

Research Article

A Study to Assess the Effectiveness of Structured Teaching Programme on Knowledge Regarding Ganser Syndrome among Law Students of Selected Colleges, Hubballi

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Abstract: Background: Any emotional distress to a person may lead him into various types of mental disorders, ranging from neurosis to psychosis. It is very important to have knowledge to identify some peculiar psychiatric disorders like Ganser syndrome. **Objectives:** (1) To assess the pretest and post knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome. (2) To assess the effectiveness of structured teaching programme on knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome and to find out association between pre-test knowledge scores with their selected socio demographic variables. **Methodology:** An evaluative study was conducted among 40 law students of selected Law college of Hubballi. The research design used for the study was Pre-experimental; one group pre-test, post-test design. **Results:** In the pre-test 35(87.5%) had average knowledge, 03(7.5%) had good knowledge and 02(05%) had poor knowledge. In post-test, 39(97.5%) had good knowledge, 1(2.5%) had average knowledge and none of them had poor knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome. There was a significant gain in knowledge of law students who were exposed structured teaching program i.e. 28.22%. The paired 't' test value ($t_{cal} = 13.45$) at $p < 0.05$ level of significance for knowledge proved that the stated hypothesis i.e. the mean posttest knowledge scores of law students regarding Ganser syndrome will be higher than pretest knowledge scores at 0.05 level of significance. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that structured teaching program was more effective for law students to increase and update their knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome. **Keywords:** Ganser syndrome, knowledge, laws students, structured teaching programme.

Introduction

A law is valuable, not because it is a law, but because there is right in it.

-Henry Ward Beecher

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely absence of disease or infirmity. Normal mental health, much like normal health, is a rather difficult concept to define. Although, normality is not an easy concept to define, some of the traits are more commonly found in 'normal' individuals are; reality orientation, self-awareness and self-knowledge, self-acceptance and self-esteem.¹ Mental illness is maladjustment in living. It produces disharmony in the person's ability to meet human needs comfortably or effectively and function within a culture.¹

Dissociative disorders are defined by a disruption in the usually integrated functions of consciousness, memory, identity, or perception. Dissociative responses occur when anxiety becomes overwhelming and the personality becomes disorganised. Dissociative disorders are mainly, dissociative identity disorders, dissociative amnesia, dissociative fugue, depersonalization disorder and rarely Ganser syndrome.²

Ganser syndrome was first described in 1897 by Sigbert Ganser in 4 prisoners. Initially, it was believed to be rare, occurring mainly in forensic settings. Later, such cases were reported more frequently in non-forensic settings. The syndrome has found a place in both the ICD-10 and DSM-IV, despite controversy about its existence and distinctiveness. This disorder was previously classified as a factitious disorder; currently, it is classified under 'dissociative disorder not otherwise specified'.³

In the patients with Ganser's syndrome, their central diagnostic feature is indeed a tendency to reliably provide wrong and approximate responses, especially to the most trivial and innocent questions. On the surface, this looks simple enough, yet, 120 years after it was first described this rare and controversial condition still raises profound and unresolved issues.⁴ Ganser syndrome is a type of factitious disorder, a mental illness in which a person deliberately and consciously acts as if he or she has a physical or mental illness when he or she is not really sick. People with Ganser syndrome mimic behavior that is typical of a mental illness.⁵

The syndrome tends to be more common in men (75%), with a male to female ratio of 4:1. It has been most frequently seen in individuals ages 15 to 40 and has also been observed in children. Ganser syndrome has also been observed in groups other than prison populations.⁶ Ganser syndrome is also referred to as "prison psychosis," because it was first observed in prisoners and it is emphasizing its prevalence among prisoners but this syndrome can also occur in apparently healthy individuals who have been facing a stressor of some description.

