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Research Article

KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS ELECTRO CONVULSIVE THERAPY AMONG CAREGIVERS OF PATIENT WITH MENTAL ILLNESS IN SELECTED HOSPITAL IN MANGALURU

Asha Crasta., Daisy D'souza., Michelle D'souza, Namrata Khadka and Viji Prasad, C*

Department of Psychiatric Nursing, Yenepoya Nursing College Deralakatte, Mangaluru

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ABSTRACT

Background: Electro Convulsive Therapy is practiced all over the globe to treat severe psychiatric disorders. Awareness regarding ECT among patients' relatives could have a significant impact on the outcome of the treatment and also assist in alleviating the misconceptions prevailed in society related to it. **Objectives:** This study was carried out to assess the level of knowledge and attitude towards Electro Convulsive Therapy among care givers of patient with mental illness. **Material and method:** A descriptive study designs was adopted in order to assess the knowledge and attitude of caregivers of mental illness toward ECT in selected hospital in Mangaluru.. The study was conducted from 24/4/2016 to 5/5/2016 by administering structured knowledge questionnaire and modified attitude scale to 100 caregivers of patients with mental illness. The data collected from the sample was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. **Results:** Study findings revealed that majority of caregivers (63%) had poor knowledge, 34% had average knowledge and merely 3% had good knowledge toward ECT. Majority of caregivers (88%) had unfavourable attitude and 12% had favourable attitude toward ECT. The study results also revealed that knowledge and attitude scores were dependents of selected demographic variables. **Conclusion:** The finding of the study revealed that the majority of the caregivers had poor knowledge and unfavourable attitude toward ECT. There were no significant association between knowledge and attitude score with selected demographic variables like age, education, occupation, income, religion, relationship with patient and family history of mental illness.

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INTRODUCTION

Knowledge explosion and the impact of science and technology are being felt in all walks of life. Its impact is greatly felt in medical science where in most complex instruments and equipments have been designed and used in various types of disease. One such design used for treating patients with mental illness is Electro Convulsive Therapy (ECT). It has been demonstrated to be an effective and safe treatment for many psychiatric disorders.¹ ECT uses electric current to induce convulsive seizure in neurons in the entire brain to alleviate symptoms such as major depression, acute manic episodes or schizophrenia.² Exactly how ECT works remains unclear, but the seizure most kindly modifies the chemical environment of neurotransmitters.³

ECT is an effective treatment and is generally well-tolerated by patients. In some cases, after a successful initial treatment episode, continuation of outpatient ECT combines with antidepressant medication may be recommended. Weekly treatments for the first month after remission, gradually tapering to monthly treatments.⁴ Though there are many social

stigma related to ECT among general public, studies which have evaluated the attitude of patients with mental illness who have received ECT suggest that they are mostly satisfied with the experience of treatment.⁵

Psychiatric disorders affect about 450 million individuals worldwide. A number of treatment modalities such as psychotropic medication, psychotherapy and electroconvulsive therapy can be used to treat the disorders.⁶ It is believed that people lack sound knowledge and appropriate attitude towards electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). However, very few systematic researches have gone into this area.⁷

Worldwide electroconvulsive therapy differences and trends were evident, average number ECTs administered per patient were eight; unmodified (without anaesthesia) was used in Asia (over 90%), Africa, Latin America, Russia, Turkey and Spain. Majority of patients who were treated with ECT were older women with depression in Western countries and younger men with schizophrenia in Asian countries.⁸

In the survey of the entire population residing in South Indian villages, it was found that 24.40% were suffering one or more

*Corresponding author: Viji Prasad, C.

Department of Psychiatric Nursing, Yenepoya Nursing College Deralakatte, Mangaluru

diagnosable psychiatric disorder. Prevalence of depressive disorder was found to be 14.8%.⁹

Caregivers are the persons who stay with the patient continuously to render care therefore it is essential for them to have some knowledge and favourable attitude toward ECT. Very few researches are conducted in Indian context to know the level of knowledge and attitude towards ECT among caregivers so it becomes strong evident for the recommendation of the need for further study.¹

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A descriptive study design was adopted in order to assess the level of knowledge and attitude of caregivers of patients with mental illness in a selected hospital at Mangaluru. The tools used for this study were demographic proforma, structured knowledge questionnaire and modified attitude scale. Questionnaire consisted of 24 items. It included general information, meaning, indications, contraindications, side effects, consent and procedure regarding ECT. Modified attitude scale consisted of 16 items.

