

## Attitude towards the Administration of Psychotropic Medication Among the Caregivers of Patients With Mental Illness

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### Abstract:

**Background:** Mental illness is a condition that impacts a person's thinking, feeling or mood and may affect his or her ability to relate to others and function on a daily basis. Psychotropic drugs are now the first line treatment to treat mental illness. Poor medication compliance is found to be almost certainly the single most important factor in poor treatment response. The study was aimed to assess the attitude towards the administration of psychotropic medication among the caregivers of patients with mental illness.

**Materials and methods:** A descriptive research approach with non-experimental design was adopted for the study. 100 caregivers of patients with mental illness who met the inclusion criteria were selected through convenience sampling technique. Demographic proforma and attitude scale were used to collect the data.

**Result:** Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyse the data. Analysis revealed that the majority of the samples (93%) had favourable attitude whereas 29% of them had neutral attitude towards administration of psychotropic medication. The Chi-square test showed no significant association between the attitude score and selected demographic variables at 0.05 level of significance.

**Conclusion:** The overall findings of the study revealed that majority of the caregivers had favourable attitude towards administration of psychotropic medication

**Keywords:** Attitude, administration, psychotropic medications, caregivers, mental illness.

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### I. Introduction

Mental illness is a condition that impacts a person's thinking, feeling or mood and may affect his or her ability to relate to others and function on a daily basis. Research suggests multiple, interlinking causes. Genetics, environment and lifestyle combine to influence whether someone develops a mental health condition.<sup>1</sup> The worldwide statistics shows that the number of adults with any diagnosable mental disorder within the past year is nearly 1 in 5 or roughly 43 million Americans. A study done by the Government of India shows that one out of every five Indians is suffering from a mental disorder.<sup>3</sup>

Psychotropic drugs are now the first line treatment for almost every psychiatric illness with growing availability of wide range of drugs to treat mental illness. The patient on psychotropic drugs needs to take drug as prescribed and regular follow up is necessary to regulate long term therapy. Some patients do not follow the prescribed treatment because of various reasons. One of the major factors for re-hospitalization is found to be non-compliance in taking drugs. Poor medication compliance is found to be almost certainly the single most important factor in poor treatment response.<sup>2</sup>

Attitudes towards antipsychotic medication may be positive in individuals who recognize therapeutic drug effects, however other individuals may view medications negatively due to a sense of stigma.<sup>4</sup> Strong social supports, including family and community supports and a good relationship with the care team, reportedly exert a positive influence on medication adherence. When a family member acts as a caregiver, this has a positive effect on patient outcomes.<sup>5</sup> Many a time the immediate blood relatives or those who care for these patients are unaware of the importance of continuing medications. They are also ignorant about the side effects of these medications and importance of follow up. Failure to take prescribed medication is thought to be the biggest cause of subsequent relapse, and this fact must be made absolutely explicit. The patient's family members may be helpful in promoting long-term medication compliance if they are fully informed.<sup>6</sup>

### II. Materials And Methods

A descriptive research approach with non-experimental design was adopted for the study. To determine the content validity, the prepared tool along with objectives, operational definition and criteria checklist was given to seven experts. The reliability coefficient of tool was calculated by using Cronbach's Alpha method.

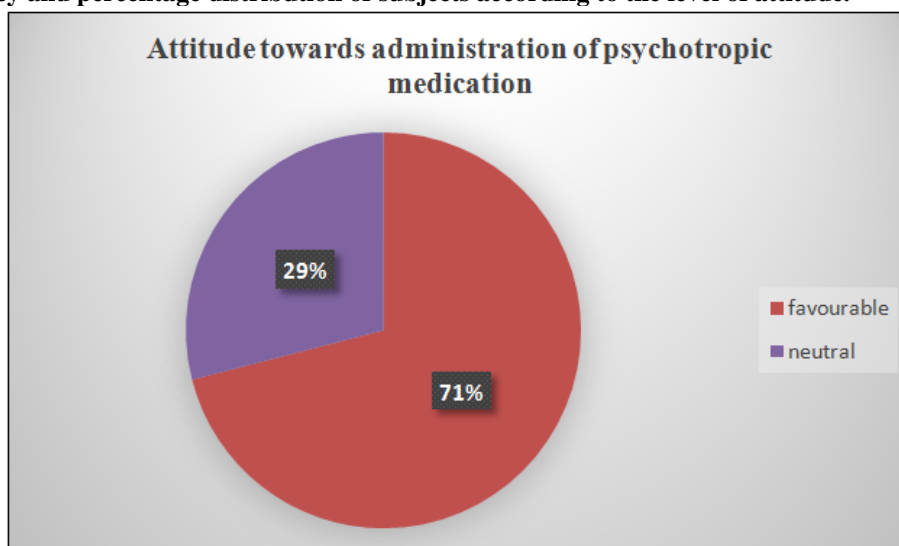
The calculated reliability (r) of the tool was 0.08, so the tool was found to be reliable. After seeking ethical clearance, a formal written permission was obtained from concerned hospital authorities. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. The final sample size was 100. Pilot study was conducted at Yenepoya hospital, Deralakatte and it was found feasible and practicable. The main study was conducted at K.S Hegde hospital, Deralakatte. The investigator explained the need and importance of study to the subjects and confidentiality was assured. After obtaining the consent for the study, the final data were collected by using demographic proforma and attitude scale on psychotropic medication. Data collected from the sample were analysed by descriptive and inferential statistics.

