

An Explorative Study to Assess the Knowledge and Attitude of People Towards Mental Illness Residing in Selected Rural Area of Maharashtra

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Abstract: This paper presents an overview on an explorative study to assess the knowledge and attitude of people towards mental illness residing in selected rural area of Maharashtra.

Keywords: Attitude, Knowledge, Mental illness, Nursing.

1. Introduction

Mental pain is less dramatic than physical pain but it is more common and also harder to bear. The frequent attempt to conceal mental pain increase the burden. It is easier to say "my tooth is aching" than to say "my heart is broken." The WHO defines health as "health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease." From the above widely accepted definition of health; it is quite evident that it encompasses physical as well as mental health. The human mind is a set of cognitive faculties including consciousness, perception, thinking, judgement and memory. It holds the power of imagination, recognition and appreciation at the same time is responsible for processing feelings emotions resulting in attitudes and action.

2. Background of the Study

According to WHO, mental health is more than the absence of mental disorder. Mental health is an integral part of health; indeed, there is no help without mental health. Mental health is determined by a range of socio-economic, biological and environmental factors. National human rights commission organised a seminar on human rights and mental health care in New Delhi. They said that mental health is not being accorded the same priority as the other health problem in the country. Resources are hopelessly inadequate and situations remain grim with about only 43 mental hospitals and institutes which still remain by large ill-equipped in terms of manpower in infrastructure and financial resources despite so many recommendations and guidelines.

3. Objectives

- 1) To assess the knowledge and attitude of people towards mental illness residing in selected rural area.
- 2) To establish the association between demographic variable

and knowledge of people towards mental illness.

- 3) To establish the association between demographic variable and attitude of people towards mental illness.
- 4) To find the correlation between knowledge variable and attitude of people towards mental illness.

4. Need for the Study

A number of social and demographic characteristics are strongly associated with the prevalence of mental disorder. In 2007 survey found that people in the younger age group were more likely to experience mental disorders. Lack of knowledge about mental illness poses a challenge to the mental health care delivery system. Research has highlighted the role of community based systems in low income countries. Stigma and discrimination and negative consequences of ignorance and misinformation. There are few studies which have measured mental health literacy in Indian context.

5. Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant association between knowledge and demographic variables.

H₁: There is a significant association between knowledge and demographic variables.

H₀₂: There is no significant correlation between knowledge and attitude.

H₂: There is significant correlation between knowledge and attitude.

H₀₃: There is no significant correlation between attitude and demographic variables.

H₃: There is significant correlation between attitude and demographic variables.

6. Materials and Methods

A descriptive study was conducted with non-probability convenient sampling among 50 people residing in a selected rural area of Maharashtra. A structured questionnaire was used to find out the knowledge and standardized checklist was used to test the attitude of people regarding mental illness. A semi-structured interview technique was performed to collect data.

The data was analysed in terms of the objective and hypothesis using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Inclusive criteria:

- 1) People residing in selected rural area of Maharashtra.
- 2) People in the age group of 18 to 70 years.
- 3) People willing to participate in the study.
- 4) People who can read and understand Marathi or English.

Exclusive criteria: People who are already suffering mental illness.

7. Results

Most of the selected sample i.e., 20 (40%) belongs to the age of 18 to 33 years. Among majority were females that is 26(52 %) most of the samples belong to Hindu religion .42(84 %). 20(40%) of the samples were graduates. Most of the sample that is 32(64 %) live in joint family. About 26(52%) has monthly income less than 16000. About 21(42 %) samples knew about mental illness from films and movies. Majority of sample 40(80%) considered mental illness as a curable disease. Whereas 12(24%) percentage samples believe marriage can treat mental illness.30 (60%) of sample has excellent attitude towards mental illness whereas 5 or 10% has poor attitude towards mental illness.

8. Interpretation

Single factor ANOVA was used to find the association

between demographic variables and knowledge and attitude of people towards mental illness. The correlation of coefficients test was used to find out the correlation between knowledge and attitude which portrayed moderately positive correlation between knowledge and attitude. There was no significant association between knowledge and attitude and demographic variables. There is no association between demographic variables and knowledge and attitude people towards mental illness.

9. Conclusion

People had good knowledge, positive attitude regarding mental illness and health seeking attitude toward mental illness. During the survey period the people were cooperative. The study concludes that with good knowledge and awareness there is presence of positive attitude among the people.

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