



EFFECT OF INFORMATION BOOKLET ON KNOWLEDGE REGARDING MEDICOLEGAL ASPECTS OF NURSING CARE AMONG REGISTERED NURSES IN SELECTED HOSPITALS, KOLKATA

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ABSTRACT

The investigator conducted a pre experimental study to assess the effect of information booklet on knowledge regarding medicolegal aspects of nursing care among registered nurses in selected hospitals, Kolkata with the objectives to determine the knowledge level of registered nurses regarding medicolegal aspects of nursing care and also to evaluate the effect of information booklet on medicolegal aspects of nursing care. The conceptual framework of the study was based on system model of self learning materials for health workers-a guide for development, utilization and evaluation. One group pre-test post-test research design was adopted. Non-probability convenience sampling technique was adopted to select 120 registered nurses. The tools used were an unstructured questionnaire and a structured knowledge questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed that the mean post-test knowledge score of registered nurses (29.7) was higher than the mean pre-test knowledge score (21.96) with a mean difference of 7.74 which was found to be statistically significant as evident from 't' value [$t(119) = 19.85$] at 0.01 level of significance, indicating the effectiveness of the information booklet. The findings also revealed that there is no significant association between knowledge of the participants and selected demographic variables. The findings of the study have several implications in nursing practice, education, administration and research. The study can be replicated on a large population for better generalization of study findings.

KEYWORDS : Information booklet, Medicolegal aspects of nursing care, Registered nurses

INTRODUCTION

"Ignorance of law is not an excuse"

The word medicolegal has originated from the latin word "medicolegalis" where "medicus" pertaining to medical and "legalis" pertaining to legal. Medicolegal is something that involves both medical and legal aspects [1]. Medicolegal is further defined as, of, relating to or concerned with both medicine and law. It is the field that deals with the application of medical knowledge to the administration of justice (Wecht, 1965)⁴. Along with the advancement of legal medicine, the increase need of legal concepts in nursing were also felt. This lead to the emphasis on legal and ethical aspects in nursing. But this change majorly came into force from the 1930s onwards . In ancient India too, medical opinion was frequently applied to the requirements of the law.

Nursing takes place in a variety of public and private settings and includes disease prevention, health promotion, health protection, surveillance, education, maintenance, restoration, coordination, management and evaluation of care of individuals, families and populations including communities [8]. In India, the enactment of various legal provisions like Consumer Protection Act, India, 1986 (CPA), Right to Information Act, 2005 (RTI) and standardization of procedures and practices have brought nursing care under the legal ambit and focus, more than ever before. In this era of specialization, the focus of nursing and medical profession is progressing from noble to a commercial one. Patients are also now more concerned in facilities and quality of care. However, of late, nurses in India have been in the limelight for negligence and cases of criminal medical negligence where nurses are also being registered in court (Kumar, 2013)⁶. The knowledge of legal responsibilities is integral with the expanding clinical role, and a logical application of the planned, systematic, and focused care, which should be the goal of modern nursing. The nurse protects the client's human and legal rights and provides assistance in asserting those rights if the need arises. In order to serve this function, a knowledge regarding legal aspects of health care is essential.

Problem statement

Assessment of the effect of information booklet on knowledge regarding medicolegal aspects of nursing care among registered nurses in selected hospitals, Kolkata.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Variables

Independent variable- Information booklet on medicolegal aspects of nursing care.

Dependent variable- Knowledge of registered nurses

Research Hypothesis

H1- The mean post test knowledge score of the registered nurses on medicolegal aspects of nursing care is significantly higher than the mean pretest knowledge score as measured by the structured knowledge questionnaire at 0.05 level of significance.

Research design

A pre-experimental study with one group pretest- posttest research design was adopted for the present study.

Study setting

The present study was conducted in five hospitals of Kolkata - at Nil Ratan Sarkar Medical College and Hospital, Calcutta National Medical College, Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute, Chittaranjan Seba Sadan and Shishu Sadan Hospital and Vidyasagar S.G Hospital.

Population

All registered nurses working in hospital of Kolkata.

Sample and Sample size

The present study was conducted with 120 registered nurses working in selected hospitals of Kolkata.

Sample technique

Non probability convenience sampling technique was used for the present study.

