their evaluation⁷.

Even though new reviews and papers discussing the new contributions about the recovery model have been published^{15,19}, studies calling for an update in existing evaluation instruments are more scarce. This paper aims to study the dimensions and instruments that have been created and are used to evaluate personal recovery on the one hand, and mental health services' orientation on the other. Additionally, the instruments' psychometric properties and their adequacy for such purpose will also be analysed. Finally, those that are available in Spanish will also be pointed out.

METHOD

For the systematic review, the PRISMA²⁰ model is applied and is adjusted to the search for evaluation instruments, specifically those aimed at the evaluation of factors associated with the concept of recovery in mental illness. Furthermore, instruments mentioned in existing reviews^{7,10,11,21-24} have been taken into account. Even though the concept of recovery is relatively recent, no temporal filters have been used. Its main objective is inherent to the genesis of rehabilitation models. The process was mainly carried out in English; nevertheless, no language filters were used, in order not to rule out the different versions of the instruments. The search has been conducted via the following databases: SCOPUS, ProQuest, PsycARTICLES, PsycCRITIQUES, PsycINFO, EBSCOHost and Science Direct, in which the following descriptors were introduced: 'mental health recovery', 'recovery instruments', 'personal recovery', 'mental illness recovery', 'recovery assessment', 'recovery orientation of mental health services', 'assessment of recovery orientation services' and 'recovery scales'.

The first goal of the search was to identify any instrument aimed at the evaluation of recovery in mental illness. Subsequently, the identified instruments were classified depending on whether they evaluate personal recovery or the services' orientation. The extraction of psychometric properties was carried out after having read the selected papers. The entire search was initially conducted between November and December 2016, whereas the selection of documents and the extraction of information were carried out between January and April 2017. Finally, the procedure was replicated between September and November 2017 in order to update information.

The dimensions which evaluate each of the scales have also been registered. The clustering of these domains was used in order to know the variability and accuracy used by the different groups when measuring a same concept. In this case, the measured concept was the recovery model.

The hierarchal criteria selected by Burgess and his team in 2011 in the systematic review that they conducted for the Australian context¹¹ were deemed suitable when selecting the most adequate instruments for their use in mental health services. Therefore, the following criteria have been taken into account to evaluate personal recovery: (1) the instrument evaluates domains related to personal recovery, (2), it is easy to complete (does not exceed 50 items), (3) it takes the user’s perspective into account, (4) it measures quantitative data, (5) it has been scientifically tested, (6) it possesses adequate psychometric properties and (7) it has been adapted into Spanish. With regards to the instruments which evaluate mental health services’ orientation, the criteria are the following: (1) the instrument measures domains related to the services’ orientation, (2) it is easy to use (does not exceed 100 items), (3) it follows an adequate creation process, (4) it takes users’ perspective into consideration, (5) it possesses adequate psychometric properties and (6) it has been adapted into Spanish.

RESULTS

A total of 53 instruments resulted from the systematic review, from which 35 relate to personal recovery and 18 to recovery orientation of mental health services.

PERSONAL RECOVERY

There are 35 identified instruments that evaluate personal recovery. Nevertheless, there was only access to the domains of 29 of them and there is no information on the 6 remaining ones. As observed in Table 1, the most recurrent dimensions in the different instruments are: management of symptoms, hope, relationships, empowerment and quality of life, while 22 were collected by a single instrument.

Figure 1 hereunder represents the process that was followed in order to select those instruments that adjust to the suggested criteria.

Criterion nº1: Assesses domains related to personal recovery

Out of the 35 instruments initially identified in the reviews and in literature related to personal recovery, only 28 are considered to evaluate domains directly related to the recovery process of people suffering from mental health issues. Thus, other instruments which are used for just one group of users or the evaluation of very specific aspects of the mentioned process have been discarded. In so doing, the following instruments have been ruled out: the RSS¹⁵, which

Table 1		Dimensions of the Personal Recovery measures (n=29)	
Dimension	Number of instruments	Dimension	Number of instruments
Symptom management	12	Spirituality	3
Hope	11	Responsibility	3
Relationships	9	Day-to-day support	3
Quality of life	7	Awareness	3
Empowerment	7	Strengths	3
Goals/self-management	5	Self-esteem	3
Knowledge	5	Redefinition of oneself	2
Support	5	Intrapersonal	2
Daily functioning	5	Interpersonal	2
Work/Educational activities	4	Search for help	2
Wellbeing	4	Helping others	2
Active growth	4	Social activities	2
Self-confidence	4	Physical health	2
Medication	3	Addictions	2

