

Knowledge and Attitude of Police Personnels Regarding the Human Righyts of People With Mental Disorders in Selected Police Stations

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Abstract

Abstract: Police officers are increasingly called upon to deal with mentally ill or emotionally disturbed individuals, which is a difficult and dangerous task at times. The main aim of the present study was to prepare educational module for police personnel on human rights of people with mental disorders. A descriptive survey approach with non-experimental descriptive correlation design was used to assess the knowledge and attitude of police personals regarding the human rights of people with mental disorders in selected police station at Gujarat. 50 police personnel were selected by using on random convenient sampling technique. Data was collected by using self-administered questionnaire to assess the knowledge and three point Likert scale to assess the attitude. Collected data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. Results showed that majority 66% of police personnel had moderate knowledge. 61% of the police personnel had favorable attitude. There was significant association between knowledge scores with demographic variables such as gender, educational status, designation, marital status and experience with mentally ill patients and type of family. There is positive correlation ($r = +.36$) between knowledge and attitude score of police personnel regarding human rights of people with mental disorders.

Keywords: Knowledge and attitude; Police personnel; Human rights; Mentally ill.

Introduction:

Mental illness is now seen as a major global problem. People with mental disabilities all over the world experience human rights violation. WHO report states that human rights violation occurs among mentally ill patients and India is not an exception. Many deaths of mentally ill patients have been occurred during police custody. This could be unfortunate result of a fearful reaction on the part of police that they lack recognition of mental illness. Nationally there is a shortage of police training in managing mental health problems and human rights of mentally ill patients. Police personals are increasingly called upon to deal with mental disorders or emotionally disturbed individuals, a task which can be difficult and dangerous times.

Mental health is the most neglected area of health policy. World health organization estimates that 10% of the world's population has some form of mental disability and 1% suffers from severe mental disorder.

National human rights commission has issued a notice to the inspector general (Prisons) of West Bengal to explain why a mentally ill man has been jailed for 25 years without trial and proper medical treatment. NHRC had filed an application in Punjab and Haryana high court to assist in pending civil written petition on the issue of such mentally disturbed prisoners. A study report on Greek police officer's attitude towards mental disorders suggest that police man misperceptions, and the difficulties encountered during transport procedures, which is attributed to insufficient knowledge about mental illness and lack of training. Since the police department come across mentally disturbed patients, it is essential to have knowledge regarding mentally illness and protection of human rights of mental disorders. All the above factors felt that there is need to assess the knowledge and attitude

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of police personnel's regarding human rights of mentally disorders.

Statement of problem

A study to assess the knowledge and attitude of police personnel's regarding the human rights of people with mental disorders in selected police stations of Gujarat.

Objectives of the study

- To assess the knowledge of subjects on human rights of people with mental disorder.
- To assess the attitude of participants on human rights of people with mental disorder.
- To correlate the knowledge and attitude of the participants.
- To associate the level of knowledge of participants with selected demographic variables.
- To associate the level of attitude of participants with selected demographic variables.

Review of literature

A study was conducted on social factors and forensic psychiatry in India to evaluate existing mental health legislation, civil and criminal laws, the standards of teaching and training of concerned professionals and emphasizes the scarcity of care for mental disorder of prisoners. The study findings show that people with mental health disorder have been exposed to a wide range of human rights violation.

A study conducted on "crisis intervention team training for police officers responding to mental disturbance calls" revealed that the average rate of mental disturbance calls compared with overall rates of calls to the police, disposition of mental disturbance calls by time and training and the effect of techniques. The study showed that there is an increased rate of transport of crisis intervention training trained officers of persons experiencing mental illness and increase in transport on a voluntary status, and significant changes in the rate of arrests by time of training.

A study on mental health training scheme for police officers found that 61% of police officers said they had not received sufficient training to deal with problems involving mental disorders. Training in this areas can help police officers acquire awareness

and understanding in order to aid the management of people with mental problems. Another study on "training police officers to distinguish mental illness". the impact of short term intensive instruction by medical health professionals on police officer's attitude towards mental disorders and on their ability to distinguish between mental illness and other behavior. Compared with a control group who did not receive the special training the 80 officers showed increased interest and sympathy for psychiatric problems. Aim of the project was to establish a program for police officers to reduce the stigma. The seminar was developed by a German anti stigma organization in cooperation with sociology teachers of the Bavarian police academy. Evaluation focused on the police officers "social distance and "negative stereotypes" to wards mentally disturbed people.

