

Assessment of knowledge & attitude about the mental health literacy among the adolescents in urban area of Belagavi

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Adolescents (15-24) constitutes 17.9% of population which is about 1.2 billion. This is the leading age group where mental health problems are initiated. Even after applying the earlier strategies to improve mental health, the results have not shown any difference in more than sixty years low socio-economic developed countries, therefore now it is necessary to take a new approach. **Objectives:** To determine the Knowledge, Attitude and practice related to mental illness among the different courses of Pre-University Adolescents. **Materials & Methodology:** Cross sectional study was carried out by selecting three PU colleges randomly. 16-18 years of age group students were selected for the study. Information regarding the attitude, statements defining the personal state of mind, knowledge regarding MHL and practice towards it were collected through questionnaire. **Results:** Arts students, 17 years of age group, females and participants residing in the joint family had shown the above average knowledge. **Conclusion:** Type of family and age group significantly affects the practice of participant. Father's literacy, number of close friends and physical fights significantly effects on attitude, statement and practice. It concludes that, friends & physical activity have an impact on attitude and also the type of family shows maximum knowledge level.

Keywords: Mental Health Literacy, Adolescents, Behavioural Stigma, Adolescents Attitude.

Mental health literacy has been defined as “knowledge and beliefs about mental disorders which aid their recognition, management or prevention. It includes knowing how to seek mental health information; knowledge of risk factors and causes of self-treatments, and also the knowledge of professional help available; and attitudes that promote recognition and appropriate help-seeking.”¹

Mental illness affects nearly 450 million people worldwide and it can be life-threatening. These patients are more commonly found than those of diabetes, cancer or heart diseases. By

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the 2020, behaviour health disorders will be leading disorder than to all other disabilities worldwide.²

Mental Health is major concern in both worldwide and India. In India, according to WHO the burden of mental health illness is 2,443 DALYs per 100,000 of population.⁴

By the year 2020, 20% of India's population mostly will suffer from some or the other form of mental concern. India also has the highest rate of suicide in the world between the ages of 15-29. In every 3 seconds someone attempts for suicide.⁶

India's adolescent population is about one fifth of the total population. Adolescent phase is the connecting phase between the childhood and the adults and are full of enthusiasm, and new innovative ideas. Their minimum death rates and better health conditions can therefore misguide to focus on adolescent health and thus provides lesser priorities.⁷

Mental health issues among students and adolescents in particular need to be addressed carefully. Since there are minimum services available to find out and help young students struggling with mental health issues.

Even after applying the earlier strategies to improve mental health, the results have not shown any difference in more than sixty years low socio-economic developed countries, therefore now it is necessary to take a new approach. Mental health awareness can become both the means and the way of ending this apathy.¹²

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample comprised of three hundred and sixty adolescents. These adolescents were taken according to three different educational streams between 16 and 18 years of age group. Group I, II, III consisted of 120 students each stream which are Science, Commerce and Arts. The study period was from 1st August 2019 to February 2019. Proportionate sampling technique was used.

Inclusion Criteria

6-18 years of age group students. Those who gave assent to participate in this study.

Exclusion Criteria

Those who were absent on the day of data collection.

Informed Consent

Prior informed written consent was taken from the principal for conducting the study in their respective colleges. Also, the informed assent form was filled by the participants at the time of study.

Ethical Clearance

Ethical Clearance was obtained from Institutional Ethics Committee (I.E.C) of JNMC, KLE Academy of Higher Education and Research, Belagavi.

Confidentiality

Utmost care was taken to maintain confidentiality and privacy of study participants by not disclosing their name and the name of the village.

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Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using SPSS software Version -20. Descriptive statistics was used for demographic profile. Inferential statistics was used for analyzing associated factors.

RESULTS

Table No-1: Age wise distribution of the participants

Age in Years	% (n)
16	27.78% (100)
17	55.56% (200)
18	16.67% (60)
Total	100% (360)

Out of 360 participants, 200 (55.6%) participants were of 17 years of age while 100 (27.8%) participants were of 16 years and 18 years of participants were total 60 (16.67%) (Table no. 1)

Table no. 2: Comparison among the attitude, statement and practice according to the type of family the participant lived in.

