

Compare the awareness about Human rights of mentally ill among the Male and Female caregivers of patients diagnosed with psychiatric disorders

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Abstract: Human rights are an important component for effectiveness in care. Enjoyment of the human right to health is vital to all aspects of a person's life and well being. The study aimed to compare the awareness about human rights among the male and female caregivers of Patients diagnosed with Psychiatric disorders. Descriptive design was adopted, 50 male caregivers and 50 female Caregivers at the Psychiatric OPD and Inpatient wards were considered as the subjects and over a period of 4 weeks, samples were selected based on the sampling criteria. Among the male caregivers 62% were having poor awareness and 38% of them were having average awareness and majority of the female caregivers (82.0%) were having poor awareness and 18% of them were having average awareness and none of them were having good awareness. It is believed that care givers are playing key role in the treatment of mentally ill patients so it is the responsibility of the psychiatric nurse to ensure that their actions promote welfare of patients.

I. Introduction

Since the origin of human civilization, mentally ill patients have received the scant amount of care and concern of the community. For centuries, as a result of this the rights of mentally ill have been abused and ignored. The caregivers must know the rights of a mentally ill person; and should support and protect them in their liberty and treatment needs, applicable requirements. It is dangerous and burdensome when patients have a mental disorder. Some are living in streets and the rest of the family gets to a place where they have to worry about their own concerns, or they may also develop mental disorder and there's nowhere for them to go.

According to the World Health Organization Report, 450 million people in world suffer from mental or behavioural disorder but only small minorities of them receive even the most basic treatment. Mental disorders affects 5 crore of the Indian population (5%) and they need special care. 80% of districts in India do not have even one psychiatrist in public service.

In Tamil Nadu, at Erwadi where 27 people died in fire accident in the year of 2001. There, the people were treated inhuman way, sometimes they were chained and malnourished. There was no medical attention on treatment part and beating was the only treatment given for them. It was identified that at least two-thirds of the patients who died had earlier consulted a psychiatrist. The majority of them needed rehabilitation, but those facilities were not available. They were chained in the beds and poles because they were mentally ill. It was reported that the patients could not escape when an accidental fire broke out in a thatched building and there were no staffs or family members who could unchain them. This heartbreaking incident made everyone to think about human rights of mentally ill. **(National Human Rights Commission Report 2001)**

It is crystal clear that if the caregivers would have understood thoroughly about the human rights, human rights violation can be well prevented. Enjoyment of the human right to health is vital to all aspects of a person's life and well being, and crucial to the realization of many other fundamental human rights and freedoms.

II. Objectives

- i.) To assess the awareness about human rights of mentally ill among male caregivers of Patients diagnosed with Psychiatric disorders.
- ii.) To assess the awareness about human rights of mentally ill among female caregivers of Patients diagnosed with Psychiatric disorders.
- iii.) To compare the awareness about human rights among the male and female caregivers of Patients diagnosed with Psychiatric disorders.
- iv.) To associate the awareness about human rights of mentally ill with the selected demographic variables.

III. Review of Literature

Section I: Reviews related to awareness of Human rights among patients.

Roja Princy (2009) studied the Patients' and staff members' perception towards the rights of hospitalized psychiatric patients. Samples included 50 patients and 50 staff nurses who were selected by purposive sampling and administered 31 item 4 point Likert scale to assess the perception on rights of mentally ill. The collected data was analyzed by paired 't' test and chi-square test. The results indicated that there were differences between the groups in terms of situations that justify involuntary hospitalization, the use of force or physical restrictions and compromise of confidentiality.

Mills MS et al (2008) described the mental patients' knowledge of in hospital rights. The researchers investigated 52 recently admitted patients about formally receiving information regarding patients' rights and about their knowledge of that information. Of the 13 day hospital patients, 12 recalled being given the information, but only 20 of 39 inpatients recalled receiving the information. Most patients, disregard of their diagnosis or legal status, knew their rights. Surprisingly, comparison with a group of patients who did not receive any information on their rights had shown no relationship between receiving information and knowledge of patients' rights.

