

## Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students

Martina Siby<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Deepthi Vijayan<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

Acknowledging the mental health needs of young people is essential to bring their functioning to its optimum and to provide for the development of their community. Even with the availability of effective treatments, young adults are less likely to seek professional help. One of the major barriers to them seeking care is their limited knowledge about mental health problems and available treatments and the prevailing stigma about mental illnesses. The present research focuses on understanding the mental health literacy, stigma and attitude seeking formal help of the population in the covid scenario. The study explores the relationship between mental health knowledge, attitude towards seeking professional psychological help and perceived devaluation and discrimination among college students. The findings of the study suggest a positive correlation between the variables and significant gender difference in mental health awareness and attitude towards seeking help. The study concludes that extensive mental health promotion may result in the reduction of the prevailing stigma and this can in turn catalyze the willingness to seek formal help in the population.

**Keywords:** *Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help, Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination, Young Adults, Mental Health Stigma*

India constitutes the world's highest number of young people. The young age is a significant phase of life being the formative period of a population that determines the future of the country as well as their own lives (Chadda, 2018). The behavioural patterns that a person develops during their formative period can determine their future health status and risk of developing any disorders (Sunitha & Gururaj, 2014). As the world is changing rapidly, adapting to the change and dealing with one's formation pose challenges to the youth's mental health. (Chadda, 2018). Mental health disorders compose a huge proportion of the overall disease burden in young adults in every society. Acknowledging the mental health needs of young people is essential to bring their functioning to its optimum and to provide for the development of their community (Patel et al., 2007). Even with the availability of effective treatments, young adults are less likely to seek professional help. One of the major barriers to them seeking care is their limited knowledge about mental

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Kristu Jayanti College, Bangalore, India

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Kristu Jayanti College (Autonomous), Bangalore, India

\*Corresponding Author

Received: April 26, 2021; Revision Received: June 18, 2021; Accepted: June 30, 2021

## **Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students**

health problems and available treatments. Hence, treatment accessibility for this population can be ensured by improving their mental health literacy (Vanheusden et al., 2008).

### ***Mental Health Knowledge***

Jorm et al. (1997) gave the name mental health literacy to a component of health literacy, that is the facility that provides access to the comprehension and utilization of knowledge in ways that assists in encouraging and enhancing good health (Holman, 2015). Mental health literacy is also known as mental health knowledge which refers to the awareness about mental illnesses that assists the acknowledgement, control and precaution towards it (Dev et al., 2017; A. F. Jorm et al., 1997). Providing mental health knowledge can assist in the early identification of mental disorders, in reducing the stigma and also improving the help-seeking attitude of individuals (Wei et al., 2015). Young women with greater levels of education had higher levels of mental health knowledge (Holman, 2015). Poor mental health knowledge alongside greater alignment with the societal norms of dominant masculinity can degrade the chances of young men seeking professional help (Clark et al., 2020).

### ***Attitude towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help***

Attitude towards seeking professional psychological help is complicated and varies massively from individual to individual based on several different factors. Several attitudinal and sociodemographic factors can determine the help-seeking preferences as well as cause unsatisfied needs, treatment gaps and delay in seeking help. Some factors that are significantly associated with the attitude towards help-seeking are age, ethnicity, marital status, education and income (Picco et al., 2016). Studies in personality traits reveal that females and individuals who score high at agreeableness and openness to experience were significantly associated with positive attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help for mental illness (Park et al., 2018).

Attitude towards seeking professional psychological help consists of three dimensions, Openness to seeking professional help, Value in seeking professional help and Preference to cope on your own. A study reported findings that higher scores on “openness to seeking professional help” were significantly associated with young adults, whilst factors like ethnicity and low education were significantly associated with lower scores in openness. Indians and least educated young adults were significantly associated with low scores in “value in seeking professional help”, whereas higher “preference to cope on your own” scores were significantly associated with lower education (Picco et al., 2016).

