



EFFECTIVENESS OF WORKSHOP ON SOFT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AMONG UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS OF SELECTED COLLEGES IN RANCHI: AN OUTCOME RESEARCH

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

Nursing is one of the professions which require knowledge as well as clinical competencies to provide effective and efficient nursing care to the patients. Moreover, team work, time management, communication skills are the key components that should be inculcated in nurses from the beginning to enable them to work as a healthy team professional along with other health team members. The primary objective of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of workshop on soft skills development among undergraduate nursing students. One group pre-test post-test design with quantitative research approach was used. 600 undergraduate nursing students from selected colleges of Ranchi were taken as samples using convenient sampling technique. Self-structured questionnaire was used to evaluate the knowledge of the participants regarding soft skills. Study findings revealed that the workshop on soft skills was effective in significantly improving the knowledge regarding soft skills among undergraduate nursing students. The study suggests that there is a need to conduct effective training programs on soft skills to inculcate the knowledge of soft skills among nurses. Soft skills are important in nursing because they directly impact comprehensive patient care, team work, and professional development. It will help nurses to build trust and rapport with patients, communicate effectively with healthcare teams, and adapt to the challenges of a fast-paced environment. Presently, employers also value and seek nurses with strong soft skills. Thus nurses having soft skills knowledge and skills are in high demand and upgrading themselves as well as their profession.

KEYWORDS

Soft Skills, Nursing Students, Workshop

INTRODUCTION

Soft skills are character traits and interpersonal skills that characterize a person's ability to interact effectively with others. In the workplace, soft skills are considered to be a complement to hard skills, which refer to a person's knowledge and occupational skills¹.

Soft skills are defined as the group of skills acquired by a person that facilitate the optimization of their own performance. Soft skills are necessary to implement the learned hard skills.²

Nurses are backbone of health team and to collaborate with other health team members it is necessary for nurses to have soft skills. Nurses need a variety of soft skills to enhance their quality of work and to provide comprehensive patient care to obtain better patient outcome. Currently the nursing sector is on the hunt of qualified nurse educator to help to develop a skilled nursing team for the future. Soft skills are combination of personal traits, attitude and qualities. Soft skills supplement the clinical skills and lead to improved patient care outcomes. As nurses are part of multi-disciplinary health care team, they must be confident in their abilities and take the time to convey important information. Hence, the student nurses should be trained in soft skills like professional etiquettes, public speaking, critical thinking, decision making and time management. These soft skills will help the nursing professionals to communicate with team members, understand the workplace culture, resolve conflicts and also accept the team decisions.

Communication, teamwork, adaptability, problem-solving, leadership, time management, and emotional intelligence are the seven most important soft skills and it is very important for nursing professionals to be trained in these soft skills which will not only lead to effective patient care but also lead to efficient team collaboration.³

Nurses are healthcare professionals and "soft" skills development among nurses is important as it affects everyone (i.e., patients, team members, and interdisciplinary colleagues). "Soft" skills generally influence how patients rate their overall experience in a healthcare visit⁴.

Need For The Study

Traditional nursing education does not formally include soft skills and personality development programme in their curriculum, but to enhance communication between nurses and patient which generates trust, strengthens the therapeutic bond, and thus improves patient adherence to treatment soft skills development programme is included in the recent nursing curriculum, and it ultimately improves healthcare outcomes.⁵

Soft skills, development is crucial for nurses as it allows them to interact and thrive in their relationships with patients and co-workers. These attributes are essential in establishing a good rapport with others and can have a significant influence on career advancement. Leadership and communication are critical competencies nurses need, and they are essential for general nursing roles as well⁶.

A cross-sectional study was done to assess the knowledge and practice of soft skills among nursing students at selected nursing colleges in Chennai. The target population was B. Sc Nursing students in Chennai. There were total 305 students in the study. The study revealed significant association of soft skill domains with selected socio-demographic variables at $p < 0.05$ level.⁷

A phenomenological study using an interpretive phenomenology approach was done to assess the perceptions of senior nurses on essential soft skills for novice nurses in a private hospital in Jakarta, Indonesia. This study aimed to explore the perception of senior nurses about the essential soft skills for novice nurses during their work adaptation process.. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews from ten senior nurses selected using a purposive sampling technique. Data were analyzed using Gadamer's hermeneutic approach. Nine essential soft skills were developed for novice nurses during their transition phase from education to practice, including self-control, initiative, caring, self-motivated, hospitality, flexibility, adaptability, analytical skill, and presentation skill. Findings of this study serve as a basis for developing the soft skills of novice nurses in their clinical practice in hospitals in Indonesia. It is also recommended that soft skills should be included in the nursing education curriculum. However, soft skills are essential for novice nurses to succeed in their adaptation and future career.⁸

Objectives

The primary objective of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of workshop on soft skills development among undergraduate nursing students.