Section II: Reviews related to awareness of Human rights among caregivers.

Mays D and Hund (2010) compared the awareness about human rights of mentally rights of mentally ill among the male and female caregivers of Schizophrenic patients. Samples of 165 male and 163 female caregivers were chosen for the study by convenient sampling and administered Human rights awareness questionnaire. Responses were analysed by univariate and multivariate statistical methods. Results shown that comparatively male caregivers were having adequate awareness about 54.4% where as only 20.2% female caregivers were having adequate awareness. Also the rural area, older age, and lower levels of caregivers' education were associated with the poor awareness about the human rights of mentally ill. The researcher recommended that health care professionals need to develop a tool on education and supportive service for female caregivers in this emerging role and contribute to family health in the community.

Shanthi (2009) conducted a study to assess the awareness of human rights among caregivers caring for mentally Ill. Totally 30 Samples were selected by convenient sampling. The self constructed tool on human rights had 20 items used to assess awareness regarding human rights. The data were analysed by using both the descriptive and inferential statistics. The study revealed that 17(56.7%) were having inadequate knowledge, 12 (40%) were having moderately adequate knowledge and only 1(3.3%) had adequate knowledge on human rights. The findings alarmed that that the majority of the caregivers caring for mentally ill were having inadequate knowledge about human rights of mentally ill.

IV. Methodology

Descriptive design was adopted, 50 male caregivers and 50 female Caregivers at the Psychiatric OPD and Inpatient wards were considered as the subjects and over a period of 4 weeks, samples were selected based on the sampling criteria. All Male and Female caregivers of mentally ill patients who fulfilled the sampling criteria were selected by simple random technique by using lottery method for the study. The tool was developed by the researcher with the guidelines given by the Mental Health Act. The questionnaire contains 30 questions and 14 sub questions under 6 domains.

The pilot study was conducted before the main study and it elicited that the study was feasible. The tool was found to be highly reliable and valid. During the data collection, the researcher introduced herself to each subject and they were informed about the purpose of the study and an informed consent was taken. Ethical clearance for the study was taken from the institutional ethical committee.

V. Results

Figure 1: Level of awareness about human rights of mentally ill among male caregivers.

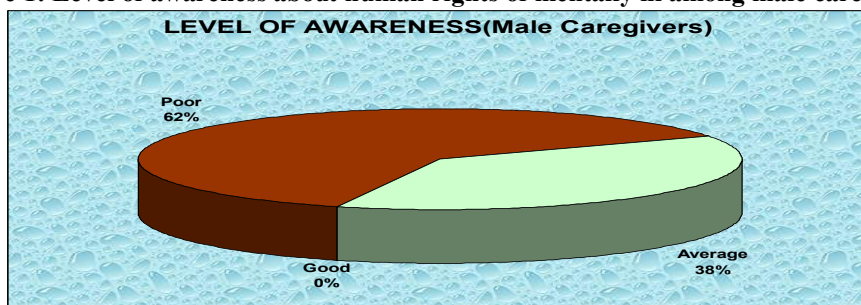


Figure 2: Level of awareness about human rights of mentally ill among female caregivers.

