

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY TO ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE OF STAFF NURSES, TOWARDS MENTAL ILLNESS AT AL- AMEEN MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL, VIJAYAPUR

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ABSTRACT

A mental illness is a disease that causes mild to severe disturbances in thought and/or behavior, resulting in an inability to cope with life's ordinary demands and routines. Attitude of hospital staff is important for admission, early diagnosis and rehabilitation process of mentally ill patients. Incomplete knowledge, misinformation and stigmatization have a direct impact on mentally ill patients. A survey approach was used in this study to assess knowledge and attitude among nursing staff towards mental illness. The study sample comprised nursing staff from AMCH, Vijayapura. out of 60 sample, majority (58.33%) had good knowledge regarding mental illness, (38.33%) of them had poor knowledge regarding mental illness and only (3.33%) of them had excellent knowledge regarding mental illness. Majority (96.6%) of the sample had favorable (positive) attitude towards mental illness.

Key Words: Attitude, nurse, mental illness etc.

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INTRODUCTION

A mental illness is a disease that causes mild to severe disturbances in thought and/or behavior, resulting in an inability to cope with life's ordinary demands and routines.

There are more than 200 classified forms of mental illness. Some of the more common disorders are depression, bipolar disorder, dementia, schizophrenia, and anxiety disorders. Symptoms may include changes in mood, personality, personal habits and/or social withdrawal.

What do you think of when you hear that someone is experiencing a mental illness? Some people feel concern, fear, or confusion. Some even avoid those who experience mental illnesses. But mental illnesses are just like any other illness everyone deserves care, help and support.

According to a study conducted by the National commission on Macroeconomics and Health in 2005, nearly 5% of India's population suffers from common mental disorders such as depression and anxiety. But mental health experts say apart from several multicenter surveys and studies India is yet to have a comprehensive survey of all the states.

According to 2011 census, the finding released recently, however, estimate that only 7.2 lakh population across India suffer from mental illnesses a figure suspected to be grossly under estimated in 2011 health minister 'Ghulam Nabi Azad' himself on the floor of the Lok Sabha estimated 6-7% of India's populations to be suffering from mental illness.

Attitude of hospital staff is important for admission, early diagnosis and rehabilitation process of mentally ill patients. Incomplete knowledge, misinformation and stigmatization have a direct impact on mentally ill patients.

NEED FOR STUDY

Today, the nursing profession is faced with multiple challenges. Nursing practice is moving toward multiple care settings that are based in institutions, community and home care.

In health settings, nurses are among the health professionals who have to deal very closely with the mentally ill patients. According to Emrich, Thompson and Moore (2003), health care professions are not immune to social prejudices and surprisingly share the general public's attitude attributed to people with mental illness. Studies show that nurses are also prone to the same misconceptions as the public, at times expecting mentally ill patients to be hostile, violent and likely to injure them. Nurses working at general hospital settings may be inadequate to deal with mentally ill and at times may elicit negative attitudes like fear and violence. Nurses, comprising approximately 15.3 percent of the healthcare team, can have a significant impact on decreasing or contributing to the multiple healthcare disparities experienced by mental health patients. Nurses need to be self-aware of their own attitude in order to avoid inadvertently discriminating against their patients through inappropriate distancing, inadequate teaching, or other nursing actions based in fear.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

"A descriptive study to assess the knowledge and attitude of staff nurses, towards mental illness at Al-Ameen Medical College Hospital Vijayapur".

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY:

Objectives of the study were to

1. Assess the staff nurses existing level of knowledge about mental illness.
2. Assess attitude of staff nurses towards mental illness.
3. Find out association between mental illness knowledge and selected demographic variables.
4. Find out association between mental illness attitude and their selected demographic variables.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research approach: A survey approach was used in this study to assess knowledge and attitude among nursing staff towards mental illness.

Research design: Non experimental design is used for the study.

Setting of the study: The study was conducted at Al-Ameen Medical College Hospital, Vijayapur, and Karnataka.

Population: In this study population consist of staff nurses working in AMCH Vijayapur, Karnataka.

SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES:

Sample: The study sample comprised nursing staff from AMCH, Vijayapura.

Sample size: 60 staff nurses

Sampling technique: subjects were selected by purposive sampling technique.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOOL

Data collection tools are the procedures or instruments used by the researcher to observe or measure the key variables in research problem¹⁰.

The following steps were adapted in the development of tool;

- Review of literature provided adequate content area for the tool preparation.
- Consultation and discussion with the nursing experts and advisors.
- Personal experience, discussion with group members and friends

RESULTS:

Table 1: Assessing the knowledge level of sample.

n=60

| Knowledge level | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1. Poor | 23 | 38.33 |
| 2. Good | 35 | 58.33 |
| 3. Excellent | 02 | 3.33 |

Data in table 1 shows that out of 60 sample, majority (58.33%) had good knowledge regarding mental illness, (38.33%) of them had poor knowledge regarding mental illness and only (3.33%) of them had excellent knowledge regarding mental illness.

Table 2: Assessing the attitude level of sample

n=60

| Attitude scale | score | Attitude frequency | Percentage (%) |
|------------------|---------|--------------------|----------------|
| Highly favorable | 111-150 | 02 | 3.33% |
| Favorable | 70-110 | 58 | 96.66% |
| Unfavorable | 30-70 | 00 | 00 |

Data in table 2 shows that majority (96.6%) of the sample had favorable (positive) attitude towards mental illness.

Association between knowledge level and selected demographic variables:

There was no significant association between knowledge level and selected demographic variables such as gender, educational qualification, experience, monthly income, marital status and religion.

Association between attitude and selected demographic variables:

There was no significant association between attitude and selected demographic variables such as gender, educational qualification, experience, monthly income, marital status and religion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The study can be replicated on a larger number of samples for generalizing the findings.
2. A similar study can be conducted in different hospitals and institutions on a large sample to identify the knowledge level and attitude towards mental illness.
3. A comparative study can be conducted to find out the knowledge and attitude towards mental illness among staff nurses.
4. Similar study can be conducted to compare attitude of B.Sc. and GNM nurses.
5. Similar study can be conducted to know the attitude of government and private hospital nurses.

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