

## Knowledge And Attitude Towards Alcoholism Among Nursing Students: An Interventional Study



### Medical Science

KEYWORDS :

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### INTRODUCTION

According to a global health report (2007), alcohol was responsible for 4% of the morbidity burden and 3.2% (1.8 million) of global deaths in 2000. Among the 26 risk factors assessed by W.H.O., alcohol ranked fifth in terms of risk factors for premature deaths and disabilities. Alcohol consumption has been steadily increasing in developing countries like India. Per capita consumption of alcohol increased by 106.75% over the period from 1970 to 1996<sup>1</sup>.

According to current concept, alcoholism is consider as a disease and alcohol a "disease agent" which causes acute and chronic intoxication, toxic psychosis, cirrhosis of liver, gastritis, pancreatitis, cardiomyopathy and peripheral neuropathy, various cancers. Further alcohol is an important etiologic factor in suicide, automobile and other accidents, and injuries and death due to violence. The health problem for which alcohol is responsible are only part of social damage, which includes family disorganisation crime and loss of productivity.<sup>2</sup>

Most of nursing students do not consider alcoholism as a problem or as a psychiatric illness. Nurses represent the main group of health professionals and experts have appointed their important role in the prevention, early detection and treatment of alcoholism<sup>2,3,5,6</sup>. There is evidence about the significant influence of these professionals' attitudes towards substance misusers on their willingness to intervene and the quality of such interventions<sup>4,5</sup>. Research has revealed that nursing students have demonstrated negative attitudes towards substance misusers. It has also been observed that contact with these patients during education enhances students' acceptance of misusers<sup>4,6</sup>.

Rassool and Rawaf assessed the impact of an educational program about alcohol and drugs on knowledge acquisition and attitude changes in nursing students. The findings suggested that the program affected the nursing students' attitudes toward substance misusers, as most participants showed more positive attitudes towards substance misusers in the post-test and were more optimistic, considering alcohol and drugs addiction as a treatable disease<sup>7</sup>.

Creating awareness regarding alcoholism in paramedical staff leads to

Early recognition  
Early treatment  
Better outcome

### AIMS

To assess:

- The knowledge and attitude of nursing students towards alcoholism
- The effectiveness of educational intervention to increase knowledge and to improve the attitude of nursing students towards alcoholism

### MATERIAL AND METHOD

- Study Population: 100 Nursing Students
- Setting: Government Nursing School, Ahmedabad.

### Measurement Instruments

- The Marcus Alcoholism Questionnaire (Marcus,1980)
- The Seaman Mannello Nurses' Attitudes Towards Alcohol and Alcoholism Scale (Seaman-Mannello,1978)
- The Tolor-Tamerin Attitude Towards Alcoholism Scale (Tolor-Tamerin,1975)
- These three scales are commonly used in attitudinal research in alcoholism.
- These three instruments have certain similarities: for example,
  - Moral factors
  - Psychological factors
  - Social factors
  - Biological factors

### Procedure

- Informed consent was taken.
- Pre-test knowledge and attitude towards alcoholism were assessed among nursing students.
- Than lecture was taken by resident dr. regarding this.
- Post-test same content was re-assessed among students.
- Change of knowledge and attitude towards alcoholism was compared which manifested in above questionnaire.

### Statistical Analysis

- Statistical analysis was done by SPSS Version 15.
- Change of Knowledge and Attitude was compared before and after an educational intervention using Chi-Square test.
- P value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

**Questionnaire and comparison between pre-test and post-test**

Marcus Questionnaire				
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
<b>Etiological Factor</b>				
Unhappy marriages and other unpleasant family situations often lead to alcoholism.	Pre Post	90 84	2 9	8 7
An alcoholic's basic troubles were with him long before he had a problem with alcohol.	Pre Post	57 69	23 19	20 12
An alcoholic usually has something in his past which is driving him to drink.	Pre Post	61 64	16 18	23 18
Alcoholics are usually in good physical health.	Pre Post	7 23	7 20	86 57

Marcus Questionnaire				
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
<b>Moral factor</b>				
Alcoholism is a sign of character weakness.	Pre Post	59 59	12 18	29 23
The alcoholic is a morally weak person.	Pre Post	57 62	8 11	35 27
The average alcoholic is usually unemployed.	Pre Post	46 59	17 21	37 20
A person who frequently stays intoxicated for several days at a time is unquestionably alcoholic.	Pre Post	54 52	26 24	20 24

Tolor-Tamerin Alcoholism Questionnaire				
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
<b>Disease factor</b>				
Alcoholics should be thought of and treated as sick people.	Pre Post	46 61	6 10	48 29
The best treatment for an alcoholic is early medical attention.	Pre Post	68 71	12 7	20 22
Some people have a physical makeup that doesn't permit them to tolerate even a couple of drinks without becoming drunk.	Pre Post	62 45	18 27	20 28