It is characterized by nonsensical or wrong answers to questions and other dissociative symptoms such as fugue, amnesia or conversion disorder, often with visual pseudo hallucinations and a decreased state of consciousness. The syndrome has also been called nonsense syndrome, balderdash syndrome, syndrome of approximate answers, hysterical pseudo dementia or prison psychosis.⁷ The law is a system of rules that a society or government develops in order to deal with crime.⁵ Law students are the individual who are trained in the law and that has been certified to give legal advice or to represent others in litigation. Lawyers work in a variety of fields, from criminal law to divorce law to patent law, navigating the legal system on behalf of their clients.⁸

Law students learn about corrections and security as well as the role of criminal justice in the judicial system. They also study security and loss prevention. After completing the program, one will possess an in depth understanding of justice, criminal law, and other aspects of the field. As the Ganser syndrome is seen in the prisoners and the lawyers deal with them, knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome would be of helpful to them.⁹

A case study was conducted on Ganser syndrome in a 15 year adolescent boy, studying in 10th class in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. On evaluation, history of being bullied for few months was revealed by his distraught parents. He would answer incorrectly to many of the questions and would give approximate answers (vorbeireden). Pseudo-hallucinations and confabulation were also documented in the patient. His personal and developmental history was unremarkable. No concerning personality issues were found. The study concluded that Diagnosis of Ganser Syndrome should be considered in patient of any age group presenting with altered sensorium, disorientation, vorbeireden, pseudo-hallucinations and/or confabulation. Multiple differential diagnoses including acute and transient psychotic disorder, factitious disorder and malingering should be discussed.¹⁰

Today, Ganser syndrome is debated by both psychiatric and judicial systems. Ganser syndrome is considered as a hysterical reaction, was often used to describe prisoners who appeared to be trying to escape prosecution. Knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome is of most important for the Law students for their future endurance.¹¹

Hence there is a need to educate the law students regarding the Ganser syndrome, its symptoms, diagnosis and treatment. This will help them to identify the cases of Ganser syndrome among the prisoners while dealing with the cases in their future law practice.

Material and Methods

Research approach: Evaluative Research Approach.

Research design: Pre-experimental; one group pre-test, post-test design.

Research setting: KLES G.K. Law College, Hubballi.

Population

Target Population : Law students

Accessible Population : 40 Final year law students studying in KLES' G.K. Law College, Hubballi.

Sample and sampling technique

Sample : Final year law students studying in KLES' G. K. Law College, Hubballi.

Sampling technique : Probability; Simple Random sampling technique.

Sample size : 40

Criteria for selection of the sample

The criteria for sample selection are mainly depicted under two headings, which includes the inclusion and the exclusion criteria.

Inclusion Criteria

- ✓ Students who are studying in final year of KLES' G.K. Law College, Hubballi.
- ✓ Students who are available at the time of data collection
- ✓ Both male and female students are included

Exclusion criteria

- ✓ Students who are not willing to participate
- ✓ Students who were sick during data collection

Development of the tool

The tool used for research study was structured knowledge questionnaire which was prepared to assess the knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome. The tool was formulated on the basis of the experience of the investigator, review of literature, extensive library search and consultation with experts.

Description of the data collection tool

In this study the data collection tools were consisted of 2 parts covering the following areas.

Part I: Socio demographic of law students included 7 items such as age, gender, religion, type of family, area of residence, study of Ganser syndrome in curriculum and source of information about Ganser syndrome.

Part II: Structured knowledge questionnaire on ganser syndrome.

Development and Description of the Structured Teaching Programme

Structured Teaching Programme on knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome was designed to educate and upgrade the knowledge of law students.

For the present study, in order to organise the content of the lesson plan, the literature were reviewed from the books, journals, published and unpublished studies, electronic media and websites. Opinion and suggestions from various experts were also considered for designing structured teaching programme.

Results

Findings related to socio-demographic variables of subjects

Majority of the subjects 32(80%) belongs to the age group of 21-30 years, 07(17.50%) belongs the age group of 31-40 years and 01(2.50%) belongs to the age group of 41-50 years. Maximum number of subjects 26(65%) were males and 14(35%) were females. Majority of the subjects 38(95%) were from Hindu religion, 02(05%) were from Muslim religion. With regards to family type, majority of subjects 25(62.50%) were from joint family whereas 15 (37.50%) were from nuclear family. With regards to area of residence, 21(52.50%) were from rural area while 19(47.50%) were from urban area. Regarding study of Ganser syndrome as a part of their curriculum, all the subjects 40(100%) have not studied Ganser syndrome as a part of their curriculum. Maximum subjects 36(90%) had no information about Ganser syndrome, while 04(10%) had the source of information as electronic media.