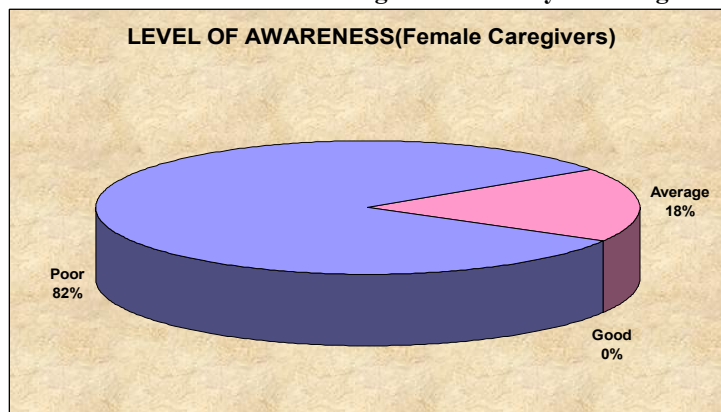
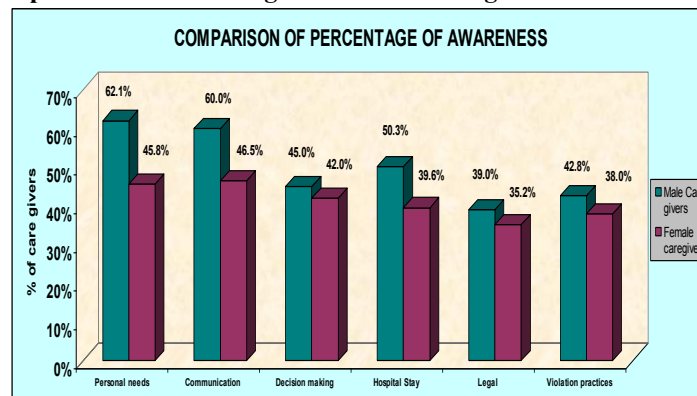


Table 1: Comparison of human rights awareness between the male and female caregivers.

Caregivers	Awareness score		Student independent t-test
	Mean	SD	
Male	29.92	7.64	$t=2.99$ $P=0.003^{**}$ DF=198 significant
Female	24.38	8.71	

When comparing the human rights awareness between male and female Caregivers, male caregivers showed relatively more awareness than the female caregivers.

Fig 3: Comparison of Human rights domains among male and female caregivers



Majority of the male care givers (62.1%) had maximum awareness in the area of personal needs where as less than half of the female care givers (46.5%) had maximum awareness in the area of communication. A statistically significant association was found between the knowledge with the age, educational status and place of living.

VI. Discussion

The present study results revealed that male caregivers had relatively more awareness than the female caregivers. There was a significant difference in the awareness about human rights of mentally ill among the male and female caregivers ($t=2.99$ $P=0.003^{**}$). Mainly in the domains like personal needs, communication, hospital stay and violation practices. These findings are coinciding with the study conducted by **Mays D and Hund (2010)**, in which comparatively male caregivers were having moderately adequate knowledge about 54.4% but whereas female caregivers had only 20.2% of adequate knowledge.

The present study revealed that age, education and place of living are significantly associated with male and female caregivers' level of awareness. Younger, more educated and urban male and female care givers

are having more awareness than others. **Sandy (2007)** compared the urban and rural care givers awareness about the rights of mentally ill in Mumbai. The caregivers from the urban area had more awareness (68.8%) about the rights of mentally ill rather than the caregivers from the rural area (42.6%). This study finding also supports the present study findings.

VII. Nursing Implications

Nursing Practice: Nurses can help the caregivers in identifying and understanding the causes for the Human rights violations. Nurses should raise the awareness regarding the protection human rights of mentally ill and its importance especially among the female caregivers.

Nursing Administration: In-service education programs and training programs on human rights of mentally ill can be conducted to help the clinical nurses to combat the human rights violations.

Nursing Education: Ensuring that education about the Human rights of mentally ill to the Student Nurses will generate the prevention of human rights violations in future.

Nursing Research: The evident of lack awareness in caregiver of patients diagnosed with psychiatric patient will give rise to the newer search for the ways in which the human rights can be protected.

VIII. Conclusions

Caring the mentally ill client is highly stressful for the caregivers. If the caregiver does not have good knowledge about the mental illness and the way to protect the mentally ill client, the care giving becomes meaningless. That too the female caregivers are in a position that the information's pertaining to the care of mentally ill is always inaccessible to them. The same situation exists in the case of awareness about human rights of mentally ill. Hence the nurse should plan the interventions to achieve the goals such as increased awareness about human rights and prevention of human rights violations.

IX. Recommendations

Similar kind study can be performed with a large scale and also in different settings.

Comparative study can be done to find out difference in the awareness about human rights of mentally ill among the long term and short term caregivers.

A study can be conducted with intervention to find out the effectiveness of intervention in creating the awareness about human rights.

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