



“A study to assess the knowledge and attitude towards Mental Illness among Undergraduate Students in selected colleges at Meerut.”

Prof. Hepsi Natha*...Mr. Laxmikant Sharma...Mr. Suraj Kumar***...Mr. Amit Kumar****...Ms. Priya Sharma*****...**

* Vice Principal, Dept. of MSN, College of Nursing, Govt. Medical College, Azamgarh

**Asst. Lecturer, Dept. of MSN, PDMSNC, Meerut

***Asst. Lecturer, Dept. of MSN, PDMSNC, Meerut

****Asst. Lecturer, Dept. of MSN, PDMSNC, Meerut

*****Asst. Lecturer, Dept. of MSN, PDMSNC, Meerut

ABSTRACT: Many people don't understand mental health problems and may have a native view of people who have them. This can cause people with mental health problem to be treated badly or labeled in a way that hurts their standing in the community. This is sometime called 'stigma' and can affect those with mental and emotional problems and their careers and families. Stigmatization of mental illness probably exists everywhere, even though the form and nature of it may differ across cultures. Our observations suggest that poor knowledge of the causes of mental illness, especially is an attribution to supernatural causation, as well as very native views of persons with mental illness. Attitude to mental illness is consequently characterized by intolerance of even basic social contact with people known to have such illness. **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:** A study to assess the knowledge and attitude towards mental illness among undergraduate students in selected colleges at Meerut. **OBJECTIVES:** 1. To assess the knowledge regarding mental illness among the undergraduate students. 2. To identify the attitude towards mental illness among undergraduate students. 3. To find out the association between knowledge and attitude score of undergraduate students regarding mental illness with their selected socio-demographic variables. **MATERIAL AND METHOD:** A descriptive study was conducted among the undergraduate students in a selected college at Meerut. A sample of 60 undergraduate students were selected by using convenient sampling technique and a self-structured questionnaire and a standardized attitude scale was used to collect the data regarding demographic profile and knowledge regarding mental illness. Data was collected by using self-responding method. Data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics (Frequencies, percentage, mean, standard deviation and range) were used for analyzing the data. inferential statistics chi square test was used to find out the association between the knowledge and attitude towards mental illness among the demographic variables. P value less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$) was accepted as statistically significant. **RESULTS:** The researcher found that 20% students have adequate knowledge, 55% students have moderate knowledge, and 25%

students have inadequate knowledge regarding mental illness. 28.33% students have favorable attitude, 58.33% students have less favorable attitude, and 13.33% students have unfavorable attitude towards mental illness.

CONCLUSION: The researcher found that the majority of the adolescents have moderate (55%) knowledge regarding mental illness and less favorable (58.33%) attitude towards mental illness.

Introduction: A mental illness is a condition that affects person's thinking, feeling or mood. Such condition may affect someone's ability to relate to others and function each day. Each person will have different experience even people with the same diagnosis. Recovery including meaningful roles in social life, school and work is possible, especially when you start treatment early and play a strong role in your own recovery process.

A mental health condition isn't the result of one event. Research suggests multiple, linking causes genetics, environment and lifestyle influence whether someone develops a mental health condition. A stressful job or home life makes some people more susceptible, as do traumatic life events like being the victim of a crime. Biochemical processes and circuits and basic brain structure may play a role too.

It is important to understand about people's attitude towards mentally ill and possible factors which have led to the formation of these attitudes. It is very likely that a person's background and experience may influence his/her attitude towards mentally ill.

Attitudes to mental illness are deeply rooted in society. Adverse attitudes affect the delivery of mental health care services. The concept of mental illness is often associated with fear of the potential threat of patients with such illness.

As we improve our medical technologies, we should also improve our attitudes. A little change in attitude in all of us is a small step. Surely a nation that tries to exercise greater graciousness can exercise a little more compassion and empathy.

Need of the study: Mental illness among undergraduate students has been topic of interest for many years. The UG Students are having misconception regarding mental illness, causes of mental illness, behavioral changes and treatment of mental illness which they learned from their parents' siblings and their friends. They are doing many wrong practices with mentally ill people because they think that mental illness can be affect them by touching or while taking care of them.

They think that people with mental illness are violent and dangerous for them or for the society. So they do not want to accept them. They will isolate the people those who will be mentally ill. They will deny them and think that mental illness is caused by a curse of god or they are suffering from mental illness because of their previous life's bad deeds or they are punished by god. So they will isolate them, beat them, burnt and chained them. They will not bring them to the doctor for the treatment of mental illness because they are not that much aware about mental illness.

UG students are in need to improve their knowledge and attitude regarding mental illness. So they will be able to take care of them and also be able to provide awareness to others regarding mental illness because in ancient time people thought that mental illness is caused by the attack of evil spirit. Undergraduate students are the future generation of our society so that they need to have sufficient knowledge regarding mental illness then only they will not do the malpractice towards mentally ill people.

