



**A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY TO ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE REGARDING MENTAL ILLNESS AMONG GENERAL PUBLIC AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SELECTED FACTORS IN SELECTED AREA OF GURUGRAM, HARYANA.**

**Nursing**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Background-** Mental illness is an age-old problem of mankind as recorded in the literature of the oldest civilizations of the world over. The stigma attached to mental illness is the greatest obstacle to the improvement of the lives of the people with mental illness and their families. It is estimated that 450 million people are experiencing mental illness at any one time, most of whom live in developing countries.

**Objectives-** 1.To assess the knowledge regarding mental illness among General Public in selected area of Gurugram 2.To assess the attitude regarding mental illness among General Public in selected area of Gurugram 3.To seek the relationship between knowledge and attitude of general public regarding mental illness.4.To find out the association between knowledge and attitude of General public regarding mental illness with the selected demographic variables.

**Material and methods-** A descriptive survey approach and correlative research design was selected for the study. The study was conducted at budhera village of Gurugram, Haryana. The data was collected from 100 samples using structured knowledge questionnaire and Attitude scale.

**Results-** The study findings revealed that the majority of the general public had good knowledge regarding mental illness.

**Conclusion-** There was significant positive correlation (0.50) between knowledge score and attitude score of the general public regarding mental illness.

**KEYWORDS**

Descriptive Survey approach, Mental Illness, Knowledge, Attitude, General Public

**INTRODUCTION**

Good mental health is related to mental and psychological well-being. WHO's work to improve the mental health of individuals and society at large includes the promotion of mental well-being, the prevention of mental disorders, the protection of human rights and the care of people affected by mental disorders<sup>1</sup>

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community"<sup>2</sup>

Mental Health is vital for the growth and productivity of every society and for a healthy and happy life. The definition of health includes mental health along with its physical, emotional, social and spiritual components. However, it is common to find people in every society suffering from mental health problems. Such people and their families face enormous challenges in their day to day living due to societal discrimination and deprived opportunities<sup>3</sup>

Mental illnesses are health conditions involving changes in emotion, thinking or behavior (or a combination of these). Mental illnesses are associated with distress and/or problem's functioning in social, work or family activities. People with mental health problems say that the social stigma attached to mental ill health and the discrimination they experience can make their difficulties worse and make it harder to recover<sup>4</sup> Mental illness unlike chronic physical illness is associated with myths & misconceptions. It leads to the formation of wide spread negative attitude towards mentally ill among public. Hence, stigma and discrimination are the main obstacles faced by mentally ill patients

Mental health problems are a cause of great concern in India as per the WHO statistics (2017) and the recent survey (2015 - 2016) conducted by the Bengaluru-based National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) in 12 states, covering 34,802 people. The NIMHANS study reveals 10 per cent of the population has common mental disorders and 1.9 per cent of the population suffers from severe mental disorders. Schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder (BPAD), depression, anxiety disorders, psychoses, phobia, suicide, mood disorders, neurotic or stress related disorders, post traumatic stress disorder, marital disharmony, sleep disorders, alcohol dependence and substance misuse, and dementia are becoming common problems in

the general population. The NIMHANS report indicates lifetime prevalence of mental disorder as 13.7 per cent with 10.6 per cent of them requiring immediate interventions<sup>5,6,7</sup>

Studies have shown that low rates of seeking psychiatric help are mainly due to poor knowledge of mental health disorders (MHD)<sup>8</sup> that includes information about mental disorders, symptoms, and psychiatric treatments<sup>9</sup>.

