



## A STUDY TO ASSESS THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE REGARDING ETHICAL SENSITIVITY OF PATIENTS CARE AMONG NURSING STUDENTS AT SELECTED COLLEGE, PUDUCHERRY.

Dr. Sathiyakala.  
K\*

Nursing Tutor, College of Nursing, AIIMS, PATNA.\*Corresponding Author

**ABSTRACT** **Introduction:** Ethical sensitivity requires nurses to recognize patients' needs by learning and interpreting their verbal and non-verbal behaviors. Development of ethical sensitivity creates an attitude and ethical response in nurses, which enables providing effective and ethical care for patients. The aim of the study was to assess the knowledge of ethical sensitivity of patient care among nursing students. **Methods:** The research approach used for the study was Quantitative Research Approach. The Descriptive Research Design was used in this study. The study was conducted in selected Nursing College at Puducherry. Convenient Sampling technique was used to select 100 B.Sc. Nursing students who met the inclusion criteria. **Results:** The findings shows that 4(4%) of them had inadequate knowledge, 68(68%) of them had moderately adequate knowledge and 28(28%) of them had adequate knowledge regarding ethical sensitivity of patient care among nursing students. **Conclusion:** Nurses are expected to display a prominent level of practical ethical skills and respect the values and rights of patients who need their professional care.

**KEYWORDS :** Ethical sensitivity, Patient care, Nursing students, Knowledge

### INTRODUCTION:

Nurses need to practice professional humility and flexible thinking. The nursing code of ethics encourages healthcare professionals to incorporate these moral guidelines into their personal lives as well. According to the American Nurses Association (ANA), nursing ethics cover several common areas.

- End-of-life issues
- Bioethics
- Advocacy
- Caregiving
- Moral courage, moral distress, and moral resilience<sup>[2,8]</sup>

The main area of ethics in nursing is cultural awareness. Nurses are increasingly observing patients from various cultures, with different languages and different beliefs. Those patients rely on nurses to make culturally appropriate ethical decisions regarding their care. The code of ethics can help nurses remember that each patient has a unique background and unique needs<sup>[3,7]</sup>

Nurses cannot disclose sensitive information about their patients. In addition, the nursing code of ethics emphasizes the importance of keeping the details of patient cases confidential. Nursing professionals take responsibility for their actions. They are honest and exercise strong moral practices in the workplace. Ethical nurses never attempt to provide services beyond their proficiency and do all they can to keep their patients safe. Nurses must dedicate themselves as patient advocates, ensuring every patient's unique needs and preferences are incorporated into their care.<sup>[7,8]</sup>

Ethical sensitivity is an important attribute that enables the identification of ethical challenges and emotional and mental perceptions of vulnerable situations of people, and awareness of ethical outcomes of decisions made by others<sup>[1,3,5]</sup>

Ethical sensitivity requires nurses to recognize patients' needs by learning and interpreting their verbal and non-verbal behaviors<sup>[9]</sup>. Development of ethical sensitivity creates an attitude and ethical response in nurses, which enables providing effective and ethical care for patients<sup>[1,5,6]</sup> Ethical sensitivity is therefore particularly important for nurses as ethical care providers<sup>[10]</sup> and this leads to ethical decision making that favors the patients<sup>[1]</sup>.

### Statement of the problem

A Study To Assess The Level Of Knowledge Regarding Ethical Sensitivity Of Patients Care Among Nursing Students At Selected College, Puducherry.

### Objectives of the study:

- To Assess The Level Of Knowledge Regarding Ethical Sensitivity Of Patients Care Among Nursing Students
- To Associate Level Of Knowledge Regarding Ethical Sensitivity Of Patients Care Among Nursing Students With Their Selected Demographic Variables
- To Correlate The Level Of Knowledge Regarding Ethical

Sensitivity Of Patients Care Among Nursing Students.

### Research Methodology:

The research approach used for the study was Quantitative Research Approach. The Descriptive Research Design was used in this study. The study was conducted in selected Nursing College at Puducherry. Convenient Sampling technique was used to select the samples for this study. 100 B.Sc. Nursing students who met the inclusion criteria were selected as study participants.