Family Type	Nuclear		Joint		F value	P value
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Attitude	2.80	0.57	2.78	0.58	0.067	0.795
Statement	4.00	0.63	3.88	0.67	2.472	0.117
Practice	3.69	0.76	3.44	0.77	8.463	0.004

According to the above results, type of family affects only on the practice of the participant with the p value of 0.004. Majority of attitude and statements are towards positive directions in the nuclear type of family with mean value of 2.80 and 4.00 respectively.

Table no. 3: Comparison of Attitude, Statement and Practice according to the age group.

Age Group	16		17		18		f value	p value
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Attitude	2.82	0.60	2.77	0.56	2.84	0.57	0.50	0.61
Statement	3.75	0.53	3.61	0.55	3.49	0.58	4.20	0.02
Practice	2.92	0.82	2.81	0.84	2.88	0.70	0.63	0.53

The table no. 3, shows that the age has the significant role for personal state of mind. For practice which has the p value of 0.53 and attitude has p value of 0.61 which has the insignificant result towards mental health. Hence the age affects only on the statement of the candidate rather than on his/her attitude and practice.

Table no. 4: Comparison among the Knowledge according to the participant's stream. (% within stream)

Stream	Below average	Average	Above average
Science	15.8	23.3	60.8
Commerce	28.3	24.2	47.5
Arts	5	15	80
Total	16.4	20.8	62.8

Chi-square (df = 4) = 33.13, p = <0.001

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According to the above results, Arts students have shown maximum above average knowledge which is 80. Considering the average category, commerce students shows 24.2 students have average level of knowledge.

Table no.5: Comparison among the Knowledge according to the participant's age. (% within age) % within age

Age in years		Knowledge		
		Below Average	Average	Above Average
	16	17.0	19.0	64.0
	17	15.0	20.5	64.5
	18	20.0	25.0	55.0
Total		16.4	20.8	62.8

Chi-square (df=4) = 2.104 , p value = 0.717

According to the above results, 17 years of age group has above average knowledge which shows of about 64.5%. 18 years of age has below average of about 20%.

DISCUSSION

The awareness about mental health literacy is the field to draw attention to the neglected areas in the research field. The case scenarios were not mentioned in this study because educating the minor age group regarding the symptoms and diagnosis will be miss-leading about the mental health disorders. Hence, no miss interpretation or miss-use of the knowledge is conducted in this study.

A cross sectional study conducted showed that 83.6% of students correctly identified the depression vignette; while in the present study we found that, arts students significantly shows the maximum above average knowledge about the mental health.

In previous study, mental health literacy and help seeking patterns in a group of young women in an urban slum setting was done in 5 different colleges. They concluded that only 8% of women were able to label the condition as depression in the first vignette. Only a few considered mental health professionals as possible sources of help. The study findings indicated that adolescents preferred reaching for informal sources including family members such as mothers than formal sources such as professionals for self than for others indicating deeply prevalent stigmatizing attitudes toward mental health conditions.¹² This present study shows the average attitude of 2.80 which indicates negative attitude towards the mental illness which consisted participants attitude towards the mental hospitals, mentally ill patients are mostly violent, best to avoid mentally ill patients etc.

In previous cross-sectional survey was conducted in three colleges of a selected University from Delhi the post graduate students were selected using convenient sampling techniques. There is a gap of knowledge among students, especially sciences, arts and technology.¹³ In present study, commerce students had given maximum average answers while arts students had given maximum above average answers.

Overall, it can be concluded that, maximum number of candidates had the stigma regarding sharing the problem with anyone, also felt that mentally ill people are violent and aggressive and also it will be embarrassing to have mental illness. Also, it clearly states that the stigma

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towards helping mentally ill person, to go mental hospital is strongly seen among all the participants. Therefore more, awareness about the mental diseases and its related issues need to be focused.

Limitation

Due to study time and research budget limitation, the study sample was taken from only 3 PU Colleges of Belagavi sample size was 260. The study sample size was extended up to 360 to match the probable valid results, but it may be necessary for further research to be conducted on larger population with large sample size for exact valid result.

Another limitation is that, mental health awareness session which was done after the data collection was done in groups rather than personal counseling due to lack of resources. Also, if the Mental health professionals were involved in this study, it would have given a different professional view to the study.

Recommendation

Mental Health Literacy among the adolescents is one of the major topics which is needs to be focused more. The use of media and books should be done more for creating the righteous awareness.

The stigmatizing factors about the concepts of mental hospital, embarrassments to have mental illness and mental illness are a real medical problem which needs proper consultation. The transparency between the parents-child should be increased for better child's positive mental health.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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