

Assessment of Knowledge and Practice about HIV/AIDS Management among Staff Nurses in Hospitals of Kashmir

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Abstract

The prevalence of HIV / AIDS, irrespective of sex, age and nationality is a formidable threat to public health all over the world. It is therefore essential to have knowledge about this deadly disease and ways of handling. This study was undertaken to assess the knowledge and practice of sample of 89 nurses (80 female, 9 male) in J&K. The subjects were administered a 3-part questionnaire and the responses were classified and analysed. The intervention brought out that the knowledge about HIV / AIDS was quite helpful in enhancing nurses' level of understanding, their behaviour and practice in work setting.

The Asia Pacific region has 60 percent of the world's population though only 20 percent of the estimated global HIV infection. However, by the end of 2003, 7.4 million adults were living with HIV/AIDS. Over 1 million adults and children were newly infected in 2003 and about 225,000 children (0-14 years) were living with HIV/AIDS. Almost 500,000 people died from AIDS in 2003, 1.9 million children are orphaned by AIDS. Thus HIV/AIDS has posed a major threat to mankind. It has affected man in all fronts such as social, economic and health etc.

HIV/AIDS is spreading from urban to rural areas and from high risk behaviour groups to general population. This pandemic of HIV/AIDS sweeping the world cuts across the conventional boundaries of nationality, sex, and age. HIV/AIDS has infected millions of men, women and children in developed as well as developing countries and is spreading to all continents of the globe. Nurses have an important role in preventing, controlling and managing this fast spreading epidemic.

Objectives

This study was undertaken:

1. To assess the knowledge of staff nurses about HIV/AIDS.
2. To assess the practice of staff nurses about HIV/AIDS, and
3. To associate knowledge and practice with selected demographic variables.

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Methodology

A survey approach was adopted using descriptive survey design. The study was conducted during August-September 2008, among staff nurses working in associated hospitals of Kashmir. A convenience sampling technique was used. The sample comprised 89 nurses (9 males and 80 females). Questionnaire developed comprised of three parts, eight items on sample characteristics, 24 items about knowledge and 20 items about practice. The knowledge was classified as good, average or poor. The practice was assessed by dichotomous questions with 'Yes' or 'No' response. The questionnaire was administered to all the staff nurses selected for the study and who were willing to participate in the study.

Results

Sample characteristics in frequency and percentage

Table 1 describes demographic characteristics of 89 nurses from Associated Hospitals of Srinagar Kashmir.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of Staff Nurses (n=89)

Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	9	12
	Female	80	88
Age in years	20-25	8	9
	26-35	34	39
	36-45	40	44
	46 & above	7	8
Education	Matric	47	52
	PUC	34	3
	10+2	8	9
	GNM	81	89
	BSc	1	24
	Others	7	8

Table 2: Relationship knowledge of HIV / AIDS and selected demographic variables (n=89)

Variables	Poor knowledge (1-8)	Average knowledge (9-16)	Good knowledge (17-24)	df	K ² Cal	Table value X ² 0.05
Male	3	4	2	2	79.70	5.99
Female	3	24	53	2	79.70	5.99
Age in years						
20-25	2	2	4	6	28.28	12.6
26-35	1	17	16	6	28.28	12.6
36-45	1	5	34	6	28.28	12.6
46 & above	2	4	1	6	28.28	12.6
Education						
Matric	5	24	18	4	17.66	9.49
PUC	1	3	30	4	17.66	9.49
10+2	0	1	7	4	17.66	9.49
Professional						
GNM	1	27	53	4	51.70	9.49
BSc	---	---	1	4	51.70	9.49
Others	5	1	1	4	51.70	9.49

(x) Significant at 0.05 level

The data were collected using demographic proforma. Frequency and percentages were computed for describing the sample characteristics. Majority (n=80, 88%) staff nurses were females, 44 percent (n=40) were in the age group of 36-45 years. Majority 52 percent (n=47) were educated upto Matric and mostly 89 percent (n=81) were GNM as professional qualification.

The knowledge level was assessed by questioning and was classified as average and poor. The score from 17-24 was marked as good, 9-16 as average and 1-8 as poor. The percentage distribution of the staff nurses by knowledge score showed that majority (62%, n=55) had good knowledge, 32 percent (n=28) had average knowledge and 6 percent (n=6) had poor knowledge.

Table 3: Relationship practice of HIV/AIDS management and selected demographic variables

Variables	Poor knowledge (1-8)	Average knowledge (9-16)	Good knowledge (17-24)	df	K ² Cal	Table value X ² 0.05
Sex	Male	3	6	1	82.70	3.84
	Female	63	17	1	82.70	3.84
Age in years	20-25	4	4	3	38.27	7.81
	26-35	30	4	3	38.27	7.81
	36-45	32	8	3	38.27	7.81
	46 & above	0	7	3	38.27	7.81
Education	Matric	29	18	2	8.05	5.99
	PUC	30	4	2	8.05	5.99
	10+2	7	1	2	8.05	5.99
	Professional					
	GNM	64	17	2	14.44	5.99
	BSc	1	0	2	14.44	5.99
	Others	1	6	2	14.44	5.99

(x) Significant at 0.05 level

The practice HIV/AIDS management was assessed by dichotomous questions with 'Yes' and 'No' responses (Table 3). The percentage distribution showed that 74 percent (n=66) were practicing the management of HIV/AIDS while educating the patients, attendants and vulnerable group in OPDs and IPSs, 26 percent (n=23) were hesitant in talking about HIV/AIDS and despite of knowledge they never practiced the health education or management of any aspect of HIV/AIDS.