22 Dimensions have only been collected by a single instrument

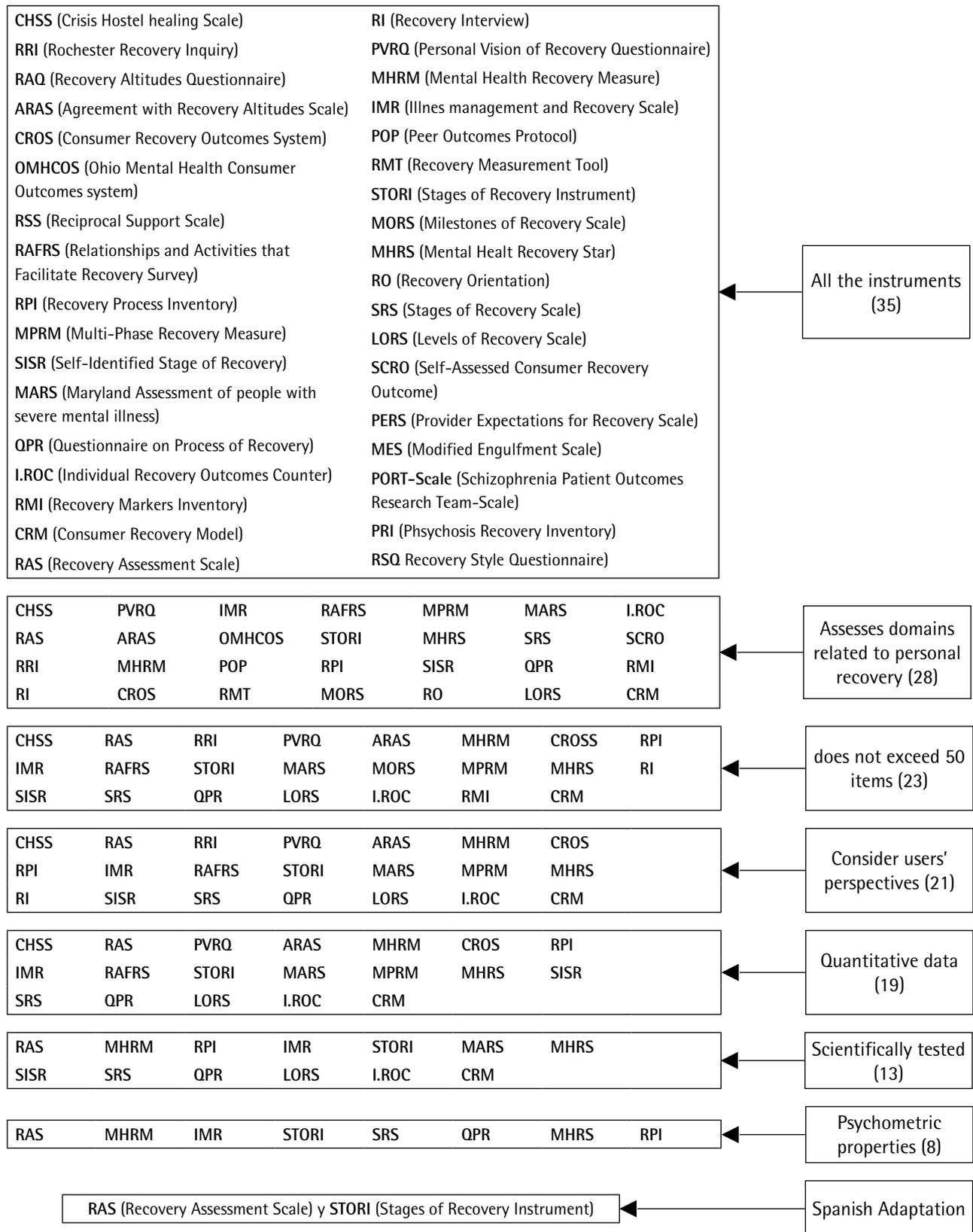


Figure 1

Flow chart for the selection of instruments for the evaluation of 'Personal Recovery'

measures mutual support from the point of view of the users that are part of a programme, the RAQ²⁶, which evaluates recovery attitudes in general terms, the PERS²⁷, which is composed by part of the optimism scale that in addition is given by professionals with regard to the users, the MES²⁸, which measures the extent to which a person's illness defines his or her self-concept, the PORT-Scale²⁹, which evaluates recovery as an attitude or a life orientation in people suffering from schizophrenia, the PRI³⁰, which evaluates recovery during the first episodes, and lastly the RSQ³¹, which is solely used in schizophrenia diagnoses.