### Inclusion criteria

- Only students studying B.Sc. Nursing,
- All 4 year batches students,
- Both male and female
- Who are all available during data collection

### Exclusion criteria

- Post basic and MSc Nursing students
- The students who are all not willing to participate the study

### DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL:

The tool consists of 2 sections namely,

**Section A:** Demographic variables

**Section B:** The Structured questionnaire used to assess the knowledge on the Ethical Sensitivity among Nursing Students (ESQ-NS) it consist of 3 Factor and 13 items, and 4 point Likert Scale, Total marks 52.

The scoring interpretation of the level of knowledge was divided into three categories as inadequate knowledge (0-17), moderately adequate knowledge (18-34) and adequate knowledge (35-52).

### DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE:

After obtaining formal permission from head of the department, the purpose of the study was explained to the study participants who are all available during data collection procedure. After getting consent from the participants, the knowledge level was assessed by using structured questionnaire.

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

- Table-1: Frequency and percentage wise distribution of level of knowledge regarding ethical sensitivity of patients care among nursing student
- Table 2: Association for level of knowledge and selected demographic data.
- Table-3: Factor correlation to assess the level of knowledge regarding ethical sensitivity of patients care among nursing student

**Table-1: Frequency And Percentage Wise Distribution Of Level Of Knowledge Regarding Ethical Sensitivity Of Patients Care Among Nursing Students**

S.No	Level of knowledge	f	%
1	Inadequate knowledge	4	4

2	Moderately adequate knowledge	68	68
3	Adequate knowledge	28	28
	Total	100	100

Table 1 findings shows that 4(4%) of them had inadequate knowledge, 68(68%) of them had moderately adequate knowledge and 28(28%) of them had adequate knowledge regarding ethical sensitivity of patient care among students.

**Table 2: Association For Level Of Knowledge Regarding Ethical Sensitivity Of Patients Care Among Nursing Students With Their Selected Demographic Variables**

Demographic Variables	n	ESQ-NS- Score		F/t-value	Level of significance
		Mean	SD		
1.Age in years:				F=0.018	NS
17-18	9	36.56	4.77	P=0.982	
19-20	48	36.54	5.76		
21-22	43	36.33	5.71		
2.Gender:				't'=1.186	NS
Male	47	35.74	5.62	P=0.238	
Female	53	37.08	5.57		
3.Year of study:				F=0.027	NS
1 <sup>st</sup>	24	36.63	4.81	P=0.994	
2 <sup>nd</sup>	24	36.25	6.54		
3 <sup>rd</sup>	29	36.34	5.74		
4 <sup>th</sup>	23	36.61	5.53		
4. Profession choice:				't'=1.519	NS
Parents suggestion	38	35.37	4.77	P=0.132	
Own interest	62	37.11	6.01		

\*p<0.05 significant, \*\*p<0.01 & \*\*\*p<0.001 Highly significant.

Table 2 shows that there is no significant association between the level of knowledge regarding ethical sensitivity of patient care among nursing students with their selected demographic variables.

**Table-3: Factor correlation of knowledge on ethical sensitivity regarding patients care among nursing students**

ESQ-NS -score	Karl Pearson correlation	
	r	p-value
Respect for individuals & Distributive justice	0.430	P<0.001*** (HS)
Respect for individuals & Maintaining patients' confidentiality	0.477	P<0.001*** (HS)
Distributive justice & Maintaining patients' confidentiality	0.323	P<0.001*** (HS)
Total	100	100

Table 3 reveals that respect for individuals and distributive justice 'r' value is 0.430, 'p' value is P<0.001, Respect for individuals and Maintaining Patients confidentiality 'r' value is 0.477, 'p' value is P<0.001, Distributive justice and Maintaining patients confidentiality 'r' value is 0.323, 'p' value is P<0.001 Highly Significant.

**MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:**

The demographic variable distribution as, 9 (9%) of them in the age group of 17 – 19 years, 19-20 year were in 48(48%) and 43(43%) of them belongs to 21-22 years. Regarding gender 47(47%) of them male and, female were in 53(53%) and based on years of study in I year were in 24(24%), II year were in 24(24%), III year were in 29(29%), IV year were in 23(23%). The choice of profession was 38(38%) students selected as Parents suggestion and 62(62%) students chosen as their own interest.