### ***Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination***

Due to the lack of enough mental health knowledge in India, stigma and discrimination predominantly exist in the communities which lead to people neglecting the need to seek help. Further, this stigma and discrimination are evidently upon the individuals with mental illness as well as their families which, hence, violates their basic human rights (Sindhu et al., 2020). Goffman defines stigma to be a process in which an individual is labelled as different in a non-desirable way and is reduced to that particular attribute. That is, the individual is reduced into being considered from a normal and independent individual to an overlooked, disregarded and disrespected one. Stigma can also be internalized, that is, people may regard that certain characteristics of an individual can justify that they reminiscent this repulsion (Holman, 2015). Link and Phelan processed a three-stage model of stigma: initially, the person is marked out as different, then the person is correlated to several undesirable

## **Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students**

characteristics and later, the person is avoided which supports Goffman's observations (Holman, 2015; Link & Phelan, 2010).

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Topkaya (2021) examined the correlates of attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help among Turkish college students. Data analysis using Pearson product-moment correlation analysis and multiple statistical regression analysis steered that being females who are older reported previous experience of help-seeking and lower levels of anticipated risks, self-stigma, self-esteem, and self-rated health and higher levels of anticipated benefits were correlated to positive help-seeking attitudes among Turkish college students. The study disclosed many cross-cultural correlates that will influence the help-seeking attitudes among college students.

Sindhu et al (2020) conducted a study to quantify the knowledge regarding common mental health issues, to assess attitude of community members and healthcare providers towards mental health patients and determine the factors causative to their stigma and to assess perception of health care providers concerning National mental health Program in Udupi Taluk, Karnataka. The research was conducted through a mixed method observational study and participants above the age of 18 were selected using a two-stage cluster sampling and were provided with 2 vignettes describing individuals suffering from indicators of mental disorders (psychosis and depression). Moreover, in-depth interviews of healthcare providers were conducted. Bivariate statistical analysis was performed to describe the responses to the variables from the questionnaire. Some of the most commonly identified causes of the mental health problems, from the results were unemployment, separated or divorced, among other socioeconomic factors. Among people diagnosed with mental illness patients with psychosis were more likely to be discriminated against than patients with depression. Stigmatizing attitude prevailed largely among the population and was found to be more in males compared to females.

In a study the relationship between help-seeking attitudes, intentions, and behaviour with the alignment of traditional masculinity and anxiety-mental health literacy was investigated among a broad sample of adolescent males (aged 12–18 years). The professional help seeking attitude of adolescents was found to be predicted by their attitude towards formal help seeking, intention to seek help from a family member and an online source. In adolescents with greater anxiety-mental health literacy and low or average personal alignment with norms of hegemonic masculinity a positive association was found in favour of the attitudes towards formal and informal help-seeking. But, in adolescents who had a greater alignment towards the norms of hegemonic masculinity no such association was observed. (Clark et al., 2020)

Fang et al. (2019) explored the help-seeking behaviours of Chinese individuals managing depressive symptoms and factors that influence these behaviours. The group of participants reported their experiences of depressive symptoms in the past year, and a major proportion of these participants have sought help. Help-seeking sources utilized most frequently sought are some forms of informal help followed by hotlines or Internet assistance, mental health professional and general physicians. The multilinear regression analysis indicated that adult participants who were adequately educated and lived in urban areas were more likely to seek help for their depressive symptoms.

## Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students

Brake et al. (2018) studied the relationship between mental contamination, post-traumatic stress (PTS) symptoms, mood-dependent risky behaviors, and help-seeking attitudes among trauma exposed undergraduates. Self-report measures of mental contamination, contact contamination, PTS symptoms, mood-dependent risky behaviors, and help-seeking attitudes were completed by the respondents. Results indicate a positive link between mental contamination and PTS symptoms. Positive correlation was found between mental contamination and negative mood-dependent risky behaviors, and a trend-level positive relationship with positive mood-dependent risky behaviors. An indirect positive effect was reported by mental contamination on help seeking attitude, in the presence of increased PTS symptoms while mental contamination had a negative direct effect on the same.

Dev et al. (2017) evaluated the mental health literacy of Delhi University students. Results showed that the students were aware of the identification of a mentally ill person, and mostly likely to identify an individual with depression rather than psychosis. They also reported awareness about the treatment of psychosis yielding unsatisfactory outcomes and prognosis compared to depression. Comparing the stigmatization towards both the illness students reported higher stigma towards psychosis. Students primarily identified psychiatrists and closest community members as the most trusted support for the patients.

