

Dual Role of Nurses as Educator and Practitioner

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Over the last century, nursing education has moved from hospital-based schools to colleges and universities. This trend helped in establishing nursing as a profession, but on the other hand it has weakened the relationship between education and practice. There has been an increasing concern in many countries on the widening gap between the two. Proper nursing education can help in this context. The dual role was introduced in some institutions in India since 1968.

This study was conducted to assess the opinion of the nursing personnel in education, administration and service towards dual role as nurse educator and as nurse practitioner. An effort was also made to ascertain the opinion regarding the strategies to implement the dual role.

Objectives of the Study

- ♦ To ascertain the opinion of nursing personnel towards the dual role.
- ♦ To compare the opinion of nursing personnel i.e. Educators, Administrators and Practitioners towards the dual role.
- ♦ To find the association between opinion and selected factors like professional education, years of experience and designation.

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- ♦ To ascertain the opinion of nursing personnel regarding different strategies to implement dual role.

Methodology

The conceptual framework of the study was based on The General Systems Model i.e. the input, process, output and feedback loop. The study aimed to ascertain the opinion of nursing personnel towards dual role as nurse practitioner.

In this study *input* included the nursing personnel i.e. nurse educators, nurse practitioners and nurse administrators. Age, professional education, designation and professional experience are the factors that may affect the cognition and perception of the nursing personnel towards dual role. Nursing personnel continuously interacted with the environment, i.e. Health care settings. The process is described in two phases.

Phase-I: Assessment of opinion by developing structured opinionnaire, checking the validity and reliability of tool, conducting pilot study, administering opinionnaire, data analysis and identifying the opinion of nursing personnel.

Phase-II: Implementation of dual role and evaluation of dual role.

Output included increased job satisfaction, increased client satisfaction, increased professional sta-

tus, better standard of nursing, better learning experience and better quality of care.

Feedback emphasised the need to strengthen the input and the process.

Phase II of process, output and feedback, are not covered under the present study.

The research approach adopted for the study was survey with descriptive correlation survey design. The independent variables in the study included age, education, experience and designation. The dependent variable was opinion of nursing personnel towards dual role of nurses.

The study was conducted in three Central Government Hospitals /Schools of Nursing in Delhi. The population under the study consisted of nursing personnel having minimum graduation degree in nursing. Sampling technique used was total enumeration to ascertain the opinion. Considering the literacy level of the sample, paper and pencil technique was judged as the most appropriate method for collecting the data and a five-point structured opinionnaire was developed.

The opinionnaire had two parts; Part 1 consisted of items pertaining to personnel data and Part 2 comprised 50 structured items distributed in 4 areas and an open-ended question to find out

whether they feel dual role is necessary in nursing and the rationale for their opinion. There were 50 statements to be responded on the 5-point scale as strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. The total score ranged between 50 and 250.

Validity of the tool was determined on the basis of expert's opinion for clarity, appropriateness, adequacy and relevance of the items. A try-out study was conducted in order to finalise the tools. Reliability coefficient of the tool was established by Cronbach Alpha method and reliability coefficient was found to be 0.9. Data was collected by personally administering the tool to 105 sample subjects in three categories of nursing personnel working in Central Government hospital and Schools of Nursing in Delhi.

The data was tabulated, organised, analysed, and interpreted using descriptive and inferential statistics on the basis of objectives of the study and hypothesis to be tested. Parameters used were frequency, percentage, mean, median, mode, standard deviation, ANOVA and Chi-square values.

Major finding

- ♦ More than 50 per cent of the respondents were below the age of 41 years.
- ♦ Forty-five respondents were nurse practitioners, 26 were nurse administrators and 36 were nurse educators
- ♦ Majority of nursing personnel (92.4%) expressed agreement for dual role.

- ♦ None of nursing personnel disagreed with performing dual role.

- ♦ Higher mean score (207.02) were seen in the opinion score of nursing personnel.

- ♦ There was no significant difference in the opinion of nursing personnel towards dual role between nurse educator and nurse practitioner.

- ♦ No significant association was found between opinion score and the selected factors i.e. age, designation, professional education and professional experience.

- ♦ There was high agreement (92.4%) on the administrative strategies mentioned to implement the dual role.

Conclusion

On the basis of findings, following conclusions were drawn.

1. More than 50 per cent of respondents were below 41 years, which indicates they can be utilised in dual role.
2. No significant difference in the opinion score of nurse prisoners, nurse educators and nurse administrators indicated that they do not differ in terms of their opinion towards dual role.
3. Nursing personnel's opinion towards dual role was independent of their age, designation, professional education and professional experience.
4. Majority of nursing personnel (103, 98.1%) felt that dual role is necessary in nursing and the advantage they expressed are better learning experience, better role models, good quality nursing care, better coordination between nursing ser-

vice, education and personnel development.

5. Two per cent of nursing personnel felt that dual role is difficult to be practised.

Implications

The study has several implications for different levels.

Nursing Practice

- ♦ Since findings of the study reveal that majority of nursing personnel agree for the implementation of dual role in nursing, they should be encouraged to practice dual role.

- ♦ Nurse should take individual initiative and interest to practice dual role wherever it is implemented.

- ♦ Higher qualified educators should participate in patient care at various capacities.

- ♦ Every nurse should get involved in delivering client care as well as participate in educational activities for the all-round personnel and professional development.

Nursing Education

- ♦ Emphasis should be on planning, implementing and evaluation of dual role of nursing personnel.

- ♦ Nursing personnel should be oriented, guided and trained in teaching techniques and methods.

- ♦ Joint planning should be done by hospital nursing department and head of the school/college of nursing for organising clinical postings and clinical teaching programmes of nursing students.

Nursing Administration

- ♦ A pilot project should be undertaken to further cor-

roborate the feasibility of the dual role.

- ♦ A well-planned orientation programme should be developed for the nursing personnel, other health team members and administrators before introducing the dual role in any institution.

- ♦ Participation of qualified nurse in clinical teaching, supervision and evaluation of future nurses ought to be encouraged.

- ♦ Manual with clearly defined objectives, responsibilities, command and control may be developed to establish dual role in the institution.

- ♦ Appropriate policies may be framed so that pay, benefits, status and promotional avenues match their respon-

sibilities. To quote an eminent education "it should be formalised, because it should be viewed as an obligation for everyone, provided that they feel comfortable, that they are prepared, that they feel competent".

- ♦ Periodic discussion and conferences may be arranged with nurse practitioners and nurse administrators in the hospital for exchange of information and sorting of various clinical problems for effective implementation of dual role.

Statutory Bodies

- ♦ Statutory bodies like national and state councils should advocate the implementation of dual role.

- ♦ Dual role should be made mandatory for keeping the

nurses abreast with the advancement in knowledge and technology.

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