About 450 million people suffer from a mental or behavioural disorder. According to WHO's Global Burden of Disease 2001, 33% of the years lived with disability (YLD) are due to neuropsychiatric disorders, a further 2.1% to intentional injuries. Unipolar depressive disorders alone lead to 12.15% of years lived with disability, and rank as the third leading contributor to the global burden of diseases. Four of the six leading causes of years lived with disability are due to neuropsychiatric disorders (depression, alcohol-use disorders, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder<sup>10,11</sup>

To plan, develop, implement, monitor, evaluate and strengthen mental health services in India, there is a need to understand the clear burden of mental disorders as well as the existing resources and services across the country. Hence, the MoHFW identified National Mental Health Survey (NMHS) as a priority area during the 12th plan period. Apart from examining the burden of mental health problems and the current treatment gap, the NMHS also focused on delineating service utilization patterns, disability status, the impact of mental disorders on individuals and families and the prevailing stigma in society<sup>12</sup>

In the global scenario, the prevalence of psychiatric disorders is 58.2 per thousand and which means that there are about 5.7 crore people suffering from some sort of psychiatric disturbance. Out of this, 4 lakh people have organic psychoses, 26 lakh people have schizophrenia and 1.2 crore people have affective psychosis thus there are about 1.5 crore people suffering from severe mental disorders, besides 12,000 patients in government mental hospital. The National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences (NIMHANS) report shows that in India 70 million people suffer from mental ailments and yet, 50-90 percent of them are not able to access corrective services due to less awareness and negative attitude or stigma towards mental illness.<sup>13</sup>

A report by the World Health Organisation (WHO) revealed that 7.5 per cent of the Indian population suffers from some form of mental

disorder. Mental illnesses constitute one-sixth of all health-related disorders and India accounted for nearly 15% of the global mental, neurological and substance abuse disorder burden. The treatment gap, which is defined as the prevalence of mental illnesses and the proportion of patients that get treatment, is over 70 per cent. WHO also predicts that by 2020, roughly 20 per cent of India will suffer from mental illnesses. And to cater to this demographic, we have less than 4,000 mental health professionals<sup>14,15</sup>

In our country, the discovery of a mental illness is often followed by denial and hesitation to seek help. Despite its enormous social burden, mental health remains a taboo subject that is susceptible to age-old stigmas, prejudices and fears. Even though mental disorders can be cured or controlled, most people tend to sweep their issues under the carpet and suffer in silence. Not only do we need to actively foster awareness about mental health, we also need to create awareness about the absurdity of the stigmas attached to mental health, in order to eradicate them.

Knowledge can have a tremendous impact on how individuals, societies and the public health community deal with mental disorders. We now know that large mental institutions no longer represent the best option for patients and families. Such institutions lead to a loss of social skills, excessive restriction, human rights violations, dependency, and reduced opportunities for rehabilitation.

A comprehensive review of public knowledge and attitude toward mental illness is important to educate the public as well, in view of the fact that public also plays an important role in helping the patients to overcome their illness or cope with illness.

## METHODOLOGY

For the present study, quantitative approach and descriptive co-relative design was used. The study was conducted at selected area of Gurugram, Haryana. Administrative permission was taken to conduct the study. An informed consent was taken from each subject individually to participate in the study. Random sampling technique was used to select 60 samples. The data were collected using structured questionnaire which was divided into three sections: section I consisted of items related to demographic data including 5 items such as Age, Gender, Education, Occupation, and Monthly Income. Section-II consisted of 25 items to assess the level of knowledge regarding mental illness among general public. Section-III consisted of 15 statements to assess the attitude regarding mental illness among general public. Content validity of the tool was established by experts from Nursing, Psychiatric Nursing, Psychology, and Psychiatry. The collected data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

## RESULTS

The data presented in the table 1 indicates that the majority of general public i.e. 43% was in the age group of 36 to 40 years. According to gender, 52% were males and 48% were females. According to educational status, 47% were graduate. According to Occupation, 38% were employed. According to monthly income, 49% had monthly income of Rs.20000 or above.