Criterion n°2: Easy to complete (does not exceed 50 items)

As observed in Figure 1, five instruments have been discarded because they possess more than 50 items: OMHCOS³² (67 items), POP³³ (241 items), RO¹¹ (56 items), SCRO³⁴ (65 items) y RMT²² (91 items).

Criterion n°3: Takes users' perspectives into account

In this step, all instruments that did not collect data directly from the network users themselves were eliminated. Examples of such instruments are the MORS³⁵ and the RMI³⁶, in which professionals are the ones that complete the scale based on their own perspective of the user's recovery process.

Criterion n°4: Quantitative data

Taking this criterion into account, instruments RRI³⁷ and RI³⁸ have been eliminated because both included open questions which generate qualitative data. The preference for quantitative data is due to the ease with which it can be subsequently interpreted when the instrument is used in a clinical setting.

Criterion n°5: Scientifically tested

In order to avoid the exclusion of instruments for this criterion, instruments' development or validation must have been published in a peer-reviewed journal, not just in reviews^{7,10,11,21,23,24} and in a compendium²². Therefore, the following instruments have been discarded: the CHSS³⁹, the ARAS⁴⁰ and the RAFRS^{41,22}, because they have only been presented in unpublished manuals or reports. The PVQR⁴² has also been discarded because it was used in a thesis and it has not been published. The CROS⁴³ scale has also been excluded

because it is described in a manuscript. Finally, the MPRM⁴⁴ was created for a specific research¹¹.

Criterion n°6: Psychometric properties: reliability (internal consistency), validity (convergent and construct validity), and assesses change

By using this criterion, instruments which do not present data on these psychometric properties are excluded. Accordingly, in the case of the SISR⁴⁵ there are no studies that evaluate either the factorial structure or the assessment of change. In the case of the LORS⁴⁶, factorial structure is not calculated. An AFC and a Rash analysis are carried out for the CRM⁴⁷, but it does not present data relating to convergent validity. In the study carried out about the I.ROC⁴⁸ the assessment of change is not indicated. Lastly, there is no data on convergent validity for the MARS scale⁴⁹. Therefore, we obtain data on the psychometric evidence established for the following instruments: RAS⁵⁰, STORI⁵¹, RPI⁵², MHRM⁵³, SRS⁵⁴, IMR⁵⁵, MHRS⁵⁶ and QPR⁵⁷.

Criterion n°7: Spanish adaptation

This final criterion refers to the translation of instruments into Spanish. Only the Spanish version of STORI⁵⁸ and the translated version into Argentinian Spanish of RAS⁵⁹ have been found.

Recovery orientation of mental health services

With regards to the 18 instruments which evaluate mental health services' orientation, dimensions of 15 of them have been found, all of which are represented in Table 2. The most recurrent dimensions are: relationships with other people, possibilities and expectations regarding the recovery process, the organisational climate, the treatment used and the cooperation and involvement of services.

Figure 2 illustrates the process for the selection of instruments that respond to the criteria that have been proposed for the evaluation of the orientation given by mental health services.

Criterion n°1: Evaluates domains related to services' orientation

Out of the 18 instruments initially identified in topic-related reviews and literature, only 15 are considered to evaluate domains directly related to services' orientation towards the recovery model. The RKI⁶⁰, which evaluates professionals' knowledge and attitudes, the STARS⁶¹, which

Table 2 Dimensions which evaluate mental health services' orientation (n=15)			
Dimension	Number of instruments	Dimension	Number of instruments
Peer/social support	12	Access	3
Recovery focus/possibilities	11	Choice	3
Organisational climate	9	Inclusion	3
Treatment	7	Orientation towards growth	3
Collaboration/Involvement	7	Self-care/wellness	3
Based on strengths	5	Meaningful activities	3
Self-monitoring/Self-determination	5	Community-centered	2
Goal striving	5	I services	2
Basic needs	5	Responsibilities	2