Review of literature:

1. Literature related to knowledge towards mental illness
2. Literature related to attitude towards mental illness.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH APPROACH & DESIGN

Quantitative Non-Experimental Descriptive Research Design

TARGET POPULATION

Undergraduate Students

SAMPLE

60 undergraduate students studying in Om Prakash Verma Inter College at Meerut

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Non-probability Convenience Sampling Technique

STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

- >Demographic Profile Sheet
- >Structured Questionnaire on Knowledge regarding Mental Illness
- >ASMI Attitude scale to assess the attitude regarding Mental Illness



Analysis and interpretation

- >Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, means, standard deviation and range)
- >Inferential statistics (chi square test)

Figure-1 Schematic Representation of Research Design

Sampling Criteria

Inclusion Criteria:

The study includes the undergraduate students who are:

1. Willing to participate
2. Available during the period of data collection
3. Knows hindi or english

Exclusion Criteria:

The study excludes the undergraduate students who are :

1. Outside the school.
2. Not available and are not present during the study.

Sample Size:

60 Undergraduate Students in selected school at Meerut.

Setting:

The setting of the study selected was Om Prakash Verma Inter College at Meerut.

Data collection tool:

1. Demographic profile sheet.
2. Structured questionnaire on knowledge regarding mental illness.
3. ASMI attitude scale to assess the attitude regarding mental illness.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. Analysis of sample characteristics regarding variables.

Majority of the undergraduate students (56.6%) belongs to the age group 12-14 years, around (38.3%) students were from the age group 15-17 years and around (5%) students were from the age group 18-20 years. Majority (81.7%) of the UG students were from the joint family and 18.3% of students were from the nuclear family. The maximum number of students (95%) were Hindus whereas on the other hand, 3.3% were Muslims followed by 1.6% were Sikhs. About 83.3% of students receive knowledge on mental illness from teachers/parents, 3.3% of students receive knowledge from mass media printing media and 13.35 of students from the health personal. The majority (56.6%) of students were in 9th class followed by 28.3% students in 10th class and 15% students were in 12th class.

2. Knowledge score of Undergraduate students regarding mental illness.

The majority of participants (55%) were having moderate knowledge while (25%) of the participants were having inadequate knowledge and a very less percentage (20%) were having adequate knowledge regarding mental illness.

3. Attitude score of Undergraduate students towards mental illness.

The majority of participants (58.33%) were having less favorable attitude while (28.33%) of the participants were having unfavorable attitude and a very less percentage of the participants (13.33%) were having favorable attitude regarding mental illness.

4. Association between knowledge score and selected demographic variables.

There is no significant association between knowledge score with their selected socio-demographic variables like—age, gender, type of family, religion and previous knowledge regarding mental illness.

5. Association between attitude score and selected demographic variables

There is no significant association between attitude score with their selected socio-demographic variables like —age, gender, type of family, religion and previous knowledge regarding mental illness.

Nursing Implications:

The findings of the study can be used in the following areas.

Nursing Education:

Discrimination occurs when a person is treated differently from another person in similar circumstances. Therefore nurses have to educate the public psychological underpinnings of psychiatric disorders and about the value of human beings. A better understanding of these disorders amongst the public would presumably lessen the stigmatization and encourage the use of currently available and effective interventions.

Nursing Practice

In nursing practice, the main factor is to identify their attitude towards mental illness. A nurse can counsel to the undergraduate students to identify their problem and help them to cope up with the situation. A nurse can create a positive attitude towards the mental illness.

Nursing Administration:

The findings of the study can help the administrators in preparing nurses for counselling and teaching the public and the under graduate students about mental illness and its management. Policies can be made where the nurse plays an important role in raising awareness, reinforce positive attitudes towards mental illness. The nurse should involve in planning and organizing health awareness program at the college level to improve their knowledge and attitude towards mental illness.

Nursing Research:

Attitude research in psychiatry made considerable progress over the past 15 years in developed countries. However, it is our culture and in our institutions that the stigmatism of mental illness continues to persist. Continuing research increase the general knowledge of the community with regard to mental illness with the hope that their attitudes to the mentally ill can be improved. The study will provide as the reference and motivation for other researchers. This study will encourage the researcher to implement action to solve the identified problems or issues encountered during study.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

On the basis on findings of the study the following recommendations findings:

- A similar study can be done in a large sample for the purpose of generalization.
- A comparative study can be done with two groups.
- A study can be done in urban and rural setting and results can be compared.
- A similar study can be carried out and anti – stigma educational programs and campaigns may be conducted.
- A similar study can be conducted by the use of different attitude scales.

CONCLUSION:

In India 15million people are battling serious mental health problems. Nearly 50% of victims suffering serious mental health disorders go untreated. The fortunate part is that most mental illnesses can be successfully treated. The Government of India also has taken special interest in mental health care in the form of National Mental Health

Programme. Stigma is one of the major difficulties faced by people with mental illness, due to which they hesitate seeking help. The mental health services are not utilized by the beneficiaries properly. Many of them suffer alone silently. By accident, we are all responsible for this situation. The researcher strongly believes that appropriate information of the mentally ill to the undergraduate students and positive attitude would bring great changes in the life of the mentally ill.

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