**Table 1: Frequency and Percentage distribution of general public by their sample characteristics N = 100**

S. no.	Characteristics	Percentage
1.	<b>Age</b>	
	30-35	23%
	36-40	43%
	41-45	16%
	46-50	18%
2.	<b>Gender</b>	
	Male	52%
	Female	48%
3.	<b>Education</b>	
	Illiterate	13%
	undergraduate	35%
	graduate	47%
	Postgraduate	5%
4.	<b>Occupation</b>	
	Unemployed	17%
	Labourer	10%
	Self-employed	35%
	Employed	38%

5.	Monthly Income	
	below 10000	15%
	10001-15000	7%
	15001-20000	29%
	Above 20000	49%

The data presented in table 2 indicated that most of the general public i.e. 70 percent had good level of knowledge score and 30 percent had fair level of knowledge regarding mental illness. Distribution of knowledge score of 100 general public showed range of score from 14-24 with mean 21.1, median 23 and standard deviation was 3.17.

**Table-2 Distribution of knowledge score among general public regarding mental illness (N=100)**

S.no.	Level of Knowledge	knowledge scores	frequency	Percentage
1.	Good	18-25	70	70%
2	Fair	9-17	30	30%
3.	Poor	1-8	0	0%

The data presented in table 3 shows range score from 54-66 with mean 59.65, median 59 and standard deviation 2.87. This indicated that general public had more favourable attitude towards mental illness i.e. maximum 72% had favourable attitude towards mental illness and only 28% had unfavourable towards mental illness.

**Table-3 Distribution of attitude score of general public regarding mental illness (N=100)**

Category	Mean range	Frequency	Percentage	Mean of attitude score
Favourable attitude	Above mean	72	72%	59.63
	Below mean	28	28%	
Unfavourable attitude				

Chi square values obtained to seek the association between level of knowledge of the general public and selected demographic factors showed that there is significant relationship between knowledge and selected factors like educational qualification. There is no significant relationship between knowledge and selected factors like age, gender, occupation and monthly income.

Chi square values obtained to seek the association between attitude of the general public and selected demographic factors showed that there is significant relationship between attitude and selected factors like educational qualification. There is no significant relationship between attitude and selected factors like age, gender, occupation and monthly income.

## DISCUSSION

The present study showed that general public with good educational qualification experienced good level of knowledge as well as fair level of knowledge and favourable attitude regarding mental illness and others experienced poor level of knowledge and no favourable attitude regarding drug compliance. The findings of the present study suggested that there was growing awareness about mental illness in general population however; it also highlights the ignorance, lack of awareness and stigma associated with mental illness in our country.

A similar study conducted by sukhwinder kaur et. al. 2016, the findings revealed that the majority of adults believed that psychiatric problems are increased in people who have a lot of tensions and who are sad and unhappy most of the time. Regarding, health seeking behaviour of people, it was revealed that 39% of the people said that they would prefer going to a psychiatrist and 28% would prefer to get patient admitted in mental hospital. It concluded that most of the people carried lot of myths and misconceptions regarding mental illness, therefore awareness camps need to be organized for public to impart adequate knowledge about mental illness [16]

The present study on the knowledge and attitude of general public showed that the knowledge of the general public had range score from 14-24 with mean 21.1, median 23 and standard deviation was 3.17 and attitude of the general public had range score from 54-56 with mean 59.65, median 59 and standard deviation 2.87. These revealed that there is a positive relationship between the knowledge and attitude score of the general public regarding mental illness. Further, there is a significant relationship between knowledge and attitude with demographic factor like educational qualification.

A similar study i.e. sumanpreet kaur (2016) conducted a co-relational descriptive study to assess the knowledge and attitude of school students towards mental illness. It shows that majority 37% of students have average knowledge followed by 35% who were having poor knowledge, 28% were having good knowledge and majority of students have negative attitude towards mental illness followed by 44% who were having positive attitude. It was concluded that there was no significant association between genders whereas stream of education and area of residence is associated with knowledge and attitude towards mental illnesses of school students.[17]

## CONCLUSION

As we all know, mental health plays an imperative role in our life. Awareness of mental illness appeared to be very limited. Therefore, for improving awareness of mental disorders need to conduct various intervention programs and strong emphasis on public education to increase mental health awareness among general public to increase knowledge and positive attitude of people towards mental illness. The study concluded that there is significant positive correlation between the knowledge score and attitude score of the general public regarding mental illness.

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