



Original Research Article

## Assess the Attitude of Staff Nurses in Providing Information to the Client Related to Legal and Ethical Rights in Psychiatric Setting in a Selected Hospital in Mangalore

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### ABSTRACT

A psychiatric nurse plays a very important role in which orientation, meeting all types of needs especially explaining rights to patient, maintaining confidentiality, taking informed consent. The present study was carried out to investigate the attitude of staff nurses in providing information to the client related to legal and ethical rights in Psychiatric setting.

**Objectives of the study:** (i) to assess the attitude of the staff nurses in providing information to client related to legal and ethical rights; (ii) to find out the association of attitude of staff nurses in providing information to the client related to legal and ethical rights with selected demographic variables(years of experience, educational qualification, age, sex).

**Method:** A descriptive design was used for the present study. The sample consisted of 30 staff nurses who were selected by purposive sampling technique. Tools used were baseline proforma and 5 point rating scale.

**Results:** The data showed that: Majority of subjects (60%) were between the age group of 20–25 years (mean age=25.87 year), 70% were females, 90% were Christians, 47% had Basic B.Sc. nurses and 40% had 2- 6 months of clinical exposure in psychiatric setting. The finding showed that among the subjects 67% had unfavorable attitude and 33% had favorable attitude. The calculated p value showed that there was no association between attitude score and selected baseline variable.

**Conclusion:** The findings of the study have shown that the attitude of staff nurses in providing information to the client related to legal and ethical rights was unfavorable.

**Key words:** Attitude, staff nurses, information related to legal and ethical rights

### INTRODUCTION

The primary goals of professional accountability in nursing are to maintain high standards of care and to prevent the patients from harm. Nurses should be aware of and be responsible for each action taken,

be able to defend their actions and be willing to accept the consequences of their actions. The public trust in a profession increases proportionately to the degree in which the professional members guard and protect the public's interest. Therefore it is necessary

for nurses to be accountable to themselves for proper use of their knowledge and skill in providing care. [1]

Ethics are the rules and principles that govern right conduct. The word ethics has been derived from Greek word Ethos which means custom or guiding beliefs. The code of ethics state what kinds of conduct is expected from the members of a profession that is what are the responsibilities being in nursing profession towards the patient, she serves and society as a whole. Code of ethics provides guidelines for safe and compassionate care. Basic terms in ethics are autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, and fidelity. [2]

The ANA approved nine provisions that address ethical practice issues such as compassion and respect, the nurse's primary commitment to the patient, patient advocacy, responsibility and accountability, duties, participation in the health care environment, advancement of the profession, and collaboration. [3]

Legal responsibilities are defined as those which a nurse must obey as a law in a professional manner. Legal aspect is defined as the activity of the nurse that legally permitted while taking care of the sick patient. Law is final authority to regulate the activities of all citizens. Nurse need to be aware of this standard, as well as legal and ethical concept and principles since nurse are accountable for their action in these areas in their professional role. Legal aspect may differ from country to country depending on their law and code of ethics. [4]

A large number of issues that need to be addressed in view of the rapidly changing canvas of modern nursing in India. Having seen the level of legal awareness among nursing staff, it would be reasonably safe to conclude that the knowledge of legal responsibilities is integral to the expanding clinical role, and a logical application of the planned, systematic, and focused care, should be the goal of modern nursing.

**Significance:** The study highlights the need to identify professionals in the work place who appear to be indifferent to ethical and legal issues, to devise means to sensitize them to these issues and appropriately training them.

**Aim:** The main aim of this study was to assess the attitude of staff nurses in providing information to the client related to legal and ethical rights in psychiatric settings.

**Purpose:** to understand the various attitudes of nurses working with mentally ill clients and also in giving information to them and their families.

#### **Objectives of the study**

1. To assess the attitude of the staff nurses in providing information to client related to legal and ethical rights in psychiatric ward.
2. To find out the association of attitude of staff nurses in providing information to the client related to legal and ethical rights with selected demographic variables (years of experience, educational qualification, age, sex).

#### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

A descriptive design was used for the present study. The sample consisted of 30 staff nurses who were selected by purposive sampling technique. Tools used were baseline proforma and a 5 point rating scale. Criteria laid down for the selection of subjects were:

**Inclusion criteria:** Staff nurse who are working in psychiatric ward and de addiction centre, and having experience for at least one month.

**Exclusion criteria:** staff nurses on long leave during the time of data collection.

#### **Data collection instruments**

Part -I: Baseline Proforma to collect baseline data of the subjects. Part – II: 5 point rating scale on attitude of staff nurses in providing

information to the client related to legal and ethical rights

**Data collection process**

The investigator obtained a formal written permission from the authority concerned. After selecting the sample who met the inclusion criteria of the study, the purpose of the study was explained with the subjects and confidentiality of the data collected was assured. An informed consent was obtained from the subjects. Tool along with the Rating scale was administered to the subjects. The average time taken by the subjects to complete the tool was 15 - 20 minutes. The selected subjects were 30 and all the subjects were very cooperative and the investigators expressed their gratitude for their cooperation. The collected data was compiled for analysis.

The data was manually analyzed using frequency, percentage. Mean and mean percentage. The association was found out using Chi square (SPSS version 16)

**RESULTS**

The results are as follows

**Section 1:** Demographic variables the data in table 1 showed that:

- Out of 30 subjects, Majority 60% belongs to the age group of 20-25 years, with mean age of 25.87 years.
- Majority 70% of subjects were female
- Majority 90% of subjects were Christians
- Majority 47% of subjects were of Basic B.Sc. nursing
- Majority 40% of subjects had 2-6 months of clinical exposure in psychiatric settings

The study used is purposive sampling technique of the subjects those who are presently working in Psychiatric ward and de-addiction ward

**Table I: Frequency and percentage distribution of sample characteristics N=30**

Sl. No	Variables	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
<b>1</b>	<b>Age in years</b>		
	a) 20-25	18	60
	b) 26-30	7	23.33
	c) 31-35	3	10
	d) 36 and above	2	6.66
<b>2</b>	<b>Gender</b>		
	a) Male	9	30
	b) Female	21	70
<b>3</b>	<b>Religion</b>		
	a) Christian	27	90
	b) Hindu	3	10
	c) Muslim	0	0
<b>4</b>	<b>Professional qualification( education )</b>		
	a) GNM Diploma	4	13.33
	b) BSc Nursing Degree	14	46.67
	c) PBBSc Nursing Degree	7	23.33
	d) MSc Nursing Degree	5	16.67
<b>5</b>	<b>Duration of job experience in psychiatric ward</b>		
	a) 1 month	2	6.66
	b) 2-6 months	12	40
	c) 7months- 1 year	5	16.67
	d) > 1 year	11	36.67

**Section 2:** Attitude of staff nurses in providing information to the client related to legal and ethical rights in psychiatric setting.

**Area wise attitude:** Data in table 2 shows that the subjects had favorable attitude in all

areas except cultural ethics. The subjects had favorable attitude in providing information to the client in the areas: Harmfulness (78.56%), Justice (82.33%) and Beneficence (74.47%) and subjects had

unfavorable attitude in providing information to the client regarding cultural ethics (55.78%).

**Grading of attitude:** Data in the figure 1 shows that among the subjects 67 % had

unfavorable attitude and 33 % of subjects had favorable attitude.