Data collection tools and techniques**Table 1 Data collection tools and techniques.**

Tool No	Name of tools	Variables to be measured	Techniques/Methods
I	Semi-structured questionnaire	Demographic Variables	Paper pencil test
II	Structured knowledge questionnaire regarding medicolegal aspects of nursing care	Knowledge of registered nurses regarding medicolegal aspects of nursing care	Paper pencil test

Reliability:

For the structured knowledge questionnaire, Split half technique was used followed by Spearman Brown prophecy formula and the reliability coefficient was found $r=0.88$, so it can be interpreted that structured knowledge questionnaire is reliable and has internal consistency.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Section I Findings related to demographic characteristics of the registered nurses.

Table 2 Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents in terms of age (in years), professional qualification and duration of clinical experience(in years).**n = 120**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (in years)		
21-30	41	34.17
31-40	52	43.33
41 – 50	15	12.50
51 -60	12	10
Professional qualification		
B.Sc Nursing	23	19.17
Post Basic B.Sc Nursing	19	15.83
GNM	78	65.00
Duration of clinical experience (in years)		
Less than 1	26	21.67
1 – 10	28	23.33
11 -20	42	35.00
21 – 30	17	14.17
Above 30	07	05.83

Data presented in table 2 shows that majority of the participants that is 43.33% were within the age group of 31-40 years, 65% respondents were GNM and majority (35%) of participants had 11-20 years of clinical experience.

Table 3 Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents in terms of present area of posting, attended any inservice training on medicolegal aspects of nursing care and involvement in legal case.**n = 120**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Present area of posting		
Medicine ward	25	20.83
Surgery ward	20	16.67
Gynae ward	28	23.33
Paediatric ward	26	21.67
Emergency ward	21	17.50
Attended any inservice training on medicolegal aspects of nursing care		
Yes	76	63.33
No	44	36.67
Involvement in legal case		
Yes	Nil	-
No	120	100

The data presented in table 3 depicts that 23.33% of the registered nurses were from gynae ward, 21.67% from paediatric ward, 20.83% from the medicine ward, 17.50% from emergency ward and 16.67% were from surgery ward. The data also revealed that 63.33% respondents attended inservice training on medicolegal aspects of nursing care while 36.67% respondents did not attend any inservice training regarding this and none of the respondents were involved in any legal case.

Section II Findings related to the knowledge of registered nurses regarding medicolegal aspects of nursing care.

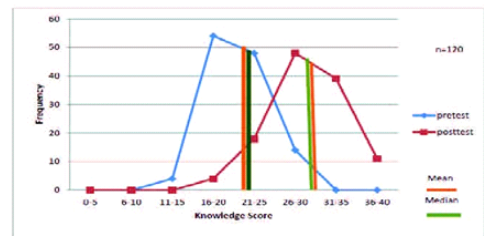
Table 4 Mean, Median and Standard deviation of pre-test and post-test knowledge score of the registered nurses.**n = 120**

Knowledge score	Range	Mean	Median	Standard deviation
Pre-test	12 - 29	21.96	22	3.45
Post-test	20 - 37	29.70	29	2.52

Maximum possible score = 40

Minimum possible score = 0

Data presented in the table 4 shows that in pre-test, the knowledge score of the registered nurses range between 12-29 and the post-test score range between 20-37. It also shows that the mean post-test knowledge score (29.7) was higher than the mean pre-test knowledge score (23.5) with the median of 29 and 22 respectively. The table also depicts that the standard deviation of the pre-test score was 3.45, in post-test it was 2.52 which indicates that there was more homogeneity in the post-test knowledge score.

**Figure 1 Frequency polygon showing the comparison between pre-test and post-test knowledge score of registered nurses.**

The frequency polygon in figure 1 shows the distribution of pre-test and post-test knowledge scores of respondents. The pre-test knowledge score range was 12-29 with a mean of 21.96, median of 22 and skewness of -0.034. In the distribution, as the mean lies to the left of the median, so the distribution is negatively skewed. In the post-test, knowledge score range was 20-37, with a mean of 29.70, median of 29 and skewness of 0.833. In this, the mean lies to the right of the median, so the distribution is positively skewed. The figure also shows that the maximum post-test knowledge scores lies in the right side of the pre-test knowledge scores indicating that post-test knowledge scores of the respondents had increased after the administration of the information booklet on medicolegal aspects of nursing care.