### III. Result

#### 3.1 Description of demographic variables of the study

The majority of the sample (33%) were in the age group of 29-38 years. Most of the sample (56%) were male, majority of the sample (58%) were belonged to Hindu religion, maximum number of the sample (47%) belongs to a nuclear and joint family, most of the sample (34%) had middle school education. majority of the sample (39%) were married. highest number of the sample (47%) had monthly income of Rs.50001-10000, most of the sample (43%) were labourers and majority of the sample (52%) reported that the duration of illness of their family member was <2 years. The highest number of the sample (92%) were having the information regarding the psychotropic medication from the health personnel.

#### 3.2 Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects according to the level of attitude.



**Figure 1:** Pie diagram shows the attitude score

The data in the Fig1 shows that 71% of the sample had favourable attitude whereas (29%) of sample had neutral attitude towards administration of psychotropic medication.

#### 3.3 Association between the attitude score and demographic variables

**Table 1:** Association between the attitude score of the caregivers and selected demographic variables.

**N=100**

Sl. No.	Variables	df	$\chi^2$ value	Table value	Inference
1	Age (in years)	4	.007	9.49	NS
2	Gender	1	.097	3.84	NS
3	Religion	2	.677	5.99	NS
4	Educational status	5	.072	11.07	NS
5	Marital status	3	.563	7.81	NS
6	Occupational status	5	.016	11.07	NS
7	Monthly income(in rupees)	4	.457	9.48	NS
8	Type of family	2	.230	5.99	NS
9	Duration of illness of the patient	2	.058	5.99	NS
10	Information regarding psychotropic medication:	1	.748	3.84	NS
11	If yes, source of information:	4	.042	9.48	NS

**P<0.05**

**NS= Not significant**

**S=Significant**

The data in the table 1 show that there is no significant association between the attitude score and selected demographic variables such as age in years ( $\chi^2 = .007$ ), gender ( $\chi^2 = .097$ ), religion ( $\chi^2 = .677$ ), education ( $\chi^2 = .072$ ), marital status ( $\chi^2 = .563$ ), occupation ( $\chi^2 = .016$ ), monthly income ( $\chi^2 = .457$ ), type of family ( $\chi^2 = .230$ ), duration of illness ( $\chi^2 = .058$ ), information regarding psychotropic medication ( $\chi^2 = .748$ ) and source of information ( $\chi^2 = .042$ ). Hence the null hypothesis is accepted for the same variable.

#### **IV. Discussion**

Attitude scale revealed that majority (71%) of the sample had favourable attitude whereas least (29%) number of sample had neutral attitude towards the administration of psychotropic medication to the patients with mental illness. These findings were consistent with the research findings of another study conducted to assess the attitude towards psychotropic medications among patients with chronic psychiatric disorders and their family caregivers shows on the 8 items assessing positive attitude toward psychotropic medications, responses of 58-78.5% of patients and 54.5-83.5% of caregivers reflected favourable attitude toward psychotropics. With regards to the 10 items assessing the negative attitude toward psychotropics, responses of 8.5-79.5% of patients and 5-82% of caregivers reflected that they had favourable attitude toward psychotropics. This indicated that positive and negative attitudes toward psychotropic medications were equally prevalent among patients and the caregivers.<sup>7</sup>

#### **V. Conclusion**

This study found that majority (71%) of the sample had favorable attitude whereas (29%) of sample had neutral attitude towards administration of psychotropic medication to the patient with mental illness. The nurse educator can plan and organize various teaching programmes for the caregivers to bring awareness medication administration and prevention of relapse among the patient with mental illness.

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