The mean value for respect for individuals was 22.6 with standard deviation of 3.59. Regarding distributive justice the mean value was 7.99 with standard deviation of 1.83. The mean value for maintaining patient's confidentiality was 5.84 with standard deviation of 1.54. The overall mean value was 36.45 with the standard deviation of 5.61.

Table 1 findings shows that 4(4%) of them had inadequate knowledge, 68(68%) of them had moderately adequate knowledge and 28(28%) of them had adequate knowledge regarding ethical sensitivity of patient care among students.

Table 2 shows that there is no significant association between the level of knowledge regarding ethical sensitivity of patient care among nursing students with their selected demographic variables.

Table 3 reveals that respect for individuals and distributive justice 'r'

value is 0.430, 'p' value is P<0.001, Respect for individuals and Maintaining Patients confidentiality 'r' value is 0.477, 'p' value is P<0.001, Distributive justice and Maintaining patients confidentiality 'r' value is 0.323, 'p' value is P<0.001 Highly Significant.

**CONCLUSION:**

Nurses are expected to display a prominent level of practical ethical skills and respect the values and rights of patients who need their professional care. To solve ethical problems, nurses first require ethical sensitivity, which is the ability to recognize ethical problems. Those who display ethical sensitivity can assess the responses and feelings of others and are aware of potential courses of action. Danasu .et.al 2018 study findings reveals that the demands placed on students exceed their resources and coping abilities, their mental health will be negatively affected. Two examples of common demands are working under difficult circumstances, caring for a chronically ill patients.<sup>[11]</sup> Due to some of the factors the students not able to focus on the ethical sensitivity of patient care.

Nursing educators using a combination of teaching methods to present real ethical case in theory and clinical practice. This approach provides continuous education in ethics, and consequently, facilitates the development of ethical sensitivity in nursing students. The research study indicated the need to prepare nursing students to meet ethical challenges in their future role as nurses.

**Ethical Issues**

Formal permission obtained from the research committee of the institution, concerned head of the department and study participants. The objectives of the study were explained to the study participants and all of them signed written informed consent forms. They were also assured about the confidentiality of the data.

**Acknowledgments**

The author would like to express gratitude to all the nursing students who were participated in the study.

**Funding**

The author has declared that there was no funding (Self).

**Data Accessibility**

The datasets are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

**Conflict of Interests**

None.

**REFERENCES:**

- Lützen K., Blom T., Ewalds-Kvist B., Winch S. Moral stress, moral climate and moral sensitivity among psychiatric professionals. *Nurs. Ethics.* 2010;17(2):213–224. doi: 10.1177/0969733009351951. [PubMed] [CrossRef] [Google Scholar]
- American Nurses Association, "Ethics and Human Rights"
- American Nurses Association, "Ethics Topics and Articles"
- Lützen K., Nordström G., Evertzon M. Moral sensitivity in nursing practice. *Scand. J. Caring Sci.* 1995;9(3):131–138. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6712.1995.tb00403.x. [PubMed] [CrossRef] [Google Scholar]
- Weaver K. Ethical sensitivity: state of knowledge and needs for further research *Nurs. Ethics.* 2007;14(2):141–155. doi: 10.1177/0969733007073694. [PubMed] [CrossRef] [Google Scholar]
- Hunt G. Moral crisis, professionals and ethical education. *Nurs. Ethics.* 1997;4(1):29–38. doi: 10.1177/096973309700400104. [PubMed] [CrossRef] [Google Scholar]
- American Nurses Association, "Nursing Advocacy"
- American Nurses Association, "View the Code of Ethics for Nurses"
- Kim Y.S., Park J.W., You M.A., Seo Y.S., Han S.S. Sensitivity to ethical issues confronted by Korean hospital staff nurses. *Nurs. Ethics.* 2005;12(6):595–605. doi: 10.1191/0969733005ne829oa. [PubMed] [CrossRef] [Google Scholar]
- Schluter J., Winch S., Holzhauser K., Henderson A. Nurses moral sensitivity and hospital ethical climate: a literature review. *Nurs. Ethics.* 2008;15(3):304–321. doi: 10.1177/0969733007088357. [PubMed] [CrossRef] [Google Scholar].
- Danasu et al., "Assess the mental health characteristics among adolescents", *International Journal of Current Research* Vol. 10, Issue, 05, pp.69493-69496, May, 2018[Google Scholar].