Vanheusden et al. (2008) evaluate the barriers-to-care in young adults with serious internalizing or externalizing problems. The results identified that a potential barrier to seeking help was the denial that they did not have any mental health problems. Individuals who accepted that they had problems were administered with the Barriers-to-Care checklist and Latent Class Analysis was conducted. Majority of the sample did not seek help in the presence of internalizing as well as externalizing problems. The analysis revealed that the respondents more likely reported the problem as self-limiting and help seeking as negative.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study of mental health knowledge, attitude towards seeking professional psychological help and perceived devaluation and discrimination among college students is a correlational study. It is a quantitative study that establishes the relationship between the variables in the study. The study checks the correlation between the mental health knowledge and attitude towards seeking professional psychological help, attitude towards seeking professional psychological help and perceived devaluation and discrimination, and mental health knowledge and perceived devaluation and discrimination. The study also aims at finding any significant difference in mental health knowledge, attitude towards seeking professional psychological help and perceived devaluation and discrimination among the sample based on their gender.

#### ***Aim***

To determine the relationship between the mental health knowledge (MHK), attitude towards seeking professional psychological help (ATSPPH) and perceived devaluation and discrimination (PDD) among college students.

#### ***Hypotheses***

- H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant relationship between mental health knowledge and attitude towards seeking professional psychological help.
- H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant relationship between attitude towards seeking professional psychological help and perceived devaluation and discrimination.

## Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students

- H<sub>0</sub>3: There is no significant relationship between mental health knowledge and perceived devaluation and discrimination.
- H<sub>0</sub>4: There is no significant difference in mental health knowledge based on gender.
- H<sub>0</sub>5: There is no significant difference in attitude towards seeking professional psychological help based on gender.
- H<sub>0</sub>6: There is no significant difference in perceived devaluation and discrimination based on gender.

### *Sample*

College students from Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu doing their undergraduate and postgraduate studies were selected for the study. The 266 college students filled the questionnaires, of which 133 were females and 133 were males between the age of 17- 26 years. A purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data.

### *Measures*

**Mental Health Knowledge:** Mental Health Knowledge Questionnaire is a 20-item tool that is self-administered and measures the public knowledge about mental health as a health component. It was developed by the Chinese Ministry of Health (MOH) in 2009. (Wang et al., 2013). The 20-item tool consists of 16 items where the respondent requires to opt “true,” “false,” or “unknown” for each statement regarding mental health. The final 4 items are answered by indicating “yes” or “no”. The MHKQ was found to be reliable and valid. The Cronbach’s coefficient of MHKQ was reported to be 0.61 and the validity was reported to be significant and internally consistent. (Li et al., 2018)

**Attitude Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help:** Attitude Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help - Short Form (ATSPPH-SF) is a 10-item scale developed by Fischer and Farina (1995) as a short form to their original scale ATSPPH which they had developed in 1970. (Fischer & Farina, 1995). The tool is a 10-item scale and uses a four-point Likert type scale. Test retest reliability was established and the result indicated a high test retest reliability of 0.80. The known group validity and criterion validity of the tool was established ( $r = .87$ ) (Aegisdottir & Gerstein, 2009).

**Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination:** Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination (PDD) (Link & Phelan, 2010) is a 12-item scale with a 3-point Likert type scale response format. The PDD scale was reported to be reliable and valid. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of reliability was found to be 0.80. The scale was reported to have significant construct, content and face validity and was found to be internally consistent (.82-.86). (Interian et al., 2010)

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data collected was analysed using SPSS. The data was tested for mean and standard deviation and then an Independent Sample t-test and Pearson’s Correlation test was used on the data to evaluate the data.

**Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students**

**Table 1 Mean and standard deviation of Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help and Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination**

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
MHK	13.89	3.014
ATSPPH	16.91	4.650
PDD	2.13	.368

The table shows the mean and standard deviation of each of the variables. The mean and standard deviation of mental health knowledge is 13.89 and 3.014 respectively, which indicates an average level of mental health knowledge in the sample. The mean and standard deviation of attitude towards seeking professional psychological help is 16.91 and 4.650 respectively, which indicates an average level of positive attitude towards seeking professional psychological help in the sample. The mean and standard deviation of perceived devaluation and discrimination is 2.13 and .368 respectively, indicating higher levels of stigma against mental illness in the sample.

