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Assess the knowledge regarding medico legal issues among staff nurses and nursing students in tertiary care hospital, Nellore

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Abstract

Nursing involves the protection, promotion and optimization of health and prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human responses, and advocacy in health care for individuals, families, communities, and populations. The important necessity for the nurse is to be aware of legal aspects associated with caring and helping people in the health care industry today unfortunately, more negligence cases are occurring and in Western societies less people want to get into the health care field, fearing legal aspects and the inevitable law suits. The present cross sectional descriptive study was conducted with an aim to identify the knowledge regarding medico legal issues among 15 staff nurses and 15 nursing students. Samples were selected by using simple random sampling technique. Structured questionnaire was used for collecting information from the respondents. The results were revealed that majority 9(60%) staff nurses and Nursing student's moderately adequate knowledge regarding medico legal issues. The study concluded that there is a need to conduct in-service education programme on medico legal aspects in delivery of care.

Keywords: Knowledge, Medico Legal Issues, Staff Nurses, Nursing Students.

Introduction

Nursing Encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick as well and in all settings. Nursing includes the promotion of health, prevention of illness, and the care of ill, disable and dying people. Nursing also includes the use of clinical judgment in the provision of care of enable people to improve, maintain, or recover health, to cope with health problem, and to achieve the best quantity of life, whatever their disease or disability, until death.

The important necessity for the nurse is to be aware of legal aspects associated with caring and helping people in the health care industry. Today unfortunately, more negligence cases are occurring and less people want to get into the health care field, Because of fearing legal aspects and the inevitable law suits.

The primary goals of professional accountability in nursing are to maintain high standards of care and to prevent the patients from harm. Nurses should be aware of each action taken be able to defined their actions and be willing to accept the consequences of their actions. It is imperative for nurse to be accountable to themselves for proper use of their knowledge and skill in providing care.

The best way for the nurse to avoid a lawsuit is to be aware of the standards of nursing practice and follow them by heart.

Employment as a nurse requires a nursing degree as well as knowledge of the nursing laws that will apply should there be a misunderstanding or challenge by a patient of their family. Many hospitals are not willing to their nurses without the legal knowledge now that legal issues are becoming more problematic. In order to avoid liability and guard against negligence of malpractice suits, the nurse must be aware of legal responsibilities of each aspect of issues of nursing.

Material and Methods

This cross sectional descriptive study was carried out to assess the knowledge regarding medico legal issues among staff nurses. After obtaining ethical clearance 15 Staff nurses and 15 Nursing students were selected by using non-probability convenience sampling technique. The data collected from sample by using interview method and documented. Statistical analysis was performed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Inclusion Criteria

- Nurses and nursing students who are
1. Both male and female nurses in NMCH.
 2. The nursing students who are studying in B. Sc. Nursing in Narayana Nursing Institutions.

Inclusion Criteria

1. On leave during the time of data collection
2. Not willing to participate in the study.

Description of the Tool

The tool was developed with the help of related literature from various text books, journals, website, discussion and guidance from experts.

Part-I: Consists of age, religion, language, education, experience.

Part-II: Consists of semi structured questionnaire to assess the knowledge regarding medico legal issues.

Plan for Data Analysis

The data is analyzed in terms of objectives of the study using descriptive and inferential statistics.

| Sl. No | Data Analysis | Method | Remarks |
|--------|------------------------|---|--|
| 1. | Descriptive Statistics | Frequency, Percentage distribution, Mean and Standard Deviation | *Distribution of socio demographic variables *To assess the knowledge regarding medico legal issues |
| 2. | Inferential statistics | Chi-Square | *to find the association between knowledge regarding medico legal issues and socio demographic variables |

Results

The data were organized and presented under the following Headings.

Section-I

- i) Frequency and percentage distribution of Socio demographic variables among staff nurses.
- ii) Frequency and percentage distribution of Socio demographic variables among nursing students.

Section-II

- ii) Comparison of level of knowledge regarding medico legal issues between staff nurses and nursing students.

Section-III

Comparison of mean and standard deviation of knowledge scores regarding medico legal issues among staff nurses and nursing students.

Section- IV

- i) Association between the level of knowledge regarding medico legal issues among staff nurses with socio demographic variables.
- ii) Association between the level of knowledge regarding medico legal issues among nursing students with socio demographic variables.

Section-I

Frequency and percentage distribution of Socio demographic variables among staff nurses.

Majority of staff nurses 11(73.4%) are between the age group of 21-23 years, 12 (80%) staff nurses are females, 13(86.67%) nurses completed BSC (N), 7(46.7%) staff nurses have < 1 year of experience, 9(60%) staff nurses got information from all the above (mass media, practical experience, curriculum), 11(73.3%) have not attended CNE program on medico legal issues.

Frequency and percentage distribution of Socio demographic variables among nursing students.

Majority 12(80%) are between the age group of 18-20 years, 15(100%) are studying BSC (N) Course, 6(40%) nursing

students got from all the above (mass media, internet, practical experience, curriculum).

Section-II

Comparison of level of knowledge regarding medico legal issues between staff nurses and nursing students.

| Level of knowledge | Staff nurses | | Nursing students | |
|---------------------|--------------|------|------------------|------|
| | (F) | (%) | (F) | (%) |
| Inadequate | 2 | 13.7 | 5 | 33.7 |
| Moderately adequate | 9 | 60 | 9 | 60 |
| adequate | 4 | 26.3 | 1 | 6.3 |
| total | 15 | 100 | 15 | 100 |

Comparison of mean and standard deviation of knowledge scores regarding medico legal issues among staff nurses and nursing students.

| Category | Mean | Standard deviation |
|----------------|-------|--------------------|
| Staff nurses | 18.6 | 4.254 |
| Student nurses | 16.73 | 2.322 |

Section- IV

Association between the level of knowledge regarding medico legal issues among staff nurses with socio demographic variables.

The study finding reveals that there is an association between the level of knowledge with socio demographic variables such as Gender has obtained Chi square value of 6.082 with table value of 5.991 shows significance at $P < 0.05$, and Work experience has obtained Chi square value of 14.99 with table value of 9.48 shows significance at $p < 0.05$.

Association between the level of knowledge regarding medico legal issues among nursing students with socio demographic variables. Remaining variables like Age, gender, educational qualification, source of information, and attended any programme knowledge shows no significant association.

Association between the level of knowledge regarding medico legal issues among nursing students with socio demographic variables.

The study findings explicit that there is no association between level of knowledge and sociodemographic variables of Student Nurses.

Conclusion

The study findings revealed that majority of staff nurses and nursing students have moderately adequate knowledge regarding medico legal issues. It indicates that there is a need to conduct in service education programmes regarding medico legal issues among staff and student nurses.

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