

Relevance of Nursing Curriculum to 'Women Health & Development'

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The purpose of this paper is to highlight the point that there is urgent need to give priority to 'Women Health and Development'. The twentieth century has witnessed tremendous progress culminating in man's conquest of space, however despite these achievements, women health and their development is grossly neglected at all levels, from womb to tomb. Hence the health problems of women deserve serious attention. India is democratic and federal in structure and has undertaken the responsibility to provide equal status to men and women, while in reality women are lagging everywhere. They don't get equal chance in education, job, election, etc. On the contrary they are exploited by society. Now the time has come with new avenue for women to emerge from traditional and social norms.

Objectives:

- * To find out the relevancy of nursing curriculum of GNM to 'Health and Development of Women'.
- * To study the topics related to Women Health and Development.
- * To find out practical application of subject.
- * To study the role of teacher in 'Women Health and Development'.
- * To introduce more relevant topics in syllabus of GNM.

Relevancy of Curriculum to Women Health & Development: Let us now see that how far present curriculum of revised GNM course is relevant.

Definition of Curriculum:

'A systematic arrangement of sum total of selected experiences planned

by school for a defined group of students to attain the aims of a particular educational programme'.

Curriculum includes philosophy, objectives, division of subject, placement, distribution of hours, etc. So curriculum differs from college to college. Syllabus is a part of curriculum which is compulsory and recommended by Indian Nursing Council and State Council.

Curriculum has wider dimension and it is an ever changing activity. It needs periodical attention, flexibility towards the improvement in education, resources, changes in social trends and medical development.

While setting up curriculum we should select learning experiences meaning fully so that students will actively participate. As such new revised GNM syllabus is based on 'Community Health Nursing'. There is good scope to communicate with people, the importance of women health and Development and how family, Society and ultimately nation will have benefits of potentiality of major sector of population that is 'Women'.

Year Wise subjects relevant to the 'Women Health and Development'
1st year:

A) Subject:- Community Health Nursing - I

This comprises Nutrition, Health education, communication skill and community health practice; B) Sociology; C) Psychology; D) Anatomy Physiology; E) Personal Hygiene.

Community Health Nursing:

A) Nutrition - Unit VI - Factor influencing selection of food and planning. VIII - Diet in Pregnancy. IX - Cultural factors in accepting diet.

Comments:- In nutrition special emphasis is to be given on diet in pregnancy and lactation because this is crucial period in woman's life when mother's and baby's health depend to a large extent on type of food provided to her. Lack of proper supply of nutrients, severely affect the development of the foetus as well as mother. This should be well explained to low socio-economical groups as how to select food which are cheaper and more nutritive like sprouted pulses, value of mixing food grains, vegetables, green leafy and seasonal fruits.

At the same time we should give attention to wrong beliefs and practices in preparation of food. She should not avoid certain items in pregnancy like papaya, gour, guava, etc. It is wrong notion in many women.

As a whole Nutrition which is closed related to health and Development should be geared at all levels of health workers.

B) Health Education: Unit - I Meaning and principles and Role of Teacher. Unit. III - A.V. Aids.

Comments:- It is a backbone of communication. The best opportunity to communicate to people at large is possible in health education. We can choose any subject related to health and development as personal hygiene, diet, blind beliefs. Importance of education to girl as well as boy, economical planning etc. There is ample scope to utilize different audio visual aids to make people understand.

C) Communication Skills:- Unit II - Importance of language. Art of listening and observing.

Comments:- It is art of transmitting information or message. It is a social

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process and formation of life. So if nurses have communication skill they will convey a lot to the people.

D) Community Health Practice:- Unit I, Primary health Care;

Unit II, Family health services; Unit VI, Health problems.

Comments:- It is a practical subject where teacher and students go in urban and rural fields to make detail survey, find out health problems and needs of families. They can convey the national and state, programme and regular services to promote the health of mother.

Sociology:-

Relevant Topics:- Unit I. comprises human growth and development of different phases of life.

Unit II, Family as a social institution, planned parenthood.

Unit VI, Culture, tradition and customs.

Comments:- There is a good chance to emphasis the equal attention for growth and development to girl as well as boy. And not to devalue girl. The important unit is a family where woman is pivotal point on which whole family moves. Indian culture is based on male dominancy. Even though law has been changed, society has not changed. Women have to sacrifice everywhere e.g. after all members consume food she will eat, whatever remains, women generally do not take breakfast, they work long time in the home and try to satisfy everybody. All people whether rural or urban, have their own belief and practices concerning health and diseases. Some cultural ideas have stood in the way of implementing health programme. Now time has come to change the image of women in society. They should be protected from murder, suicide and torture. Our nurses should come forward to explain them blind beliefs and malpractices and make them independent — Intellectually, economically, socially and culturally.