21 Dimensions have only been collected by a single instrument

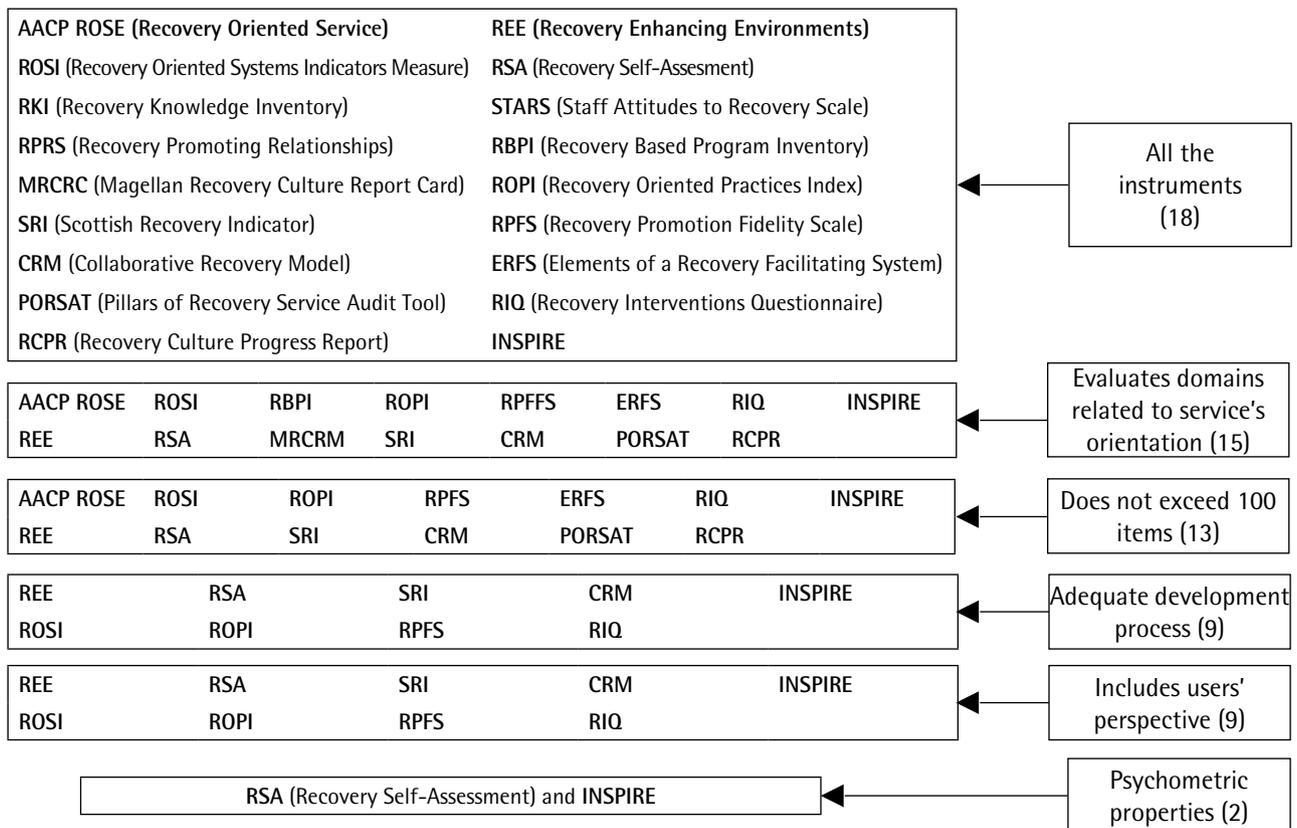


Figure 2 Flow chart for the selection of instruments for the evaluation of 'Recovery orientation of mental health services'

evaluates workers' attitudes, and the RPRS⁶², which evaluates professionals' competences, have been discarded.

Criterion nº2: Easy to complete (does not exceed 100 items)

In order to select an easy-to-complete instrument, the following two instruments with over 100 items were discarded: the MRCRM¹¹, with 102 items, and the RBPI^{63,11}, with 148 items.

Criterion nº3: Adequate development process

This criterion determines if instruments have followed an adequate development process, as well as if they have been scientifically tested and subsequently published. Accordingly, the following instruments have been discarded: the AACP ROSE²², which has only been presented in one communication and has been added to the Campbell-Orde compendium, the ERF⁶⁴, a reduced version of the REE that has only been used in a pilot project in 2008-2009, the POR-SAT⁶⁵, which is used in an Irish report, and lastly, the RCPR⁶⁶ a reduced version of MRCMR, which was also solely used to elaborate a specific report.

Criterion nº4: Includes users' perspective

All remaining instruments meet this criterion. In other words, they are all instruments that collect data on services whilst at the same time taking users' perspective into consideration.