**Table 2 Correlation between Mental Health Knowledge and Attitude Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help**

		ATSPPH
MHK	Correlation Coefficient (r)	.365**
	p-value	.000

\*\* Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The correlation between the variables, mental health knowledge and attitude towards seeking professional psychological help were calculated. Table 2 indicates the Pearson's correlation result and it shows that there is a moderate positive correlation between mental health knowledge and attitude towards seeking professional psychological help ( $r = .365$ ) at a significance level of 0.01 ( $p = .000$ ). Hence it is found that there is a significant relationship between mental health knowledge and attitude towards seeking professional psychological help. Similar results were found in a study conducted by Feten et al. (2020) in their study assessed the stigma and its correlation with help-seeking intentions and comfort with disclosing a mental illness in a sample of students and their results revealed a positive correlation between help-seeking intention and mental health knowledge.

**Table 3 Correlation between Attitude Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help and Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination**

		PDD
ATSPPH	Correlation Coefficient (r)	.219**
	p-value	.000

\*\* Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The correlation between the variables, attitude towards seeking professional psychological help and perceived devaluation and discrimination were calculated. Table 3 indicates the Pearson's correlation result and it shows that there is a low positive correlation between attitude towards seeking professional psychological help and perceived devaluation and discrimination ( $r = .219$ ) at a significance level of 0.01 ( $p = .000$ ). Therefore, the result shows that there is a significant relationship between attitude towards seeking professional psychological help and perceived devaluation and discrimination. Similar results were found

## Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students

in the study conducted by Karaffa and Hancock (2019) on the mental health stigma and veterinary medical students' attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help and the results showed that positive correlations were found between public stigma and self-stigma, and attitudes toward seeking help and willingness to seek mental health services.

**Table 4 Correlation between Mental Health Knowledge and Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination**

		MHK
PDD	Correlation Coefficient (r)	.246**
	p-value	.000

\*\* Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The correlation between the variables, mental health knowledge and perceived devaluation and discrimination were calculated. Table 4 indicates the Pearson's correlation result and it shows that there is a low positive correlation between mental health knowledge and perceived devaluation and discrimination ( $r = .246$ ) at a significance level of 0.01 ( $p = .000$ ). The findings, hence show that there is a significant relationship between mental health knowledge and perceived devaluation and discrimination. Similar results were found in the studies of Collins et al. (2014) on beliefs related to mental illness stigma among California young adults and Holman (2015) on exploring the relationship between social class, mental illness stigma and mental health literacy using British national survey data which found that in young people with moderate levels of mental health awareness it was associated to stigmatized attitude. But in the study by Jorm (2012) on mental health literacy and empowering better mental health actions, he concluded with findings that high level of mental health awareness is negatively correlated with stigmatized attitudes.

**Table 5: Independent Sample t-test of Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help and Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination based on Gender**

	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
MHK	Female	133	14.68	2.86	4.44	264	.000**
	Male	133	13.10	2.96		263.70	
ATSPPH	Female	133	17.72	4.88	2.88	264	.004**
	Male	133	16.10	4.27		259.40	
PDD	Female	133	2.12	.386	.166	264	.868
	Male	133	2.13	.351		261.65	

\*\*Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 5 shows that the mean value of mental health knowledge for females and males are 14.68 and 13.10 respectively. The t value obtained between the two groups on mental health knowledge is 4.44 at corresponding p value .001 ( $p < .01$ ). This clearly shows that there is a significant difference in mental health knowledge between males and females. Hence, it is

## **Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students**

found that there is a significant difference in mental health knowledge based on gender. A similar result was obtained in the study by Holman (2015) on social class, mental illness stigma and mental health literacy using British national survey data, where it was concluded that educated (graduates) young women had higher levels of mental health knowledge than men.

The mean value of attitude towards seeking professional psychological help for females and males are 17.72 and 16.10 respectively. The t value obtained between the two groups in attitude towards seeking professional psychological help is 2.88 at corresponding p value .004 ( $p < .01$ ). This clearly shows that there is a significant difference in attitude towards seeking professional psychological help between males and females. The result shows that there is a significant difference in attitude towards seeking professional psychological help based on gender. Similarly, Park et al. (2018) on his study of the influencing factors of attitudes toward seeking professional help for mental illness among Korean adults also found that female gender was positively associated with attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help for mental illness. While, Clark et al. (2020) in his study on the impact of masculinity on the relationship between anxiety specific mental health literacy and mental health help-seeking in adolescent males found that poor mental health knowledge alongside greater alignment with the societal norms of dominant masculinity can degrade the chances of young men seeking professional help.