Psychology:-

Relevant Topics:- Unit II, Dynamics of behaviour, process of adjustment, frustration and conflict, defence mechanisms;

Unit III - Personality Development; Unit VI - Mental Health; Unit VIII - Social psychology

Comments:- In this subject stress can be given right from the infancy. How development is dependent on a person, environment and biological inheritance, Mother's health is very important in the period of pregnancy. Healthy atmosphere at home will develop good mental health. Attention and care on children, nurture health and individual. But our society exactly fails in treating boy and girl differently. Child at birth is not conscious of itself or other. He is not aware of any relationship, it is we who differentiate boy and girl, and give undue importance to male child and create frustration and conflict in girls.

Anatomy and Physiology:-

Relevant Topics:- Reproductive System.

Comments:- We can teach detail about physiology of reproductive system, menstrual cycle how it affects women health and how physiological changes take place during puberty and menopause. Sometimes problems occur in menopause if a woman is not mentally prepared, so mental hygiene is necessary.

Personal Hygiene:-

Relevant Topics:- Unit I- Concept of Health and its relation; Unit II - Maintenance of Good Health; Unit VI - Mental Health.

Comments:- Now definition of health is not restricted to physical, bodily fitness but it comprises mental, spiritual and social health. So this concept of health should be wide spread to community. India is a signatory of Alma Alta committee Health for all by 2000 AD and Health of Women is

given prime importance as bulk of population is constituted by children and women.

Mental health includes nature, adjustment, frustration, tension. When body and mind work efficiently then there is good integration. But due to social and cultural restraint mental health of women is not maintained properly. There is so much restrictions on women which make her frustrated, some times adjustment is not possible for her and she may go to the extend of suicide. Mental health depends on community, love and satisfaction. But unfortunately our women are not getting any favour from society, even if she exceeds a little from the normal norms of society, she has to suffer for life.

2nd Year:-

Subjects:- A) Paediatrics, B) Psychiatric, C) Gynaecology.

Paediatrics:-

Relevant Topics:- Unit II- Growth and Development.

Comments:- Assessment of biological physiological, psychological and sociological factors in boy and girl is very important and equal attention should be given to boy and girl. Early detection of deviation from normal health is necessary.

Psychiatric Nursing:-

Relevant Topics:- Unit II- Etiology and contribution, factors to mental illness; Unit III- Community Responsibility to mental illness. Attitude and misconceptions; Unit IV- Role of the nurse. - Depression - Involutionary depression. - Mania.

Comments:- Psychiatric problems are raising day by day and it is found that women are more in number due to Psychological stress of interpersonal relationship with family, marital disharmony, job conflict, traumatic experience of past life.

There may be physiological changes in the body at puberty, menstruation, involutionary period when many women needs psychological support.

They may suffer from sense of loneliness, sense of separation, fear of old age and loss of security.

So it is duty of family members (husband, son and daughter-in-law) to understand her phase of life and give sympathetic treatment in way of acceptance and respect.

Gynaecology:-

Relevant Topics:- Unit I- Sterility, Fertility, Sterilization; Unit II — Venereal Disease, Menopause, abnormalities of menses.

Comments:- Motherhood is very much prestigious and esteemed status to woman in Indian culture. So if any woman who is not having child, is tortured by society, old family members and husband. Sterility can be corrected and some times the husband may be at fault, but very few males may agree to undergo all the tests and ready to accept their physical fault. In case of sterilization, also males feel that they will not be able to enjoy sexual life so they put the burden of operation on women. Many women suffer from menstrual problems but hardly they are considered by male. Some may suffer from menopausal disturbances, but they don't get sympathy from their husbands. All these points should be explained by teacher to nurses.

3rd year:-

Subjects: A) Community Nursing II
B) Midwifery.

Community Nursing:-

Relevant Topics:- Unit I- Health Services at National state and local level; Unit III - Rural health services; Unit VII - Health assessment; Unit IX - Human Sexuality; Unit XII Demography and family welfare.

Comments:- Modern community health wants to bring together all the available health services. (MCH, Medical Care, Family Welfare, Environmental Education, etc.) within the reach of people at all levels of

National, state and local. This is a unified integration of preventive, curative and promotive health services.

The enjoyment of highest attainment of health has been declared a fundamental right of every human being irrespective of sex. So women have the fundamental right to receive health services available in India. On this basis Government has allotted good amount of money towards maternal and child health care. At outer rural areas also women can get all facilities.

Constitution of India part IV, and relevant portion is formed in Directive principles of state policy — that State will provide effectively the health services to men and women and children of tender age. In short it is a Responsibility of individual, community state and local level to make services and facilities available to women.

This subject is very much concerned with women health. Nurses do insist, sex education, is a scientific subject. It should be based on health in sex life and no complexes to be formed. Girls should know the natural phenomena of sex and change that occur at puberty and menstruation. They must know the sexual impulses. Along with this men and women should have relevant knowledge of sexually transmitted diseases, by sexual contact like, AIDS, syphilis and herpes, etc.

Demography is a scientific study of human population. It is closely related to family planning and statistics. India is considered the second populous country in the world and the population is constantly increasing. In this view the family planning is to be given top priority by nation and national family programme is to be activated. Women's fertility period is roughly from 15 to 45. So if women at the age of 15, is means at 30 years age she is exposed to pregnancy and may give birth to even 15 children. So the main factor

for higher fertility in India are early marriage, poverty illiteracy, limited use of contraceptives and traditional ways of life.