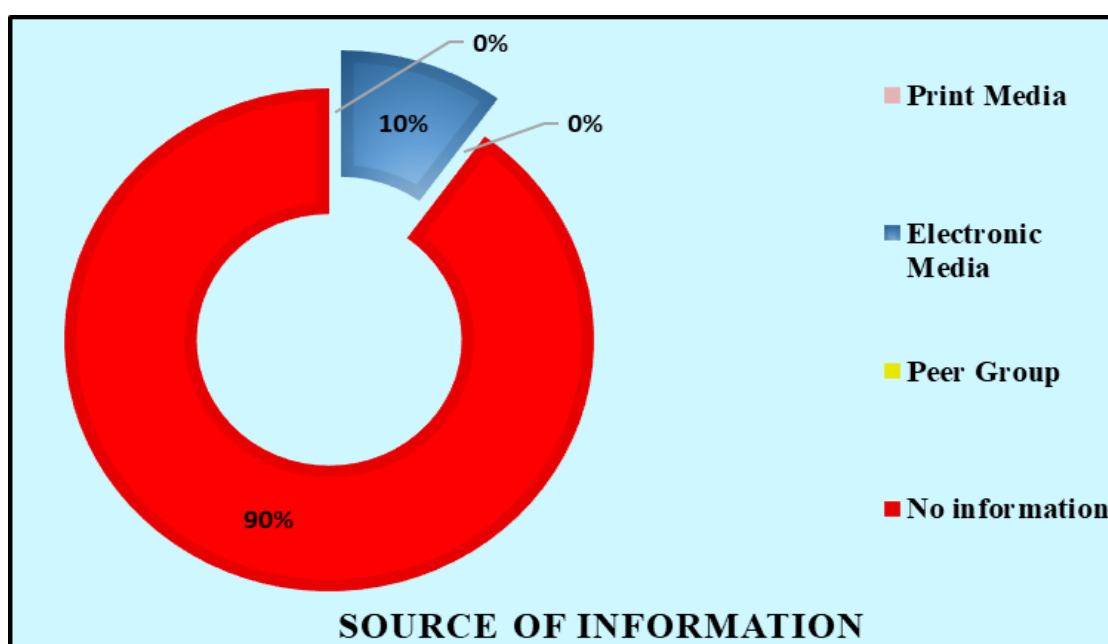


Figure 1. Distribution of subjects according to source of information regarding Ganser syndrome

Analysis and interpretation of knowledge scores of subjects who have participated in the study regarding anser syndrome

Table 1. Mean, Standard Deviation and Range of knowledge scores of subjects regarding Ganser syndrome.

Area of analysis	Mean	Standard deviation	Range
Pre test	8.7	2.45	13
Post test	14.62	1.40	07
Difference	5.92	1.05	06

Table 1 reveals that that the pre-test mean knowledge score was 8.7, standard deviation 2.45 and range 13. Whereas the post-test, mean knowledge score was 14.62, standard deviation 1.40 and range 07. The overall difference in mean knowledge score was 5.92 and range 06.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage distribution of knowledge scores of subjects regarding Ganser syndrome.

Level of Knowledge	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Good (above 11)	03	7.5%	39	97.5%
Average (06 to 11)	35	87.5%	01	2.5%
Poor (below 06)	02	05%	00	00

Table 2 shows that distribution of level of knowledge of law students regarding Ganser syndrome during pre-test and post-test. Most of the subjects in the pre-test 35(87.5%) had average knowledge, 03(7.5%) had good knowledge and 02(05%) had poor knowledge. In post-test after STP, 39(97.5%) had good knowledge, 1(2.5%) had average knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome and none had poor knowledge.

