
“ A STUDY TO ASSESS THE MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY AMONG YOUNG ADULTS AT ARAGONDA, CHITTOOR DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH.”

Author’s Name: ¹Ms.Golla Thejasri, Ms.Jisa Paul, Ms.John Sneha, Mr.K.Bhaskaran, Ms.K.Dilli Priya, Ms.P.Sneha, Ms.P.Supriya, Ms.Swetha.G, ²Mrs.V.R.Malathy, ³ Ms.Reddy Priya.

Affiliation: ¹B.SC. Nursing students, ²Mrs.V.R.Malathy M.Sc (N), HOD of Mental Health Nursing, ³Ms.Reddy Priya M.Sc (N)., Lecturer in Community Health Nursing, Aragonda Apollo College Of Nursing. Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh.

Corresponding Author Name & Email: Mr.K.Bhaskaran, karunadinesh2001@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

A descriptive study was conducted among 150 young adults at paimagham village in aragonda, chittoor. Ethical approval was sought from institutional ethics committee. Permission was obtained from the head of the institution. Voluntary informed written consent was obtained from participants after appraising them of the nature and purpose of the study. Anonymity and confidentiality was assured. Data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire descriptive statistics were used to characterize the participant’s demographic profile and mental health literacy levels. The relationship between mental health literacy level and selected variables like age, gender, educational status, occupation of the father and mother, size of family, monthly income of the family was explored using chi-square.

Results : The study questionnaire was administered among young adults and the findings of study on level of mental health literacy revealed that majority that is 46.7% of the subjects had high level of mental health literacy. The mean score was 78.69. The results also revealed there is a significant association between demographic variables such as age, gender, educational status, occupation of father, occupation of mother, size of family, income of family with level of mental health literacy with p-value ($p < 0.05$). **Conclusion:** the results of the study have important implications for further research and practice. The level of mental health literacy and it’s association between selected demographical variables highlights the importance of establishing and increasing initiatives to promote knowledge on mental health and mental illness among young people.

Key words: assess the level of mental health nursing, young adults.

INTRODUCTION:

Health is an essential part in human life. It enhances the competencies of an individual and communities thereby enabling them to achieve their self-determined goals. Mental health is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in.

Health literacy as been defined as the ability to gain information, understand and use information in ways which promote and maintain good health. Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stressors in life, realize their abilities, learn well, work well and contribute to their community.

Mental illness in general are thought to be caused by a variety of genetic factors, environmental factors, inherited traits, stressful life situations, and ongoing (chronic) medical conditions such as diabetes, childhood history of abuse or neglect etc., Signs and Symptoms of mental illness in general are feeling sad or down, confused thinking, reduced ability to concentrate, excessive fear or worries, or extreme feelings of guilt, extreme mood changes from high and low, withdrawal from friends and activities, excessive anger, hostility or violence and suicidal thinking.

While mental health issues are more prevalent among young adults, many individuals may delay seeking support due to various factors including lack of awareness, stigma and perceived barriers. Hence understanding the factors that influence delay in approaching mental services among young adult in community is essential for developing effective interventions and support systems to address their mental health needs. This study utilized a semi structured questionnaire to collect data on mental health literacy by investigating the level of mental health literacy among young adults in community, to identify gap in knowledge and understanding of mental health conditions.

Additionally by addressing mental health literacy, we can create a more supportive and inclusive environment that prioritizes mental well-being and fosters resilience among community.

Therefore, this study aims to assess Mental Health Literacy among young adults at selected community. By examining these factors, we can gain valuable insights into the knowledge, beliefs, and behavior surrounding mental health within this population. These findings will guide in the development of targeted interventions and support services that are tailored to the specific needs of young adults in community settings.

Need for the Study:

Approximately one in three people world-wide suffer from a mental disorder at some point in their lives but only a minority seek professional help for it often with considerable delay. In 2019, 970 million people globally were living with a mental disorder, (Majority with anxiety and depression). Adult aged 35 to 44 also experienced the highest rate in mental diagnosis. i.e. (45% reported any one mental illness). Where as in 2023, 18 to 34 age group people are high in ratio. Even though more than 1 in 5 US adults live with a mental illness, about 1 in 25 US adults live with a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression.