Research Methodology

Quantitative survey approach was used to carry out the study. Descriptive correlation design was used. The study was conducted at Surendranagar police station, Gujarat. the samples were selected by convenient sampling technique. A total of 50 police officers were selected for the present study

Inclusion criteria: Study includes constable, head constable and assistant sub inspector.

Tools of the study

Tool 1: *Socio demographic Performa:* it is comprised of 11 items which includes age, sex, educational status, designation, monthly income, religion, marital life, type of family, years of experience and previous experience with mental disorders and source of information regarding mental disorders.

Tool 2: Self-administered questionnaire was used to assess the knowledge of human rights of people with mental disorders among police persons.

Tool 3: Three point Likert scale was used to assess the level of attitude of police personnel's regarding human rights of people with mental disorder.

Data analysis and interpretation

Description of sample characteristics (Tables 1-3).

The table 4 shows that the correlation coefficient computed between the overall mean knowledge and overall mean attitude of police personnel's

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of samples.

S. No	Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	21-30 years	26	52
		31-35 years	16	32
		36-45 years	8	16
2	Gender	Male	31	62
		Female	19	38
3	Educational status	PUC Graduate and above	22	44
			28	56
4	Designation	Constable	25	50
		Head constable	18	36
		Asst. sub inspector	7	14
5	Marital status	Unmarried	11	22
		Married	39	78
6	Experience in department	0-5	24	48
		6-10	12	24
		11-15	14	28
7	Previous experience	< 1 month	21	42
		>1 month	10	20
		No	19	38
8	Monthly income	<Rs 10,000	20	40
		10,000-19000	22	44
		>19000	8	16
9	Religion	Hindu	29	58
		Muslim	12	24
		Christian	9	18
10	Type of family	Nuclear	26	52
		Joint	24	48
11	Source of information	Health personnel	5	10
		Print media	15	30
		Electronic media	9	18
		Friends and family	2	4
		No	19	38

Table 2: Knowledge of police personnel's regarding human rights of people with mental disorder:

Knowledge level	Score category	Frequency	Percentage
inadequate	≤ 50 score	0	0
Moderate	51-75	33	66
Adequate	>75	17	34

Table 3: Level of attitude of police personnel's regarding human rights of people with mental disorder.

Attitude level	Category	Frequency	percentage
Unfavorable	≤ 50 score	0	0
Moderate	51-75	19	38
Favourable	>75	31	62

Table 4: Correlation between knowledge and attitude of respondents on human rights of people with mental disorders.

Domains	Statements	Max. score	Police personnel's			
			Mean	SD	Mean (%)	SD (%)
Knowledge	25	25	16.94	2.2	67.8	8.6
Attitude	25	75	61.00	4.8	81.3	6.4
Correlation coefficient					+0.357	

Table 5: Association between pre-test knowledge score of primi postnatal mothers with selected demographic variables:

Variables	<median (16)	Median (16)	Df	X ² value
Age				
21-30 years	17	9		
31-35 years	10	6	2	0.84NS
36-45 years	6	2		
Gender			1	4.74 S
Male	24	7		
Female	9	10		
Educational level			1	4.48 S
PUC	11	11		
Graduate	22	6		
Designation			2	9.77S
Constable	19	6		
Head constable	13	5		
Asst. sub inspector	1	6		
Marital status			1	3.90S
Married	10	1		
Unmarried	23	16		
Experience in department			2	5.20 NS
0-5 years	17	7		
6-10 years	10	2		
11-15 years	6	8		
Experience with mental disorders			2	8.41 S
<1 month	12	9		
>1 month	4	6		
No	17	2		
Monthly income			2	2.48 NS
<10,000	12	8		
10000-19000	17	5		
>19000	4	4		
Religion			2	0.87 NS
Hindu	19	10		
Muslim	7	5		
Christian	7	2		
Type of family			1	1.21NS
Nuclear family	19	7		
Joint family	14	10		
Source of information			4	7.8 NS
Health personnel	3	2		
Print media	8	7		
Electronic media	6	3		
Relatives/family members	0	2		
No	16	3		

as $r = 0.357$ which was found to be significant at $p < 0.05$ level hence it suggests that there is a linear (positive) correlation between knowledge and attitude.

Recommendations

- The study can be replicated on larger sample, in different settings to generalize the findings.
- A comparative study can be done between the urban and rural police personnel's knowledge and attitude regarding the human rights of people with mental disorders.
- An experimental study can be carried out

to find out the effectiveness of a teaching programme in human rights of people with mental disorders.

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