**Overall attitude score:** Data in table 3 shows that the mean percentage of the attitude score is 77.14%

**Table II: Area wise mean, standard deviation and mean percentage of attitude scores (N=30)**

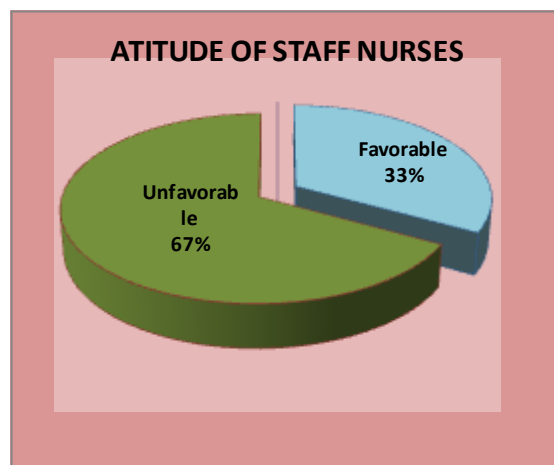
Area	Maximum score	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean percentage	Level of attitude
Harmfulness	30	23.567	4.099	78.56	Favorable
Justice	50	41.167	4.387	82.33	Favorable
Beneficence	25	19.867	5.673	74.47	Favorable
Cultural ethics	15	8.367	1.938	55.78	Unfavorable

**Table III: Overall Mean, Standard Deviation and mean percentage of attitude score (N=30)**

Mean	Standard deviation	Mean percentage (%)
92.57	9.95	77.14

### Section 3: Association between attitude score of subjects and selected baseline variables.

The data in the table 4 shows that there is no significant association between attitude score and baseline variables like age (p=0.443), gender (p=1), religion (p=1), education (p=0.493), experience (p=0.673). The calculated value was found to be less than the table value at p<0.05 level of significance. Therefore the research hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted.



**Figure 1:** Pie diagram showing the distribution of subjects according to the grading of attitude.

**Table IV: Association between attitude score of subjects and selected demographic variables**

Sl. No	Variables	<Median	>= Median	'p' value	Significance
<b>1</b>	<b>Age in years</b>				
	a) 20-25	11	7		
	b) 26-30	3	4	0.443	Not significant
	c) 31-35	1	2		
	d) 36 and above	0	2		
<b>2</b>	<b>Gender</b>				
	a) Male	5	4	1	Not significant
	b) Female	10	11		
<b>3</b>	<b>Religion</b>				
	a) Christian	14	13		
	b) Hindu	1	2	1	Not significant
	c) Muslim	0	0		
<b>4</b>	<b>Professional qualification(education)</b>				
	a) GNM Diploma	3	1		
	b) BSc Nursing Degree	8	6	0.493	Not significant
	c) PBBSc Nursing Degree	2	5		
	d) MSc Nursing Degree	2	3		
<b>5</b>	<b>Duration of job experience in psychiatric ward</b>				
	a) 1 month	0	2		
	b) 2-6 months	7	5	0.673	Not significant
	c) 7months- 1 year	2	3		
	d) > 1 year	6	5		

(\*Significant;\*\*Not significant) (p < 0.05)

## DISCUSSION

A descriptive study was conducted by Kumar R, Mehta S, Kalra R with the objective to identify the knowledge of staff nurses regarding legal and ethical responsibilities in the field of psychiatry which found that majority (90%) of the nurses possess moderate level of knowledge.

[5] A descriptive survey was conducted by Kumar SV to assess the knowledge and attitude towards importance of human rights among health care team members. The study revealed that the 75% of the health care team members had favorable attitude towards practicing the patient care by giving importance to human rights. [6] A descriptive and cross sectional study was conducted by Eren N to assess the nurses attitude toward ethical issues in psychiatric inpatient settings, the result indicated that nurse needed additional education in Psychiatric ethics. The study revealed that the attitude of nurses regarding legal and ethical issues in psychiatric inpatient settings was inadequate. [7]

## CONCLUSION

Nursing ethics is a branch of applied ethics that concerns itself with activities in the field of nursing. Nursing ethics shares many principles with medical ethics, such as beneficence, non-maleficence and respect for autonomy. The rights of the mentally ill clients are protected by Mental Health Act. They have the right to Accept or refuse treatment, if you are capable of making treatment decisions, make informed

decisions, leave the hospital if they are admitted on voluntary basis, privacy and confidentiality. The finding of the study also shows that majority of nurses have unfavorable attitude.

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