According to 2021 statistics Global online survey which was done on US adults(18-24years) showed the following results of Anxiety – 41%, Stress - 39%, Depressive phase – 30%, Feeling of loneliness and Social isolation – 28%, Mood swings – 26%, Phases of sadness – 23%, Panic attacks – 20%, Phobias – 8%

In India appropriately 60 to 70 million people suffers from common and sever mental disorders. India is the world’s suicide capital with over 2.6 lakhs cases per year, where 37.2% had suicidal ideation, 10.9% had suicide plan. **WHO statistics** say that average suicide rate in India is 10.9 for every one lakh population. According to the latest **world happiness index for 2023**, India finds itself ranked at the 126th position among 146 countries, marking it as one of the least joyful nations globally. A recent statistics reflected that 74% of Indians suffering from stress while 88% suffering with Anxiety. Mental illness is a stigma in India.

Problem Statement

“A Study to assess the Mental Health Literacy among young adults at Aragonda, Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh.”

Objectives of the study

- to assess the level of Mental Health Literary among young adult.
- to find the association between Mental Health Literacy among young adults with selected demographic variables.

Assumptions: This study will enhance the knowledge regarding Mental health literacy among young adults.

Hypothesis: There will be a significant association between level of Mental Health Literacy and selected demographic variables.

Limitations

The study is limited to young adults residential at Aragonda. The age group of 18-25 year.

METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology: Quantitative research approach was used in the study as the researchers aimed to assess the level of mental health literacy among young adults.

Research design: Non Experimental, descriptive research design was used in the study.

Variables

Dependent variables: It refers to the Mental Health Literacy among young adults in this study.

Independent variables: The study includes independent variables, such as the age, gender, religion, educational status, marital status, education of the father, education of mother, occupation of the father, occupation of the mother, size of the family, monthly income of the family, any one diagnosed with mental health problems at any time in the family and, whom they seek help during stress.

Population: The target population selected for the study comprise young adults(18-25years) residing at Aragonda.

Sample: The sample refers to a subset of the population, selected to participate in the study. The present study comprise of 150 young adults in Aragonda.

Sampling technique: It is a process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population. A non-probability convenient sampling technique was adopted in this study.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Inclusion criteria: It refers to the characteristics that a subject must possess to be a part of the target population. The inclusion criteria are

- ❖ Young adults with in the age group of 18-25 years.
- ❖ Samples who are available at the time of data collection.

Exclusion criteria: It refers to the characteristics that make an element excluded from the target population. The exclusion criteria for this study includes

- ❖ Participants below 18 years of age and above 25 years.
- ❖ Participants who were not available at the time of data collection.
- ❖ Samples who were not willing to participate in the study.
- ❖ Participants who were not able to understand english.

Study setting: The data collection was done in Paimagham village at Aragonda, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh. Paimagham village total population is 2776 and number of houses are 726. Female population is 1404 and male population is 1372 and the female literacy rate is 33.1%, male literacy rate is 71.8%.

Instruments used for data collection

The tool is the instrument or device used to collect data. It should be a vehicle for obtaining data and drawing conclusion.

Based on the objectives of the present study, a semi-structured questionnaire was used to assess Mental Health Literacy among young adults.

Description of the tool

The descriptions of the tool used for data collection are as follow.

Section-A -Demographic profile

It was developed for the purpose of assessing the demographic characteristics of the sample consists of age, gender, religion, educational status, marital status, education of the father, education of the mother, occupation of the Father, occupation of the mother, size of the family, monthly income of the family, is there any members in the family diagnosed with mental health problems at any time, and whom do they seek help during stress.

Section-B- Mental Health Literacy scale (MHLS)

The Mental Health Literacy scale (MHLS) consists of 34 semi structured questionnaire which helps researchers to know participants level of mental health literacy. 1-14 questionnaires are scored on 1-4 scale and 15-34 questionnaires are scored on 1-5 scale.

Scoring

The total score is 134 with minimum score 34 maximum score 134.

Based on the score the level of mental health literacy was classified in three level.

