



A STUDY TO ASSESS THE MYTHS REGARDING MENTAL ILLNESS AMONG PRIMARY CAREGIVERS OF MENTALLY ILL PATIENTS AT SELECTED HOSPITAL IN BHOPAL (M.P).

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at assessing the myths regarding mental illness among the primary caregivers of mentally ill patients. Mental illness is always subject to negative attitude and prejudice all over the world. The non experimental descriptive design was used for the study. A total of 30 primary caregivers were selected through convenient sampling technique. The data was collected through a pre validated questionnaire, used in previous other studies developed to assess the myths. The result suggested of the presence of myths among the caregivers and association with socio demographic variables.

KEYWORDS

Myths, Primary caregivers, Mentally ill patients

INTRODUCTION

Mental and behavioral disorders can affect 10% of the adult population worldwide at any point of time in their lifetime. The burden of mental disorders is the highest in young adults, who are considered to be the most productive section of the society. Neuropsychiatry conditions together as measured by disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) account for 10.96% of the global burden of disease. Projections estimate that by the year 2020, neuropsychiatric conditions will account for 15% of disabilities worldwide.¹

In India, the prevalence of mental disorders ranges from 10 to 370 per 1000 population in different parts of the country.^{2,3}

Myth usually refers to a story of a vague origin, basically evolved from religious or supernatural beliefs, which seeks to explain or rationalize one or more aspects of the world or a society. Hence the study of myth is inseparable from religion. The prompt access and utilization to adequate mental health care services by people is still a far cry. This can be because of the fact that mental illness is still not well understood, often ignored, and considered a taboo and the people associated with it especially the mentally ill, their families and relatives, as well as professionals providing specialized care, are still the object of marked stigmatization.⁴

In most countries, families bear a significant proportion of these economic costs because of the absence of public funded comprehensive mental health service networks. Families also incur social costs, such as the emotional burden of looking after disabled family members, diminished quality of life for carers, social exclusion, stigmatization, and loss of future opportunities for self-improvement.⁵ Many times patients are ignored, isolated, or taken to sorcerers and faith healers, and treated with rituals rather than with appropriate medications. It is also recognized that labeling such people, and then drugging them, is destructive and morally wrong.⁶

AIM

The aim of the study was to assess the myths regarding mental illness among caregivers of mentally ill patients.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To assess the socio demographic data of the primary care givers of mentally ill patients.
- 2) To determine the myths regarding mental illness among the primary care givers of mentally ill patients.
- 3) To find out the association between myths about mental illness with the socio demographic variables.

HYPOTHESIS

H₀ - There will be no significant association between socio-demographic variables and the myths regarding mental illness.

H₁ - There will be significant association between socio demographic variables and the myths regarding mental illness.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A non experimental descriptive research design was used for the

study. The non probability convenience sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 30 primary caregivers at People's Hospital. The data was collected through a pre validated questionnaire designed to assess the myths.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected was analysed using the descriptive and inferential statistics namely mean and chi square.

RESULT

The result is divided into three categories. They are related to

1. Socio demographic characteristics of participants
2. Myths regarding mental illness
3. Association of myths with socio demographic variables.

1. Socio demographic characteristics of the participants

Data presented shows that 20% of the primary care givers were from 18-27 years, 23.3% of the primary care givers were 28-37 years old, 26.7% of the primary care givers were 38-47 years old and 30% of them were more than 47 years. 50% of the primary care givers were male and 50% of them were female. According to religion of the primary care givers 93.3% of them were Hindus and 6.67% of them were Muslims. According to qualifications of the primary care givers 10% of them were illiterate, 16.7% of them were 5 th passed, 10% of them were 10 th passed, 20% of them were 12 th passed, 16.7% of them were graduate, 16.7% of them were post graduate and 10% of them were above post graduate. Regarding occupation of the primary care givers 43.3% of them were in private job, 23.3% were self-employed, 33.3% of them were unemployed. Majority of primary care givers i.e., 70% were from urban area and 30% of them were from rural areas.

2. Table representing the percentage of caregivers who agree and disagree the statements regarding myths

S. No	Statement	Agree	Disagree
1	Mental Illness is God's punishment for past sins.	23.3%	76.7%
2	Keeping fast and visiting holy shrines can cure mental illness	26.7%	73.3%
3	Mental illness can affect anybody at any age in any situation in both genders	100%	0
4	Mental illness can be transferred from mentally ill to healthy individual through coming in contact with him/her.	6.7%	93.3%
5	Mental illness is something people should hide and be ashamed of	23.3%	76.7%
6	Individual with mental illness can never become normal	23.3%	76.7%
7	There is no treatment for mental illness in science	10%	90%
8	All mentally ill individuals are violent all the time and can cause harm to anyone at any time.	83.3%	16.7%
9	Individual who have character flaws are prone to get mental illness	16.7%	83.3%
10	People with mental illness have lower level of intelligence	70%	30%

11	The only place for mentally ill patients to stay is at mental hospital not in community or home	33.3%	66.7%
12	All mentally ill patients show unusual behaviour like using abusive language and muttering to self	53.3%	46.7%
13	Children don't get mental illness	33.3%	66.7%
14	It is safe to maintain distance from mentally ill patients as they can harm you	56.7%	43.3%
15	Loss of semen can be the cause of mental illness in men	16.7%	83.3%
16	Individual with mental illness have no capacity to understand small things so they should not get a job	73.3%	26.7%
17	People with mental illness have no right to marry and have family	56.7%	43.3%
18	Mental illness can be treated by normal physicians who treat any other diseases like diabetes	3.3%	96.7%
19	Having less or more sexual desire make a person more prone to mental illness	30%	70%
20	People who get higher education become mentally ill.	90%	10%

3.Regarding association of myths with socio demographic characteristics

It has been found that only education status and habitat of the participants has significant relationship with the myths regarding mental illness, all other variables like age, gender, religion and occupation of the caregivers has no significant relationship with the myths.

DISCUSSION

In the present study 56.7% of participants believed that people with mental illness have no right to marry or have family. Majority 83.3% reported that all mentally ill individuals are violent all the time and can cause harm to anyone at any time. This indicates that apart from the obvious suffering caused by mental disorders, there is a hidden burden of stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness.

CONCLUSION

From the study it is evident that myths regarding mental illness are still prevalent even among the caregivers. The presence of myths among caregivers very well explain the severity of myths and prejudice that would be present in the general population.

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