So nurses can explain to women how they can come out of risks of many children by giving effective health education.

Family planning and women health have close relationship. The principal health outcomes of family planning by minimizing maternal mortality morbidity, nutritional status, prevention of major illness in pregnancy, and antenatal care, etc.

So family planning is now looked upon as a necessary ingredient to quality life. It is centre of human welfare and social well being.

Midwifery:-

Relevant Topics:- Unit II - Embryology; Unit III - Antenatal care, and physiological changes in pregnancy; Unit IV - Diseases associated with Pregnancy; Unit - V - Care during labour; Unit VII - Puerperal, Unit X - Domiciliary midwifery, and family planning.

Comments:- Midwifery starts from embryology which involves biology. The mental and physical traits of every human being are, to some extent determined by the nature of his genes at the moment of conception and hence genetic endowment of man and woman can not be altered. So health of any woman is concerned with genetic factors characterized in her.

The importance of antenatal care especially diet is already well described in topic of nutrition - when women is pregnant due attention is expected by family member and her husband as many physiological changes take place during pregnancy. Frequent check up will detect early deviation of normal health. She may be suffering from other diseases like heart diseases, tuberculosis, anaemia which will affect her pregnancy and may cause danger

to her health.

Safe delivery is also an important aspect of women health to reduce maternal mortality, problems are more in villages. So nurses must be well taught regarding safe delivery and postnatal care to prevent infection during and after labour.

National objective of family planning is to reduce the birth rate. And nurses have vital role in finding out eligible couples, to educate people, to register women for antenatal, to follow survey and to arrange family planning camps.

India was a first government in the World to adopt family planning as a national programme, which was launched in 1953. India has allotted a good amount by way of funds in every five-years plans. However, today it is a dire need to control population against 84.38 crores, by the latest census.

1991 census shows the growth of population by 23.5%. So family planning should be made more effective by raising the age of women for marriage, restricting deliveries. This is closely concerned with Health and Development of Women. Men seem to be anxious to plan their families, but they don't take the initiative in their operations. Women have no choice or voice in pregnancy. Even though there is law of MTP she does not exercise her right to end the unwanted pregnancy due to cultural constraints.

In our country so much importance is given to the sex of the unborn child whether boy or girl. Many legends and myths like:- If mother eats more sugar then she will have girl, if she eats more meat then a boy. But scientists have proved that there is no control on what determines the sex. It is a matter of chance. This census shows us drop of female population in comparison to male population. There may be reason for this drop, as there is a fad of amniocentesis, sonography, etc. to

determine the sex and if found female then MTS is performed. So long as there is limited purpose to detect abnormality, it is alright but otherwise it is injustice to female race to get destroyed before they appear in this world.

So I suggest the following:-

- a) Family planning should be strict like in China.
- b) Stress on health education and more propaganda.
- c) Male should be involved more in permanent method.
- d) Subject should to be taught in school and colleges as a national programme.

Practical application of relevant subjects in curriculum:

The role of teacher in implementation of syllabus is very vital. It is made explicit that owing to the changing face of society, it is a dire need to support 'Women health and Development'. So curriculum may be appended with certain topics which are more relevant.

As such present syllabus also has enough scope to deal, the topic of 'Women health and development' as described above in detail.

But if curriculum development is worked out well through suitable interaction between the teachers and students, so that students cease to be passive recipient and become active participants. There is need for innovative teaching to bring community into class room and vice versa. Because the purpose of nursing education is to prepare the individual for practice of the profession of nursing in clinical and community area. Most of teachers teach to cover the portion and that is why even though there is good chance to emphasis to topic 'Women health and development' a lot more concentration needs to be developed in teacher to deliver effective teaching. I feel that some more hours should be allotted to convey the topic. There should be easily accessible facility of vehicle and audio-visual Aids to make

subject interesting.

Introduction to new Components:

It is needless to mention that the topic of 'Women health and Development' has highest claim to any other target so it should be involved in General education system. Since the minimum requirement of GNM Course is XIIth standard passed, so before the student enters the Nursing course she should be well oriented and motivated to the topic.

Our proposed curriculum should comprise the following care components:-

1) In community Nursing

I - Separate topic on 'Women health and Development, is to be recommended by the nursing council and separate marks to be allotted to the subject.

2) In Sociology:-

- a) Place of a women in present family.
- b) Image of present working women in society.
- c) Effect of economical impact on women.
- d) Social trend affecting women in health.

3) Psychology:-

- a) Dynamics of Women personality.

In Midwifery:-

- a) Review of MTP law.
- b) Merits and Demerits of sex determination Test.

Community Nursing II

- a) Present census and consequences of continuous drop of female population.
- b) Legal rights and relevant law for women in India today.

Friends, I consider it to be unique privilege to put before you my views regarding relevancy of present curriculum and suggestions for new topics related to 'women health and Development'.

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