Hypothesis

There will be a statistically significant difference between the soft skills scores of nursing students before and after the workshop on soft skills.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

One group pre-test post test design with a quantitative research approach was adopted to test the hypothesis whether the "workshop on Soft skills development" for undergraduate nursing students will

improve their knowledge regarding soft skills. Convenient sampling method was used and undergraduate students from selected nursing colleges of Ranchi participated in the soft skills development workshop.

600 undergraduate nursing students from selected nursing colleges of Ranchi participated in the soft skills development workshop. Self-structured 15-item multiple choice questions, each comprising four responses with one correct answer, was used to evaluate the knowledge of the participants regarding soft skills. The knowledge questionnaire was validated by the three nursing experts. The Pre-test questionnaire was filled by the participants (self administered questionnaire method) before the beginning of the workshop and Post-test questionnaire was filled by the participants after the completion of the workshop. Participants were given 10 minutes to fill the questionnaire.

Intervention

The one –day workshop comprised of the lecture sessions which was taken by nursing, medical, and professional experts on : Etiquettes for successful Nursing, Public speaking skills, Intriguing ways of Time Management, Problem solving and decision making skills and Teamwork.

Data Analysis

The data obtained for this study were analyzed to determine the effects of the workshop on the knowledge level of undergraduate nursing students. Knowledge score was categorized into Poor (0-4), Average (5-9), Good (10-12), Excellent (13-15) to describe the level of study participants at pre-test and post-test level.

RESULTS

Six Hundred participants participated in the workshop of soft skills. The level of knowledge of the study participants is illustrated in Table 1. 7.5% of the participants had average knowledge, 34.83% had good knowledge and 57.66% had excellent knowledge in Pre-test.3% of the participants had average knowledge, 22.5% of the participants had good knowledge and 74.5% of the participants had excellent knowledge in Post-test.

The total Knowledge Score, Percentage and Mean of six hundred participants is illustrated in Table 2. The overall score percentage of 600 participants in Pre-test is 82.34% and means value is 12.35. The overall score percentages of 600 participants in Post-test is 88.9% and mean value is 13.33.

Table 1: Knowledge level of study participants in Workshop of Soft Skills (N=600)

Level of Knowledge	Score Range	Pre-test (Score & Percentage)	Post-test (Score & Percentage)
Poor	0-4	0	0
Average	5-9	45 (7.5%)	18 (3%)
Good	10-12	209 (34.83%)	135 (22.5%)
Excellent	13-15	346 (57.66%)	447 (74.5%)

Table 2: Total Knowledge Score, Percentage and Mean (N=600)

Variable	Pre-test Score & Percentage	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Score & Percentage	Post-test Mean
Knowledge Score	7411 (82.34%)	12.35	8001 (88.9%)	13.33

DISCUSSION

For nurses, soft skills set them apart from the traditional nursing practices. Team Work, problem solving, communication skills, Time Management and interpersonal effectiveness are all competitive capabilities employers look for in their nurses. These are essential for leadership roles and career growth, allowing nurses to stand out and fulfill professional goals⁹.

Currently, there are few studies that analyze the importance of Soft skills for nursing students.

To provide effective and efficient health care, not only technical training is required, but also nurses need to be competent in soft skills, such as communication, critical thinking, Etiquettes for successful Nursing, Public speaking skills, Time Management, Problem solving and decision making skills and Teamwork.

Soft skills development is the current need of the hour for nurses as it is

enhancing the skills of patient care and also leading to their professional growth. The study findings revealed that the workshop on soft skills was effective and was helpful for nursing students. The knowledge level on soft skills has resulted in significant improvement of knowledge among nursing students regarding soft skills.

Limitations

The study is limited to selected nursing colleges in Ranchi and only the knowledge level was assessed to evaluate the effectiveness of the workshop on soft skills.

Implications

Soft skills are formulated as a module in third and fourth semester as per the new competency based syllabus introduced by Indian Nursing Council. In this regard, workshop on soft skills is a paramount of importance for undergraduate nursing students.

CONCLUSION

The workshop on soft skills for undergraduate nursing students was found to be effective in significantly improving the knowledge regarding soft skills. This will encourage the students to implement the soft skills in their clinical practices, and enhance their professional skills which will further lead to their professional growth.

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