Criterion nº5: Psychometric properties: internal consistency, convergent validity and factorial structure

Psychometric properties have not been demonstrated for some instruments, such as the ROP⁶⁷, the SRI⁶⁸ or the RPF⁶⁹. Internal consistency, measured via Cronbach's alpha, is the only known psychometric property for the REE⁷⁰, the ROSI⁷¹, the CRM⁷² and the RIQ⁷³. However, the following psychometric properties have indeed been carried out for the RSA⁷⁴ and the INSPIRE⁷⁵: internal consistency, convergent validity and factorial structure.

Criterion nº6: Spanish adaptation

The fact that neither the Recovery Self-Assessment (RSA) nor the INSPIRE have a Spanish adaptation means that

there is no instrument which meets all the mentioned criteria to evaluate the orientation of services in our area.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study is to update dimensions and instruments which are used to evaluate the recovery model with regards to personal recovery and mental health services' orientation in Spain. One of the main conclusions drawn from this study is that there is a lack of consensus on the recovery concept in both of these areas. This same idea was supported by several reviews carried out at least five years ago^{10,11,23,24}. Therefore, despite the recovery model's increasing popularity and relevance, it is still necessary to seek for approaches for its conceptualisation.

Current science on this topic has made progress with regards to the subjective processes which evaluate the CHIME¹² recovery model's conceptual framework. However, said progress is not clearly reflected in measurement instruments. Even though some of the most widely used domains to evaluate the personal recovery process are symptoms, hope, relationships, quality of life and empowerment -domains that are related to the mentioned conceptual framework (CHIME), except for symptoms-, in this review it can be observed that there are other instruments with different domains which are evaluating the same concept. In this respect, the confusion concerning the recovery model's conceptual framework is also making it difficult for clinicians to choose the instruments to be used, since there is no consensus regarding instruments.

Few instruments present an evaluation of the psychometric properties which guarantee the instrument's adequacy for its practical use. Out of the 35 instruments developed to evaluate the process of personal recovery, only eight of them (RAS, MHRM, IMR, STORI, SRS, QPR, MHRS and RPI) meet the reliability, convergent and construct validity criteria and assess change. Among the 18 instruments which evaluate mental health services' orientation towards recovery, only the RSA and INSPIRE offer evidence data on internal consistency, convergent validity and factorial structure.

In Spain, the personal recovery model is an emerging concept. It is present in the country's National Health Service⁷⁴ and in some of its autonomous regions' mental health policies, such as: Basque Country⁷⁷, Navarre⁷⁶ and Catalonia⁷⁷. However, the scarcity of instruments adapted into Spanish suggests that the evaluation of this model is not being carried out with the instruments proposed in topic-related literature.

In this review it can be observed that, out of the eight instruments which meet the established selection criteria to

evaluate the personal recovery process, only two of them are translated into Spanish, and only one is adapted into Spanish culture (STORI). The STORI (Stages of Recovery Instrument^{51,58}) is a 50-item instrument with a Likert scale, which evaluates the different phases of personal recovery: moratorium, awareness, preparation, rebuilding and growth. The personal process would be at the phase in which the person has obtained the highest score.

Furthermore, in relation to the adapted instruments for the evaluation of the recovery model in mental health services, no instruments with a Spanish adaptation that have met the criteria have been found.

This shortage of instruments adapted to the Spanish context reveals the necessity to validate and adapt instruments that contribute to the evaluation of this personal recovery model into Spanish. Moreover, it shows the impact that services have on the recovery process undergone by people suffering from mental illness. To establish mental health services and programmes and to train professionals that would be able to perform interventions based on this model, the recovery concept has to be understood and specified²⁴.

This review has certain limitations. On the one hand, the exclusive criteria system that has been selected to choose the instruments could lead to the elimination of instruments able to provide adequate information on personal recovery, but do not meet some of the aforementioned criteria (for example, they do not have more than 50 items, as established in the criterion 2). Likewise, there could be more instruments apart from STORI which are translated into Spanish, but may not meet other aforementioned criteria. On the other hand, access to the original version of some of the instruments introduced in this review was not possible and, since it is 'grey' literature, its description has been carried out through previous reviews.

Therefore, as a final conclusion, it is important to highlight the need to specify, unify and clarify the recovery model concept. This is the only way to reach consensus on the domains which make up the recovery model concept and in turn, this will make it possible to select the most appropriate instruments to evaluate said concept. In the same way, if the elements that contribute to the recovery process are understood and specified, it will be possible to choose the instruments that serve to evaluate mental health services and therefore, it will be possible to improve clinical care.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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