

## Attitude Regarding Mental Health among Communities

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** 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 patients with mental health problems. It is also the cornerstone for designing evidence-based community mental health interventions.

**Objectives:** To assess the attitude regarding mental health among communities of East rest camp Chander nagar, Dehradun.

**Materials and Methods:** This study was conducted in the, East rest camp Chander nagar Dehradun, India, from 15 May 2023 to 18 December 2023. Descriptive survey design was adopted and Convenience sampling technique was used to collect data from 500 community people. Self-structured questionnaires were used to assess demographic variables and 4 point rating scale was used to check attitudes of community people.

**Results:** The study shows that among 500 subjects, 312 (62.4%) persons had negative attitude towards mental health and 188 (37.6%) had positive attitude towards mental health.

**Conclusion:** The study findings suggest that the majority of the community people had negative attitude toward mental health. Hence there is a need to create mental health awareness and furthermore change the attitude regarding towards mental health.

**KEYWORDS:** Attitude, Mental health, Community

### INTRODUCTION

Mental health is a positive state in which one is responsible for self-awareness, self-directive, reasonable worry free and copes with usual daily tensions. Such individual functions well in society are accepted within a group and are generally satisfied with their lives.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand mental illness is common, affecting more than 25% of all people at some time during their lives, affecting people in all countries and societies, individuals of all ages, women and men, the rich and the poor, from urban as well as rural environment.<sup>2</sup>

Nearly one billion people have a mental disorder. 1 in every 8 people, or 970 million people around the world were living with a mental disorder. India had 197.3 million (95% of the total population) persons with mental disorders, accounting for 14.3% of the country's total population.<sup>3</sup>

WHO estimates that the burden of mental health problems in India is 2443 disability-adjusted life years per 100 00 population; the age-adjusted suicide rate per 100 000 population is 21.1. The economic loss due to mental health conditions, between 2012-2030, is estimated at USD 1.03 trillion. In Uttarakhand, the incidence rate of postpartum depression was 11% among mothers and the prevalence rate of depressive disorder was 6% as per 2014 report. These belief and attitudes are a potential barrier to seeking optimal professional help.<sup>4</sup>

Stigma associated with mental illness acts as one of the biggest hurdles in providing treatment to mentally ill people. Because of the stigma, the mentally ill people are perceived as "different" and are seen with negative attributes and are more likely to be rejected regardless of their behavior.<sup>5</sup>

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The Mental health condition is perceived as frightening, shameful, imaginary, feigned, and incurable, while the patients are characterised as dangerous, unpredictable, untrustworthy, unstable, lazy, weak, worthless, and/or helpless in the community. Furthermore, it is important to study the perception, attitude, and health-seeking behavior in the community regarding mental illness, which will help in providing mental healthcare services for the community.<sup>6</sup>

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Study Design

This study was conducted in the, East rest camp Chander nagar Dehradun ,India, from 15 May 2023 to 18 December 2023. Descriptive survey design was adopted and 500 subjects were included in the study by Convenience sampling technique. Self-structured questionnaire was used to assess demographic variables and 4 point rating scale was used to check attitudes of community people.

### Instrument/Tool

Self structured questionnaire was used to assess socio demographic variables and 4 point rating scale was used to check attitude of community people.

### Tool 1: Socio demographic variables

It includes 6 items: age, gender, educational level, type of family, history of mental illness in family, have you come across mentally ill in your community.

### Tool 2: Likert-scale (4- point scale)

Likert-scale (4- point scale) was used to assess the level of attitude regarding mental health among community people. The tool consists of 15 items with

both positive and negative statements regarding mental health. The total score of tool was 60. Score between 1 – 30 was considered as negative attitude and score between 31 – 60 was considered as positive attitude.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data were presented as mean±standard deviation (SD). Frequency and percentage distribution was used to evaluate sociodemographic variables of community people residing in East rest camp Chander nagar, Dehradun. Likert-scale (4- point scale) was used to assess the level of attitude regarding mental health among community people.

## RESULTS

The study included a total of 500 community people with age ranging between 20- 80 years. The mean age of study participants were  $35.87 \pm 1.414$ , which is shown in table no.1. The majority of 317(63.4%) community people belonged to 20-35 years of age. In gender, the majority of 330(66%) community people were male and 170(34%) community people were female in study. Regarding education, mostly 230(46%) of them had primary education. Majority 288(57.6 %) were belong to joint family. 320(64%) had no history of mental illness in family. A total of 280(56%) community people have not come across mentally ill in their community.