The mean value of perceived devaluation and discrimination for females and males are 2.12 and 2.13 respectively. The t value obtained between the two groups in perceived devaluation and discrimination is .166 at corresponding p value .868 ( $p > .01$ ). This clearly shows that there is no significant difference in perceived devaluation and discrimination between males and females. There is no significant difference in perceived devaluation and discrimination based on gender. Similar results were found in the study conducted by Collins et al. (2014) on beliefs related to mental illness stigma among California young adults and it was found that stigma existed in young adults regardless of gender differences. While in a study by Sindhu et al (2020) on the awareness and attitudes towards common mental health problems of community members in Udupi Taluk, Karnataka, it was found that stigmatizing attitude prevailed largely among the population and was found to be more in males compared to females and the study by Holman (2015) on social class, mental illness stigma and mental health literacy using British national survey data, it was concluded that educated women (graduates) were associated with lower levels of stigma.

### **CONCLUSION**

The findings indicate a positive correlation existing between mental health knowledge and attitude towards seeking professional psychological help, attitude towards seeking professional psychological help and perceived devaluation and discrimination and mental health knowledge and perceived devaluation and discrimination among college students. The findings suggest a significant difference in mental health knowledge and attitude towards seeking professional psychological help among males and females. Females had higher levels of mental health knowledge and attitude towards seeking professional psychological help compared to males. Finally, was no significant difference found in perceived devaluation and discrimination among males and females.

Based on the findings certain implications were drawn. According to previous studies, assessing the mental health knowledge of a particular population can provide an



## Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students

understanding about the extent of awareness the population requires (Reavley et al., 2012). Hence improving the mental health services, policies and intent to seek such services at early stages of disorders (Jorm, 2012; Tay et al., 2018) and also, higher levels of awareness can reduce stigma towards mental illnesses (Jorm, 2012). While stigma evidently exists in the communities it can act as a barrier to seek needed mental health services (Ahmedani, 2011).

The findings of this research bring insight to the fact that females have higher levels of mental health knowledge and favourable attitude towards seeking professional help. In a previous research that studied the barriers to seeking help in men, it was concluded that a greater alignment to the norms of hegemonic masculinity is a potential barrier to help seeking in males (Clark et al., 2020). In the study, women had a moderate level of mental health knowledge and men scored lower than women. It is hence necessary to provide awareness to both women and men. It is important to normalise help seeking attitude in men because the barriers of hegemonic masculinity can negatively impact their willingness to seek help.

The present research also indicates that stigma towards mentally ill individuals exist in greater levels in both young women and men. Hence, it can be suggested that awareness be provided to the youth population about mental illnesses and mental patients to reduce their stigma. This can increase their intent to seek help in need as well as decrease the effect of public stigma on mentally ill individuals. The present study provides evidence to the positive association between mental health knowledge and attitude towards seeking help, suggesting that it is necessary to promote mental health awareness to increase the intent to seek mental health services in young people.

The positive association between moderate levels of mental health knowledge and attitude towards seeking professional psychological help, and higher levels of stigma towards mentally ill individuals, suggests that higher levels of mental health knowledge and higher intent to seek professional help can only reduce the stigmatized attitudes of young people towards mentally ill individuals. This calls for more focus on mental health promotions targeting the youth population.

The study is not without any limitations. The research design does not demonstrate the causality of the variables. Taking a broad universe into the study, the size of the sample limits the extent to which the results can be generalized. The gender study was only done on two genders of youth population. Hence, it can be suggested to choose a random sampling technique and a larger sample for future studies on these variables and population to be able to generalise the findings as well as provide a better understanding on it to facilitate interventions accordingly. Another suggestion may be to include samples from all the genders to have a more representative sample of the population. Further studies can also focus on the influencing factors of the variable and opt for unstructured questionnaires to collect data to derive a better conclusion on the status of these variables in the population.