Tolor-Tamerin Alcoholism Questionnaire				
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
<b>Disease factor</b>				
Alcoholics should be thought of and treated as sick people.	Pre Post	46 61	6 10	48 29
The best treatment for an alcoholic is early medical attention.	Pre Post	68 71	12 7	20 22
Some people have a physical makeup that doesn't permit them to tolerate even a couple of drinks without becoming drunk.	Pre Post	62 45	18 27	20 28

Tolor-Tamerin Alcoholism Questionnaire				
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
<b>Nature of alcoholism factor</b>				
Alcoholics are not essentially different from other human beings who have difficulty in adjusting to problems in living.	Pre Post	65 71	9 13	26 16
Most alcoholics really have similar sensitivities and needs as most people.	Pre Post	51 64	13 16	36 20
Alcoholics will usually try to get other people to fall in with their bad drinking habits.	Pre Post	86 77	6 9	8 14

The Seaman-Mannello Scale				
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
<b>Disease/Etiological factor</b>				
Alcoholics usually have severe emotional difficulties.	Pre Post	72 76	10 12	18 12
The life of an alcoholic is not a very pleasant one.	Pre Post	69 65	12 15	19 20
Alcoholics suffer from feelings of inferiority.	Pre Post	64 66	19 16	17 18
Alcoholics were driven to drink by other problems.	Pre Post	83 82	10 6	7 12
Alcoholics are very sensitive people.	Pre Post	37 44	11 29	52 27
Alcoholism is an illness.	Pre Post	40 67	7 15	53 18
Alcoholics are usually in poor physical health.	Pre Post	67 67	7 17	26 16
Alcoholic patients need psychiatric consultation.	Pre Post	67 66	13 13	20 21

The Seaman-Mannello Scale				
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
<b>Drinking/Alcoholism factor</b>				
Alcoholics feel they are bad people because of their drinking.	Pre Post	34 53	14 25	52 22
Alcoholics want to stop drinking.	Pre Post	51 57	20 26	29 17
When used wisely, alcoholic beverages are no more harmful to normal adults than nonalcoholic beverages.	Pre Post	56 52	17 22	27 26
Alcohol in moderate amounts can actually be beneficial to a healthy person.	Pre Post	47 65	15 12	38 23

The Seaman-Mannello Scale				
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
<b>Professional Attitude factor</b>				
Alcoholics deserve hospital space just like any other patient.	Pre Post	45 54	16 12	39 34
I don't think that my patients would become angry if I discussed their excessive drinking with them.	Pre Post	44 60	19 16	37 24
I prefer to work with alcoholic rather than other patients.	Pre Post	42 50	25 29	33 21

**Results and Discussion**

- After the educational intervention
  - Many students accepted alcoholism as a disease and also as a psychiatric illness.
  - Students also accepted that alcoholics also have similar sensitivities and need as most people. (Stigma factor)
  - Students told that moral and religious upbringing also plays part in alcoholism.
  - Alcoholics are usually in poor physical health.
  - The average alcoholic is usually unemployed.
  - Alcoholics feel they are bad people because of their drinking.
- There is not significant change in attitude regarding some moral factors, etiological factors and nature of alcoholism factor like
  - Alcoholics usually have severe emotional difficulties.
  - The life of an alcoholic is not a very pleasant one.
  - Alcoholics want to stop drinking.
  - Most alcoholics just want to live it up and are irresponsible.
  - Alcoholics will usually try to get other people to fall in with their bad drinking habits.

Unhappy marriages and other unpleasant family situations often lead to alcoholism.

- Professional Attitude Factor – positive change but not that much significant.
- Alcoholics deserve hospital space just like any other patient.
- I don't think that my patients would become angry if I discussed their excessive drinking with them.
- I prefer to work with alcoholic rather than other patients.
- Nursing students despite the longer time in the profession, had less professional experience with alcoholics, even in the face of the indicators from the literature that there is a growing demand of patients with problems due to the use/abuse of alcohol in hospitals and health care in general <sup>8</sup>. According to the literature, professionals in general health services have difficulty with identifying the problem with the patients <sup>8,9</sup>. These difficulties arise from the limited ability of professionals to identify and diagnose early cases of problematic alcohol use, given the lack of knowledge and practical skills for approaching the problem <sup>8,9</sup>.
- Soares et al had mentioned in his study that the impact of an educational intervention gives positive results in knowledge and attitude of nurses towards alcohol and related problem.
- In Primary Care Nurse Attitudes, Beliefs and Confidence Levels Regarding Alcohol Abuse and Its Treatment: Impact of Educational Intervention – Raja Sekhar Vadlamudi – had stated statistically significant positive change in the nurses' attitudes, beliefs, and confidence levels regarding alcohol abuse and its treatment after the educational intervention.

### Conclusion

There is a significant change in the certain aspects of knowledge and attitude towards alcoholism after an educational intervention

- Moral factors
- Etiological factors
- Nature of alcoholism factors
- Stigma related to alcohol use

However, it was possible to say that the improvement of attitudes may be related to practice time after the professional has received such training, as well as the increase of knowledge that derives from the acquired skills in the interaction of nurses trained with the patient in the course of their practice <sup>9</sup>. This result points to the need to conduct follow-up studies with this population of trained nurses, which can support the elucidation of this question.

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