

An executive summary of the final report of the work done on the minor research project of Roshan Monteiro, P.G. Department of Social Work, St Aloysius College (Autonomous), Mangalore entitled **“Assessment of Beliefs & Practices among Families with Mental Illness & Effectiveness of Education in Selected Communities of Mangalore Rural Areas”** , sanctioned by UGC, vide sectioned letter no MRP (H)-072/12-13/ KAMA002/ UGC-SWRO dated 23 Sept. 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The enormity of mental health problem and its resultant burden upon human society is gigantic. Mental illness is still perceived as an immoderation, a sign of weakness. Stigma, prejudice, and unfairness are closely related and tightly interwoven social constructs. Stigma, or prejudice, and discrimination against those with mental illness cut across all classes and social groups. The main objectives of this study were to investigate the family and community approach in terms of beliefs and practices towards the mental health perspectives and the effectiveness of 'Community treatment' for mental health problems in terms of hospitalisation and cost-effectiveness - preventive and Promotive aspects of mental health.

The researcher selected a descriptive research design for the research study in order to obtain complete accurate information on the approach in terms of belief, Practices and Effectiveness of Education of rural community towards mental health problems. Dakshina Kannada District was the universe for this study which is located in Costal Karnataka, India. Hundred subjects in all age groups from selected rural areas of Dakshina Kannada District by proportionate simple random sampling. Data was collected through face to face interview method using semi-structured questionnaire. All analysis was performed by using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software windows (version 16.0).

Major findings were assessed based on the results of the study. According to this research there is mental illness existing in families, among the types of mental illness faced by mentally ill persons were mentally retarded, most of the family members feel that mental

illness is a burden, there is negative opinion among family members, despite of mentally ill patients undergone treatment still family members feel that practicing beliefs towards eradication of mental illness is effective, there is a lack of community health education and there are no any effective community health programmes related to mental health organised by government.

Mental health is considered as an integral part of health and equal care and concern is necessary to acquire it as people show concern towards physical health. The study addressed stigmatised beliefs and practices can lead to poor care for the ill persons and effectiveness of education is essential to have positive outlook towards mental health and problems and keep up the dignity and right based care for ill persons. Mental health remains a neglected issue in most developing countries, where access to effective mental health services is limited. The integration of mental health into primary health care is necessary to promote as a strategy to address this problem. Consequently, there is an urgent need to enhance mental health awareness among communities, and to provide mental health training for primary healthcare staff.

Study showed that mental health promotion should be based on holistic and integrated. The treatment and intervention programmes for mentally ill persons focused on their background, culture, education, employment and more often done in a positive approach. Government and health organisations and other health professionals need to be committed to assess health issues by implementing programmes, treatment benefits which are lacking in these communities. During interaction family members expressed their opinion that care giving for the mental ill patients is burden. Therefore training on coping skills and care giving methods need to be implemented. Study stresses that people should recognise mental health is part of health concern and it has to be taken as physical health.