## REFERENCES

- Aegisdottir, S., & Gerstein, L. (2009). Beliefs About Psychological Services (BAPS): Development and psychometric properties. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 22, 197–219. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070903157347>

## Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students

- Ahmedani, B. (2011, December 29). *Mental Health Stigma: Society, Individuals, and the Profession*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3248273/>
- Alonzo, R., Hussain, J., Stranges, S., & Anderson, K. K. (2020). Interplay Between Social Media Use, Sleep Quality, and Mental Health in Youth: A Systematic Review. *Sleep Medicine Reviews*, 101414. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smrv.2020.101414>
- Basu, S., & Banerjee, B. (2020). Impact of environmental factors on mental health of children and adolescents: A systematic review. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 119, 105515. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105515>
- Brake, C. A., Jones, A. C., Wakefield, J. R., & Badour, C. L. (2018). Mental contamination and trauma: Understanding posttraumatic stress, risky behaviors, and help-seeking attitudes. *Journal of Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders*, 17, 31–38. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jocrd.2017.08.010>
- Chadda, R. K. (2018). Youth & mental health: Challenges ahead. *The Indian Journal of Medical Research*, 148(4), 359–361. PubMed. [https://doi.org/10.4103/ijmr.IJMR\\_1585\\_18](https://doi.org/10.4103/ijmr.IJMR_1585_18)
- Clark, L. H., Hudson, J. L., Rapee, R. M., & Grasby, K. L. (2020). Investigating the impact of masculinity on the relationship between anxiety specific mental health literacy and mental health help-seeking in adolescent males. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 76, 102292. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2020.102292>
- Collins, R. L., Roth, E., Cerully, J. L., & Wong, E. C. (2014). Beliefs Related to Mental Illness Stigma Among California Young Adults. In *Beliefs Related to Mental Illness Stigma Among California Young Adults* (pp. 1–6). RAND Corporation. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt14bs3jz.1>
- Dev, A., Gupta, S., Sharma, K. K., & Chadda, R. K. (2017). Awareness of mental disorders among youth in Delhi. *Current Medicine Research and Practice*, 7(3), 84–89. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cmrp.2017.05.004>
- Fang, S., Wang, X. Q., Yang, B. X., Liu, X. J., Morris, D. L., & Yu, S. H. (2019). Survey of Chinese persons managing depressive symptoms: Help-seeking behaviours and their influencing factors. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 95, 152127. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comppsy.2019.152127>
- Feten, F.-R., Ons, C., Hadhami, S., & Majda, C. (2020, December 9). *Knowledge, attitude and behaviours toward mental illness and help-seeking in a large nonclinical Tunisian student sample*. *Early Intervention in Psychiatry; Early Interv Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/eip.13080>
- Fischer, E. H., & Farina, A. (1995). Attitudes toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help: A Shortened Form and Considerations for Research. *Journal of College Student Development*, 36(4), 368–373.
- Hebbani, S., Ruben, J. P., Selvam, S. S., & Srinivasan, K. (2018). Influence of socio-cultural factors on the emotional problems among college going young-adult children of parents with alcoholism: A study from South India. *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*, 37, 26–31. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajp.2018.08.005>
- Holman, D. (2015). Exploring the relationship between social class, mental illness stigma and mental health literacy using British national survey data. *Health*, 19(4), 413–429. JSTOR.
- Interian, A., Ang, A., Gara, M. A., Link, B. G., Rodriguez, M. A., & Vega, W. A. (2010). Stigma and depression treatment utilization among Latinos: Utility of four stigma measures. *Psychiatric Services (Washington, D.C.)*, 61(4), 373–379. <https://doi.org/10.1176/ps.2010.61.4.373>

## Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students

- Jorm, A. F., Korten, A. E., Jacomb, P. A., Christensen, H., Rodgers, B., & Pollitt, P. (1997). "Mental health literacy": A survey of the public's ability to recognise mental disorders and their beliefs about the effectiveness of treatment. *The Medical Journal of Australia*, 166(4), 182–186. <https://doi.org/10.5694/j.1326-5377.1997.tb140071.x>
- Jorm, Anthony F. (2012). Mental health literacy: Empowering the community to take action for better mental health. *The American Psychologist*, 67(3), 231–243. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025957>
- Karaffa, K. M., & Hancock, T. S. (2019). Mental Health Stigma and Veterinary Medical Students' Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help. *Journal of Veterinary Medical Education*, 46(4), 459–469. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jvme.1217-185r>
- Koydemir-Özden, S. (2010). Self-Aspects, Perceived Social Support, Gender, and Willingness to Seek Psychological Help. *International Journal of Mental Health*, 39(3), 44–60. JSTOR.
- Li, J., Zhang, M., Zhao, L., Li, W., Mu, J., & Zhang, Z. (2018). Evaluation of attitudes and knowledge toward mental disorders in a sample of the Chinese population using a web-based approach. *BMC Psychiatry*, 18(1), 367. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-018-1949-7>
- Link, B. G., & Phelan, J. C. (2010). Labeling and stigma. In *A handbook for the study of mental health: Social contexts, theories, and systems, 2nd ed* (pp. 571–587). Cambridge University Press.
- Park, S., Jeon, M., Lee, Y., Ko, Y.-M., & Kim, C. E. (2018). Influencing factors of attitudes toward seeking professional help for mental illness among Korean adults. *The International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 64(3), 286–292. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764018760952>
- Patel, V., Flisher, A. J., Hetrick, S., & McGorry, P. (2007). Mental health of young people: A global public-health challenge. *The Lancet*, 369(9569), 1302–1313. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(07\)60368-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(07)60368-7)
- Picco, L., Abdin, E., Chong, S. A., Pang, S., Shafie, S., Vaingankar, J., & Subramaniam, M. (2016). Factors influencing attitudes towards seeking professional psychological help: Findings from a multi-ethnic Asian population-based study. *Abstracts of the 24th European Congress of Psychiatry*, 33, S521. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eurpsy.2016.01.1929>
- Picco, Louisa, Abdin, E., Chong, S. A., Pang, S., Shafie, S., Chua, B. Y., Vaingankar, J. A., Ong, L. P., Tay, J., & Subramaniam, M. (2016). Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help: Factor Structure and Socio-Demographic Predictors. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7, 547. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00547>
- Reavley, N. J., McCann, T. V., & Jorm, A. F. (2012). Mental health literacy in higher education students. *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, 6(1), 45–52. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-7893.2011.00314.x>
- Sindhu, M., Phadnis, S., Chouhan, Z., Saraswat, P., & Maheshwari, S. (2020). Awareness and attitudes towards common mental health problems of community members in Udupi Taluk, Karnataka: A mixed method study. *Clinical Epidemiology and Global Health*, 100679. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cegh.2020.100679>
- Sunitha, S., & Gururaj, G. (2014). Health behaviours & problems among young people in India: Cause for concern & call for action. *The Indian Journal of Medical Research*, 140(2), 185–208. PubMed.

## Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students

- Tay, J. L., Tay, Y. F., & Klainin-Yobas, P. (2018). Mental health literacy levels. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing, 32*(5), 757–763. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apnu.2018.04.007>
- Topkaya, N. (2021). Predictors of attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help among Turkish college students. *Children and Youth Services Review, 120*, 105782. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105782>
- Vanheusden, K., Mulder, C. L., van der Ende, J., van Lenthe, F. J., Mackenbach, J. P., & Verhulst, F. C. (2008). Young adults face major barriers to seeking help from mental health services. *Patient Education and Counseling, 73*(1), 97–104. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pec.2008.05.006>
- Wang, J., He, Y., Jiang, Q., Cai, J., Wang, W., Zeng, Q., Miao, J., Qi, X., Chen, J., Bian, Q., Cai, C., Ma, N., Zhu, Z., & Zhang, M. (2013). Mental health literacy among residents in Shanghai. *Shanghai Archives of Psychiatry, 25*(4), 224–235. PubMed. <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1002-0829.2013.04.004>
- Wei, Y., McGrath, P. J., Hayden, J., & Kutcher, S. (2015). Mental health literacy measures evaluating knowledge, attitudes and help-seeking: A scoping review. *BMC Psychiatry, 15*, 291. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-015-0681-9>
- Wong, E. C., Collins, R. L., Cerully, J. L., Seelam, R., & Roth, E. (2016). Racial and Ethnic Differences in Mental Illness Stigma and Discrimination Among Californians Experiencing Mental Health Challenges. In *Racial and Ethnic Differences in Mental Illness Stigma and Discrimination Among Californians Experiencing Mental Health Challenges* (pp. 1–12). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt1d41dhg.1>

### **Acknowledgement**

The authors appreciate and thank the author of PDD scale for granting permission to use the scale and everyone who participated and helped in the research process.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

**How to cite this article:** Siby M. & Vijayan D. (2021). Mental Health Knowledge, Attitude towards Seeking Help, and Perceived Stigma among College Students. *International Journal of Indian Psychology, 9*(2), 1803-1814. DIP:18.01.180.20210902, DOI:10.25215/0902.180