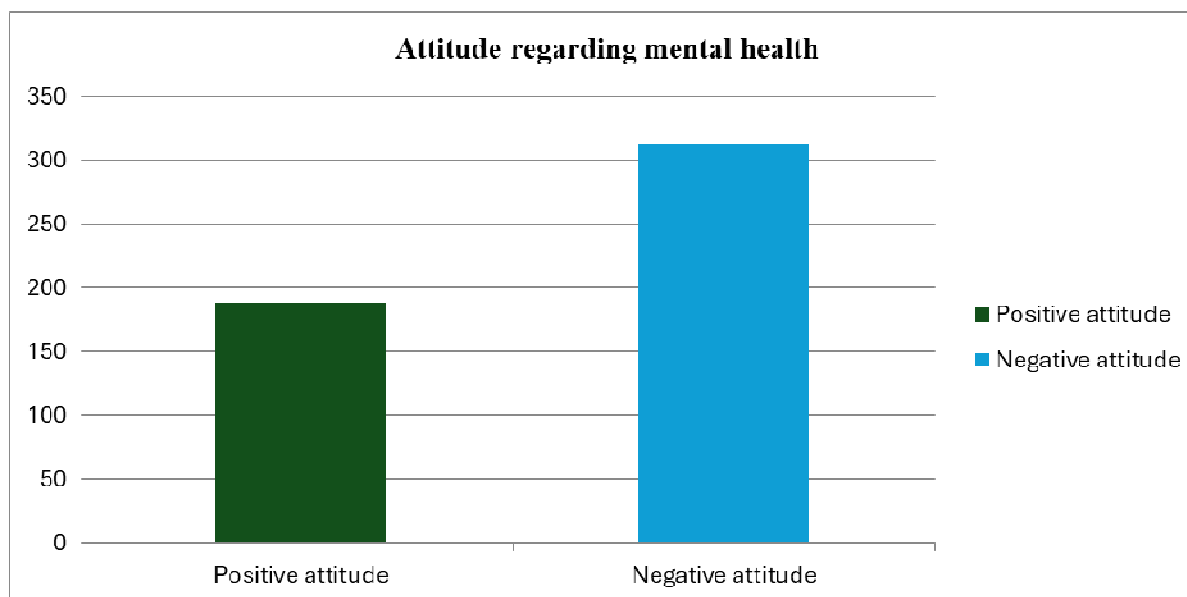
The four point Likert-scale was used to analyze the attitude of subjects regarding mental health which is shown in table no. 2. Among 500 subjects, the majority of community people, 312(62.4 %) were having negative attitude and 188 (37.6%) were having positive attitude regarding mental health.

**Table No.1 Selected demographic variables of community people**

**N= 500**

| S. No. | Variables           | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1      | Age in years        |           |            |
|        | 20- 35              | 317       | 63.4       |
|        | 36- 50              | 112       | 22.4       |
|        | 51- 65              | 52        | 10.4       |
|        | 66- 80              | 19        | 3.8        |
| 2      | Gender              |           |            |
|        | Male                | 330       | 66         |
|        | Female              | 170       | 34         |
| 3      | Educational level   |           |            |
|        | Primary or below    | 230       | 46         |
|        | Secondary education | 206       | 41.2       |
|        | Higher education    | 63        | 12.6       |
| 4      | Type of family      |           |            |
|        | Joint family        | 288       | 57.6       |
|        | Nuclear family      | 212       | 42.4       |

|   |   |     |    |
|---|---|-----|----|
| 5 | History of mental illness in family                 |     |    |
|   | Yes   | 180 | 36 |
|   | No  | 320 | 64 |
| 6 | Have you come across mentally ill in your community |     |    |
|   | Yes   | 220 | 44 |
|   | No  | 280 | 56 |



**Figure no. 1. Attitude of community people regarding mental health**

## DISCUSSION

The current study has shown that attitude towards psychiatric health in this community is negative. The study shows that the mean age of study participants was  $35.87 \pm 1.414$ . Among 500 subjects 312 (62.4%) persons had negative attitude towards mental health and 188 (37.6%) had positive attitude towards mental health. Specifically, males had a significantly more negative attitude than females. These study findings suggest that the majority of the community people had negative attitude toward mental health.

A similar study was conducted at Delhi (2021) by Ahmed R, Jha N, Singh U et.al to assess the literacy level of mental illness among the community. The study used a survey method with 306 participants. Socio-demographic datasheet and the public perceptions of mental illness questionnaire was used to collect data. The result showed that the mean age of participant was 33. Participants understanding of mental health among community participants negative perception was higher. This study concluded that overall mental health literacy among community participants was found to an unsatisfactory level.<sup>7</sup>

A study was conducted by S.Suvitha, E.Rama et.al to assess mental health literacy among nursing students in selected college at ponducherry, 2021. The study used a descriptive method with 100 participants selected by convenient sampling. Mental Health Literacy Scale was used to collect data. The result

showed that 82% subjects have moderate level of knowledge on mental health literacy.<sup>8</sup>

A descriptive study was conducted by Gusain.R, Singh.M.G, Sylvia.R at Dehradun, Uttarakhand on factors affecting awareness of Mental health among adults of selected area of Dehradun, Uttarakhand. Result of the study showed that the samples reported that majority of the factors affecting awareness of mental health was superstitious belief, history of mental illness, peer group. The study concluded that majority of the factors responsible for mental illness was superstitious belief, history of mental illness, peer group.<sup>9</sup>

A study was conducted by Kulkarni, Kaustubh.S, et.al, (2023) on awareness and attitude about mental illness in the rural population of Maharashtra. 196 subjects were selected for the study. Results indicated that females showed higher scores for authoritarianism and social restrictiveness. People in the community have a varied perspective to mental illnesses which has changed for the better over time but community still approaches quacks first which warrants the need for more awareness.<sup>10</sup>

## LIMITATIONS:

The findings could be generalized only to the population which fulfilled the criteria in the study.

Only attitude was assessed, no attempt was made to identify other attributes like perception, opinions towards mental health.

**CONCLUSION:** The study findings suggest that the majority of the community people had negative attitude toward mental health. Hence, this survey helps in providing mental health awareness and furthermore change the attitude towards positive.

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