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Staff nurses' knowledge regarding holistic nursing care

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Abstract

Background: Holistic nursing care concepts are included in the nursing curriculum but still it appears to be a vague concept which makes it difficult for the staff nurses to put it into practice. Knowledge regarding holistic nursing care is essential in providing high quality care and increased patient satisfaction. **Aims and Objectives:** To assess the knowledge of staff nurses regarding holistic nursing care. **Materials and Methods:** Study was conducted in a selected hospital of Udupi District using a comparative survey design. The study involved convenient samples of 150 staff nurses with at least one year of experience as registered nurses. Questionnaires on demographics and knowledge on holistic nursing care were prepared. **Results:** Ninety two percent of the nurses were in between 20 to 30years, 88 % were females, 68.7% were GNM qualified, 85% of them had experience within 1-5 years, and 56 % of them were working in Intensive Care Units ICUs. The study also revealed that majority (58%) of the nurses had average knowledge regarding holistic nursing care.

Key words: Knowledge, Holistic nursing care, Staff nurses

Introduction

Holistic health and holistic nursing is not a recently evolved concept. It can be traced back to the age of Florence Nightingale (Dossey, 2005). American Holistic Nurse's Association defines holistic nursing as "all nursing that has healing the whole person as its goal". The holistic nursing is focused on integrating caring along with healing (Thornton, 2008). The present scenario of health care system which is going for specialization in every aspect of health care is more focused on human body and its physical needs. Many a times the psychological, social, and spiritual needs are less met and thus the care being delivered is lacking a holistic perspective. Addressing these needs and treating the patient as an individual is essential to transform the care provided to be holistic in nature. In

this context holistic nursing care appears to be more important (Koslander, da Silva, & Roxberg, 2009; Nyström, 2002). It is also found that the nurses who are entering newly into the profession do not have a clear understanding about holistic nursing care. Even though the curriculum includes holistic nursing concepts, still it appears to be a vague concept which makes it difficult for the nurses to put into practice (Filej & Kaučič, 2013). Nurses possessing adequate knowledge regarding holistic nursing care will be able to deliver a high quality care to their patients and will also ensure increased patient satisfaction.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in a selected hospital of Udupi District among staff nurses in the month of January 2014. The design adopted was a descriptive survey design. The participants of the study were selected using a convenient sampling technique. One hundred and fifty staff nurses who had at least one year of experience as registered staff nurses have given consent to be a part of the study. Questionnaires on demographics and knowledge on holistic nursing care were prepared. Content validity of knowledge questionnaire was established by nine experts from nursing and related fields. The reliability of the tool was

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established by split half technique by administering it to 20 staff nurses. This method of reliability measures the internal consistency of the tool and it was found to be reliable ($r = .8$). The demographic Proforma and the knowledge questionnaire consisted of six items and 20 items respectively. The knowledge questionnaire contained 12 questions on holistic nursing care and eight scenario based questions of multiple choice type. Correct responses were scored 'one' and incorrect responses were scored 'zero'. The maximum possible score was 20. Ethical aspects were taken into consideration by getting approval from the ethical committee of the institution and obtaining written informed consent from the participants. Data were collected from staff nurses who have at least one year of experience as registered nurse and were available at the time of data collection.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

Among the 150 staff nurses participated in the study majority (92%) of the nurses were in between 20-30 years, 88% were females, 68.7% were GNM qualified nurses and 85% of them had experience within 1 to 5 years. The majority (56%) of the participants were working in ICU. Demographic data are described in Table 1.

Table 1:
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Sample Characteristics
N=150

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age(in years)		
20 – 30	138	92.0
31 – 40	7	4.7
41 – 50	5	3.3
Gender		
Male	18	12.0
Female	132	88.0
Educational qualification		
GNM	103	68.7
BSc (N)	47	31.3
Years of clinical experience		
1 – 5	128	85.3
6 – 10	12	8.0
11 – 15	1	0.7
16 – 20	4	2.7
21 – 25	5	3.3
Area of work		
ICU	84	56
Ward	66	44

Description of knowledge score of staff nurses regarding holistic nursing care in terms of frequency and percentage was computed. The knowledge score was categorized as good ($\geq 80\%$), average ($> 50\%$) and poor ($\leq 50\%$). The description of knowledge score is shown in Table 2.

Table 2:
Description of Knowledge Score on Holistic Nursing Care of Staff Nurses
N=150

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean \pm S.D
Good	7	4.7	10.35 \pm 2.81
Average	87	58	
Poor	56	37.3	

The data analysis revealed that majority 58 % of the nurses had average knowledge regarding holistic nursing care, 37.3 % had poor knowledge and only 4.7 % had good knowledge. The description is represented in Figure 1.

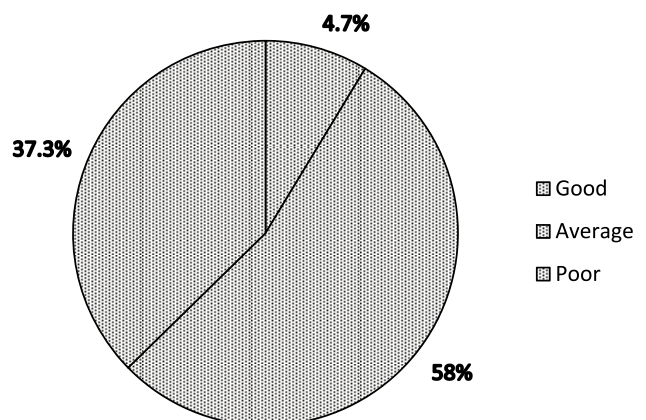


Figure 1: Pie diagram showing knowledge regarding holistic nursing care

Discussion

Majority (92%) of the nurses were in the age group of 20 – 30 years, 88 % were females, 68.7 % were GNM qualified nurses and 85 % of them had experience within 1 to 5 years. Majority (56%) of the participants were working in ICU.

The study findings reveal that only very few nurses (4.7%) had good knowledge with regard to holistic nursing care, 58 % of the nurses had only average knowledge, and 37.3% had poor knowledge. This finding is supported by the study conducted by (Filej & Kaučič, 2013) which explored the knowledge of holistic nursing practice among nurses. The study results showed that the participants had understanding

regarding holistic nurse practice but needed more clarity.

Pelzang, Wood, & Black, (2013) conducted a study in Bhutan to explore the understanding and perception of patient centered care among the staff nurses. The study made use of a mixed approach and survey questionnaires to collect data. The study findings revealed that nurses had knowledge regarding patient centered care but expressed the need to improve the knowledge which is a supportive finding for the present study.

Nurses often neglect the spiritual needs of the patients because they are not aware as to how to assess the spiritual needs. As spiritual care is a significant element of holistic care, neglecting spiritual needs will lead to care being compartmentalized. A study conducted in Norwegian nursing homes stressed the importance of this aspect of spiritual needs among people with dementia and the need to identify ways to interpret the spiritual needs (Ødbehr, Kvigne, Hauge, & Danbolt, 2014).

Holistic nature of nursing with an importance on spiritual needs of the patients should not be forgotten with the advent of modern technologies. Holistic nursing creates a feeling of completeness and harmony in the patient and also it adds to the aesthetics of care (Radmehr, Ashktorab, & Abedsaeedi, 2015).

Conclusion

Though the concept of holistic nursing care is included in the basic nursing curriculum, the knowledge of staff nurses regarding the concept was not very good. This shows that with the advent of modern technology, the nursing care is more fragmented than holistic.

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