Analysis of knowledge, practice and selected demographic variables like sex, age, academic and professional education. Table 2 and 3 reveals the association between knowledge, practice and selected demographic variables which was significant at 0.05 level.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework (Fig 1) is a theoretical approach to the study of a problem that scientifically emphasises on the section arrangements and classification of the study subjects. Here the conceptual model is based on Pender's Health Promotion Model. In 1982 Pender's Health Promotion in Nursing Practice was published with the concept of promoting optimal health superseding disease prevention.

According to Pender, the health promotion, identifies cognitive-perceptual factors in the individual that are modified by situational, personal and interpersonal characteristics to result in the participation of health promotion in the presence of a cue to action.

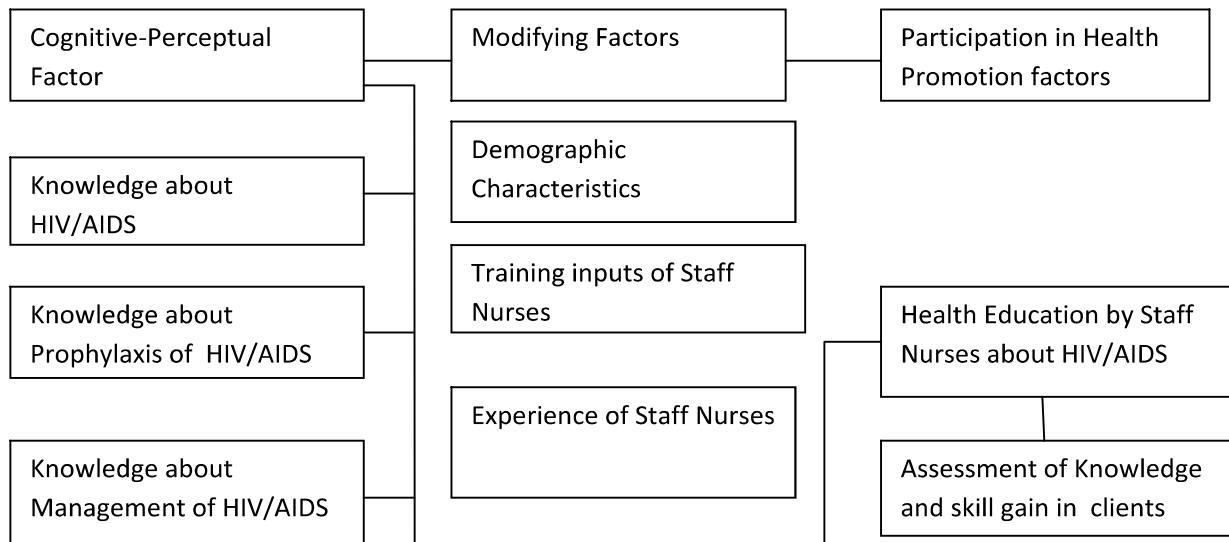
In the present study the cognitive perceptual factors are staff nurses' knowledge about HIV/AIDS in terms of importance of health and healthy behaviour.

Modifying factors are : selected demographic characteristics, training inputs and experience of staff nurses for gaining knowledge and skill participation in health promotion factors. This depends on utilisation of knowledge and skill for health promotion by educating clients about prevention of HIV/AIDS. The assessment of knowledge and skill gain in clients is not included in the study.

Discussion

The present study reveals that among 89 participants majority (65%, n=55) of the

Figure 1 : Pender's Health Promotion Model



sample had good knowledge about HIV/AIDS. Further, the majority (74%, n=66) were utilising the knowledge while taking care of patients in any set up. They were educating the public about prophylaxis, causes, related signs and symptoms of HIV/AIDS; 26 percent (n=23) disclosed that they were hesitant in discussing HIV/AIDS because of its stigma. Thus the staff nurses require counselling skills to impart the knowledge about HIV/AIDS to the control the HIV/AIDS epidemic, besides continuous knowledge update about the latest strategies of HIV/AIDS. This study needs replication in a large sample.

Chizoma & Onibokum (2007) studied knowledge and behaviour of nurses midwives in the prevention of vertical transmission of HIV in Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. A cross-sectional study design was utilised to determine the knowledge and behaviour of nurse midwives in the prevention of vertical transmission of HIV. The study sample consisted of 155 nurse midwives drawn from three selected hospitals through stratified random sampling method. Data was collected through the use of self-administered questionnaire. Information sought included respondents' demographic characteristics, knowledge and behaviour findings revealed that nurses and midwives had moderate level of knowledge with mean score of 51.4 percent. The mean score on behaviour was 52.5 percent. Major factors that influence behavior in these settings were mainly fear of getting infected, irregular supply of resources like gloves, goggles, sharp boxes and regular water supply.

Hypotheses tested revealed that there is a positive relationship between knowledge and behaviour ($r=0.583$, $p=0$). Knowledge level of nurse midwives who had educational exposure was not different from those who did not ($t=1.439$, $p=0.152$).

Ouzouni et al (2012) studied HIV/AIDS knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of student nurses. Overall student nurses had fairly good knowledge about HIV/AIDS as well as positive attitude towards AIDS people ($M=70.39$; $SD=18.43$; possible range 18-90).

Conclusion

Information, education and communication strategy is effective in enriching knowledge and awareness of nurses and subsequently changing behaviour of the beneficiaries. Hence, in-service education by NACO has been quite helpful in educating the respondents in their awareness and make up in the deficit areas like counselling skills, post exposure to prophylaxes, treatment of the associated problems in HIV/AIDS patients. Nurses have key role in prevention and treatment of this deadly disease therefore, their misconception and ignorance about HIV/AIDS must be shed through well designed health education programme.

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