The content validity of the tool was established in consultation with seven experts. The structured knowledge questionnaire and attitude rating scale regarding ECT and the demographic proforma were prepared in Kannada and translated into English by a language expert. After the development of the proposal and the tools, ethical clearance was obtained from ethics committee, Yenepoya University.

Table 1 Frequency and percentage distribution of sample characteristics

		N=100	
Sl.No.	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age in years		
	a. 15-25	24	24
	b. 26-40	44	44
	c. 41-60	30	30
	d. Above 60	2	2
2.	Educational qualification		
	e. Primary school	28	28
	f. No formal schooling	6	6
	g. High school	23	23
	h. Collegiate education	43	43
3.	Religion		
	i. Hindu	53	53
	j. Muslim	26	26
	k. Christian	21	21
	l. Others	0	0
4.	Occupation		
	m. Government employee	2	2
	n. Private employee	54	54
	o. Coolie worker	29	29
	p. Others, specify	15	15
5.	Monthly income		
	q. Below 5000	13	13
	r. 5001-10000	56	56
	s. 10001-15000	15	15
	t. 15001 and above	16	16
6.	Relationship with patient		
	u. Parent	25	25
	v. Sibling	23	23
	w. Relative	13	13
	x. Other	39	39
7.	Any family history of mental illness		
	y. Do not know	16	16
	z. No	75	75
	aa. Yes	9	9

The tool was pre-tested by administering it to 10 caregivers of patients with mental illness. The samples found that the instructions and the language of the tool were clear and understandable. The reliability of knowledge questionnaire was computed by using split half technique employing Karl Pearson's coefficient correlation and calculated 'r' value was 0.7. The Reliability of the attitude scale was tested by Cronbach's alpha method and it was found to be 0.706. The tools were found to be reliable. Pilot study was conducted to find out the feasibility of the study. A total of 100 samples were selected by non probability convenience sampling technique. Data collected from the samples were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS

The study findings are discussed under the following headings:

Section I: Descriptions of demographic characteristics of caregivers

Table 1 shows the distribution of caregivers according to the demographic characteristics.

The findings of the present study revealed that majority of caregivers (44%) belong to the age 26-40 years and majority of them that is 43% have collegiate education. Most of the caregivers (53%) belong to Hindu religion. Majority of the caregivers that is 53% were private employee, 56% of caregivers had the monthly income between Rs. 5001-10000. 39% of the caregivers were other than parent, sibling and relatives. Majority of caregivers (75%) of them don't have the family history of mental illness.

Section II: Analysis of knowledge of caregivers toward ECT

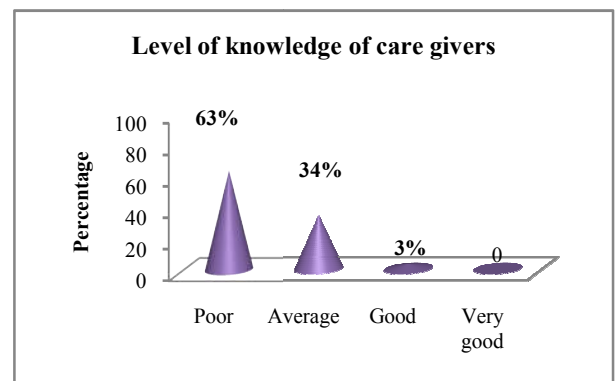


Figure 1 Cone diagram showing level of knowledge regarding ECT among caregivers

Figure 1 shows that majority of the caregivers of patients with mental illness that is 63% had poor knowledge whereas 34% had average knowledge and remaining 3% had good knowledge regarding ECT.

Section III: Analysis of attitude towards ECT among caregivers

Figure 2 shows that 88% of caregivers of patients with mental illness were shown unfavourable attitude towards ECT, only 12% of them have shown favouring attitude toward ECT.

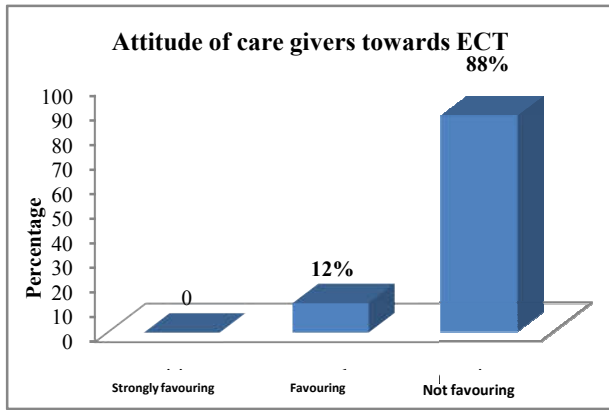


Figure 2 Bar diagram showing the attitude of caregivers towards ECT

caregivers had the monthly income between Rs. 5001-10000. 39% of the caregivers were other than parent, sibling and relatives. Majority of caregivers (75%) of them don't have the family history of mental illness.