Score	Interpretation
More than 75%	High level Mental Health Literacy
51-75%	Medium level Mental Health Literacy
Less than 50%	Low level Mental Health Literacy

Validity of the tool

Validity is the appropriateness, fullness and usefulness of the inference made from the scoring of an instrument. The tool along with the statement of the problem, objectives and checklist with the criteria were submitted to Dr. Dinesh (Department of psychiatry), Apollo Institute of Medical Sciences and Research. He was requested to give opinion and suggestions regarding the tool. The researcher had formal discussion with the expert to clarify vital points of the study. The tool were finalized with the help of guide.

Reliability

The reliability of an instrument is the degree of consistency, which it measures the attribute it is supposed to measure about the level Mental Health Literacy in the study.

Objective-1

- To assess the level of Mental Health Literacy among young adults.

Level Of Mental Health Literacy	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)	Mean (x)	SD (σ)
High (>75%)	70	46.7	78.69	13.493
Medium (51-75%)	59	39.0		
Low (<50%)	21	14.0		
TOTAL	150	100		

The data collected on Mental Health Literacy among young adults regarding at Aragonda shows majority 70 (46.70)% of the participants had high level of Mental Health Literacy, 59 (39.30)% of the participants had medium level of Mental Health Literacy and 21(14)% of the participants had low level of Mental Health Literacy. This shows that the majority of participants had influenced in digital era, hence it is essential to improve their knowledge regarding seeking information on mental health and illness.

In spite of mass media, government programmes and health education given by the nursing and medical team to create awareness, still 14% of adults at paimagham village in Aragonda are having low level of Mental Health Literacy. This clearly states that necessary steps should be taken to improve the knowledge regarding Mental Health Literacy.

Objective-2

- To find the association between Mental Health Literacy among young adults with selected demographic variables.

Inferential statics made on association between Mental Health Literacy and selected data variables depicts that age, education of the participants, marital status, education of the father, occupation of the father, occupation of the mother, size of the family, approaching person during stress shows high significance with $P \geq 0.01$ Level

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The analysis made on association between mental health literacy and demographic variables highlighted that there is a significance association between the mental health literacy with selected demographic variables such as age, gender, educational status, father and mother occupational status and monthly income of the family

The findings of the study have valuable implications on the following

- ❖ Nursing education
- ❖ Nursing practice
- ❖ Nursing research
- ❖ Nursing administration

Nursing Education

The findings of the present study show the result regarding level of Mental Health Literacy among young adults. Knowledge of the community regarding Mental Health problems has a remarkable impact on the attitude, the help seeking path and prevention of stigma and discrimination against client with Mental Health problems. It is also the cornerstone for designing evidenced based community Mental Health intervention in nursing curriculum.

Nursing Practice

Health care professionals especially nursing personals are well positioned to advocate the young adults in gaining the knowledge on Mental Health Literacy and apply it in practice. This in turn improve knowledge, positive thoughts and behaviour among young adults in order to enhance quality of care provided in health care sector. It also help to safeguard the community, protect the public and to support young adults in decision making in health care.

Nursing Research

Mental Health Literacy can reduce the misconceptions and stigma and can encourage those who are suffering to seek help and find a support network, it's important for caregivers, friends, and loved ones to understand the impact that mental health has on daily life. Hence more research need to be done on MHL and professional help-seeking behaviour among young adults as only limited study was done in India on this aspect.

Nursing Administration

On a broader scale, improved mental health literacy may reduce the burden on health social care services and reduce health inequalities. Community awareness for mental health reduces stigma. Hence, nursing administrators should take initiative and frame strategies, policies and programmes that enhance MHL; of young peoples.

Recommendations

On the basis of study the following recommendations have been suggested

- A similar study can be replicated on a large sample.
- A similar study can be conducted to assess mental health literacy among health care professionals.
- A comparative study can be conducted to detect the changes in the level of mental health literacy of population with the experience gained.
- A descriptive study can be conducted to find out the factors affecting mental health literacy of the students.

Conclusion

The present study helped us to understand that one of the way to improve the mental health knowledge of young adults is to modify their lifestyle. This could be done to improve the mental health ,of young adults which could in turn help to build the self-confidence to manage mental health problems and improve mental health knowledge by themselves.

Mental Health Literacy is considered a pre requisite for early recognition and intervention to mental disorders and for their reason, it has become a focus of research over the past few decades. Assessing the level of Mental Health Literacy helps to identify knowledge gaps and belief concerning mental health issues and also help to plan mental health promotion programs.

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