Table 3. Pre-test, post-test percentage of knowledge scores of subjects regarding Ganser syndrome.

Items	Mean % of knowledge scores of subjects		
Structured knowledge questionnaire	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain in knowledge
	41.42	69.64	28.22*

Table 3 reveals that there was 28.22% gain in knowledge after administration of structured Teaching Program regarding Ganser syndrome.

Testing of hypothesis

Calculated t-value ($t_{cal}=13.45^*$) was greater than the tabulated t-value ($t_{tab}=2.02$). This indicates that the gain in knowledge score was statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the structured teaching program regarding Ganser syndrome was effective in improving the knowledge of subjects.

Analysis and interpretation of data to find out an association between pre-test knowledge scores of subjects with their selected socio demographic variables

Calculated chi-square value for age 20.54 was greater than tabulated value 9.49. Hence, there was an association between pretest knowledge scores of subjects only with their Age. And there is no association between pretest knowledge scores of subjects with their other socio demographic variables like, gender, religion, family type, area of residence, study of ganser syndrome in curriculum and sources of information about Ganser syndrome. Hence only H2.1 was accepted.

Discussion

This study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of structured teaching programme on knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome among law students of selected colleges, Hubballi. There were no literatures found either to support or to contradict the findings related to effectiveness of structured teaching programme on knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome and also association between knowledge scores with selected socio-demographic variables. Ganser syndrome is one of the least researched topics in the field of psychiatry nursing. Only few articles, limited scientific research and theories are available on knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome.

Conclusion

The findings revealed that, out of forty law students, majority of the subjects 32(80%) belongs to the age group of 21-30 years, maximum number of subjects 26(65%) were males. Nobody among the subjects studied Ganser syndrome in their curriculum. Maximum subjects 36(90%) had no information about the syndrome. With respect to their knowledge most of the subjects in the pre-test

35(87.5%) had average knowledge, 03(7.5%) had good knowledge and 02(05%) had poor knowledge. In post-test, 39(97.5%) had good knowledge, 1(2.5%) had average knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome.

The study concluded that, the overall pre-test knowledge scores of law students were average. The post-test knowledge scores of the law students after administration of structured teaching programme was significantly higher than the pre-test knowledge scores. This indicates the structured teaching program was effective to improve the knowledge of law students. Hence, the need of teaching sessions regarding Ganser syndrome for law students is highly recommended.

Implications of the Study

The investigator has drawn the following implication from the study:

A. Nursing Education

- ✓ Psychiatric nurses who practice in both psychiatric and legal systems need an understanding of Ganser syndrome to adequately assess the patient, plan effective treatment and evaluation of care.
- ✓ When a psychiatric evaluation is ordered by the court, it is the responsibility of a psychiatric facility to assess, treat, and evaluate Ganser syndrome. The patients may return to court following the psychiatric evaluation if they are found competent to stand trial. Hence nurses need to be educated on Ganser syndrome.

B. Nursing Practice

- ✓ With respect to clinical implications, Ganser syndrome is uncommon in children and adolescents, its recognition is necessary to distinguish this disorder from psychotic disorders, especially in prisoners.
- ✓ Individual with Ganser syndrome should be admitted for assessment and suggests the need for follow-up after apparent recovery.

C. Nursing Administration

- ✓ The study helps the nursing manager to initiate and carry out various methods of teaching for nursing students, nurses, law students and lawyers regarding Ganser syndrome at various settings.

D. Nursing Research

- ✓ Ganser syndrome is one of the least researched in the field of psychiatry nursing.
- ✓ More number of researches is needed to be conducted on the nature, symptoms and treatment and prognosis of Ganser syndrome.

Recommendations

Keeping in the view the findings of the present study, the following recommendations were made:

- ✓ This study can be replicated to a larger sample to generalize the findings.
- ✓ A similar study can be undertaken with a control group design.
- ✓ A comparative study can be conducted on law students and advocates and the findings can be compared.
- ✓ A similar study can be conducted on nurses to assess the knowledge regarding Ganser syndrome.

Conflicts of interest

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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