These findings are consistent with the research findings of Mezinew Sintayehu, Haregwoin Mulat (2013) who had assessed the prevalence of mental distress and associated factor among caregivers of patient with severe mental illness and found 45.1% of caregivers were more than 44 years old, the less income status.¹⁰

Description of level of knowledge of caregivers regarding ECT

In the present study majority of caregivers that is 62% have poor knowledge, 34% have average knowledge and only 4% have good knowledge regarding ECT.

The study results were consistent with another study conducted by R. Rajagopal, S. Chakrabarti, S. Grover & N. Khehra which revealed that only 12.16% of caregiver's and patients came close to getting all their facts right. The majority (52-71%) were only aware of the rudiments of the ECT procedure. Fewer patients (38-49%) knew about the more specific aspects of the procedure, the consent process, mechanism, usual indications and side effects. Only a small proportion (4-25%) was aware of all possible indications and other finer details.¹¹

Description of attitude of caregivers towards ECT

In the present study majority of caregivers that is 88% have unfavouring attitude, only 12% of them have favouring attitude towards ECT.

The similar study conducted by Amitava Dan, Sandeep Grover, Subho Chakrabarti revealed that 53% of caregivers had positive attitude, 38% have negative attitude and 9% were uncertain about their attitude toward ECT.⁵

Association between level of knowledge, attitude of caregivers and selected demographic variables

The present results showed that caregivers of patient with mental illness had poor knowledge and unfavouring attitude towards ECT and there were no significant relationship between level of knowledge with their selected demographic variables.

A similar study conducted by Alaa El, Din M. D, Khaled A. M, Nadia E. S and Nagat M.K among caregivers of patients with mental illness showed that there were no significant differences among caregivers' knowledge and attitude toward ECT according to their socioeconomic status (p=0.02).¹²

CONCLUSION

The finding of the present study has quite a few implications in the field of nursing education, nursing administration, nursing practice and nursing research. The present findings also indicated that majority of caregivers of patient with mental illness have poor knowledge and unfavourable attitude toward ECT and hence the awareness on it becomes the prime importance. There is high need for right information, education, and advice to the most of the caregivers, especially of patients with mental illness

Section IV: Association between level of knowledge and selected demographic variables of caregivers.

Table 2 Association between level of knowledge and selected demographic variables

Sl. No.	Demographic variable	χ^2 value	P value	Inference
N=100				
1.	Age in years	46.92	0.39	NS
2.	Educational status	42.66	0.57	NS
3.	Religion	34.43	0.26	NS
4.	Occupation	36.98	0.79	NS
5.	Monthly income	26.51	0.98	NS
6.	Relationship with patient	55.62	0.13	NS
7.	Any family history of mental illness	22.50	0.83	NS

p<0.05, NS= Not significant

Data presented in Table 2 shows that there was no significant association between level of knowledge and demographic variables such as age, educational status, religion, occupation, income, relationship and family history of mental illness.

Section V: Association between attitude score and selected demographic variables

Table 3 Association between attitude score and selected demographic variables

Sl. No.	Demographic variable	χ^2 value	P value	Inference
N=100				
1.	Age in years	72.82	0.45	NS
2.	Educational status	79.04	0.26	NS
3.	Religion	49.96	0.39	NS
4.	Occupation	57.74	0.88	NS
5.	Monthly income	73.12	0.44	NS
6.	Relationship with patient	63.05	0.76	NS
7.	Any family history of mental illness	39.41	0.80	NS

p<0.05, S= significant, NS= Not significant

Data presented in Table 3 shows that there was no significant association between attitude and demographic variables such as age, educational status, religion, occupation, income, relationship, and history of mental illness.

DISCUSSION

Description of demographic characteristics of caregivers

The findings of the present study revealed that majority of caregivers (44%) belong to the age 26-40 years and majority of them that is 43% have collegiate education. Most of the caregivers (53%) belong to Hindu religion. Majority of the caregivers that is 53% were private employee, 56% of

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