Table 5 Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according to pre-test and post-test knowledge level.**n = 120**

Knowledge Level	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Excellent (>90%)	Nil	-	08	06.67
Very good (81-90%)	Nil	-	21	17.50

Good (71-80%)	09	7.50	56	46.67
Fair (61-70%)	32	26.67	25	20.83
Poor ($\leq 60\%$)	79	65.83	10	8.33

Data presented in the table 5 shows that in the pre-test, 65.83%

respondents had poor knowledge level, 26.67% had fair and 7.50% had good knowledge level. None of the respondent had excellent or very good knowledge level. Data also depicts that in the post-test, 46.67% had good knowledge level, 20.83% had fair, 17.50% had very good, 6.67% had excellent and 8.33% had poor knowledge level.

Table 6 Area wise distribution of pre-test and post-test knowledge score of registered nurses regarding medicolegal aspects of nursing care.

Knowledge Area	Maximum Possible Score	Mean		Mean%		Gain%		Modified gain
		Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test	actual gain	possible gain	
Concept of medicolegal aspects	01	0.11	0.60	11	60	49	89	0.55
Code of ethics and code of professional conduct	03	0.9	1.8	30	60	30	70	0.43
Legal framework for nursing practice in India	01	0.2	0.4	20	40	20	80	0.25
Rights for nurses	01	0.2	0.5	20	50	30	80	0.38
Medicolegal aspects of nursing practice	25	6.2	15.6	24.8	62.4	37.6	75.2	0.50
Rights of a consumer	01	0.23	0.63	23	63	40	60	0.66
Nurses role to prevent legal complications	02	0.8	1.62	40	81	41	59	0.71
Do's and do not's for safe nursing practice	01	0.15	0.56	15	56	41	59	0.71
Situational	05	2.8	4.2	56	84	28	72	0.38

The data presented in the table 6 shows that maximum knowledge gained of respondents happened in the area of nurses role to prevent legal complications and do's and do not's for safe nursing practice as per modified gain (0.71). The second highest gain was in the area of rights of a consumer as per modified gain (0.66). Concept of medicolegal aspects and medicolegal aspects of nursing practice had the third and fourth highest knowledge gain respectively as per modified gain (0.55) and (0.5). Code of ethics and code of professional conduct recorded fifth highest knowledge gain as per modified gain (0.43). It was followed by the area of situational application and rights for nurses as per modified gain (0.38). Lowest knowledge gain was in the area of legal framework for

nursing practice in India as per modified gain (0.25).

Section IV Findings related to the effect of information booklet H_0 - There is no significant difference between the mean pretest and posttest knowledge score of registered nurses after exposure to the information booklet as measured by structured knowledge questionnaire at 0.05 level of significance.

H_1 - The mean post test knowledge score of the registered nurses is significantly higher than the mean pretest knowledge score after exposure to the information booklet as measured by structured knowledge questionnaire at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 7 Mean, Median, Standard deviation and t value of pre-test and post-test knowledge score of the registered nurses.

Knowledge score	Mean	Median	Mean difference	Standard deviation	SED	't'
Pre-test	21.96	22	7.74	3.45	0.39	19.85*
Post test	29.70	29		2.52		

t(df 119) = 2.61, $p < 0.01$

Data presented in the table 7 indicates that mean post test knowledge score (29.70) was higher than the mean pre-test knowledge score (21.96) with a mean difference of 7.74 which was found statistically significant as evident from the t value of 19.85 for df (119) at 0.01 level of significance. This indicates that the mean difference between the pre-test and post-test knowledge score is a true difference and not by chance. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected (H_0) and research hypothesis was accepted (H_1). Thus it can be concluded that the information booklet was effective in enhancing the knowledge of registered nurses on medicolegal aspects of nursing care.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the findings, it can be concluded that the information booklet was found to be effective in increasing the knowledge of registered nurses regarding medicolegal aspects of nursing care as compared with the pretest and posttest knowledge score. The knowledge score of the registered nurses had no statistical significant association with the selected demographic variables.

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