



Research Article

The Knowledge and Attitude of Nursing Students Towards Sexuality

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A B S T R A C T

Introduction: It is the right of young people to enjoy healthy lives. Giving young people truthful, developmentally appropriate sexual health education is essential to assisting them in accepting personal accountability for their wellbeing and health. Our kids and young adults are growing up in a world that is changing quickly due to globalization and technology breakthroughs, which expose them to a variety of influences from around the globe. They must gain the information, abilities, values, and attitudes necessary to build wholesome and accountable relationships and make wise and responsible choices. The objectives of the study were to assess knowledge and attitude of nursing students regarding sexuality.

Method: Quantitative approach was used along with exploratory design in this study. The tool A structured knowledge questionnaire was developed and used for the purpose of data collection and a likert scale was used for attitude assessment. This tool is validated by seven experts and reliability was also assessed. Sample consisted of 100 nursing students of undergraduate program from Rufaida college of nursing, Jamia Hamdard selected by convenient sampling.

Result: The data were obtained and analyzed by descriptive statistics. only 6 (6%) nursing students had adequate knowledge regarding sexuality and the majority i.e. 94 (94%) nursing students had inadequate knowledge regarding sexuality. Regarding attitude it was found that majority of nursing students i.e. 81 (81%) had a favorable attitude and 19 (19%) of nursing students had unfavorable attitude regarding sexuality.

Conclusion: Based on findings, the majority of the students have inadequate knowledge but favorable attitude regarding sexuality. Apart from sex education at school level, adolescents need sex education at university level also. This would provide them numerous opportunities to think about all facets of sexuality and inculcate an optimistic sense of their own sexuality.

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitude, Sexuality, Nursing Students

Introduction

In Indian culture, discussing sex, venereal disease, and associated topics is frowned upon. The elders' conservative views

on sex, which include those of some parents and educators Teenagers who lack information are unable to learn beneficial truths about sexuality. It is concerning to note that

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there is no agreement in India about the inclusion of sex and reproductive health education in the curriculum for colleges and universities. With the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, the increase in child rape, premarital sex and teenage pregnancies etc. it became imperative that colleges make a contribution towards addressing these issues. There is a need to inform children and adolescence with the knowledge on sex education so that they can make sound decision on sex.

The period of adolescents are one of the transitional period with healthy life which includes sexual life also but more or less the parents do not provide any information related to sexual health to the adolescents. Sexuality education is the provision of necessary clues and guidance about body growth, puberty buildup, relationships, sexuality, and sex. This would also help the youth in developing the skills necessary for communication and making decisions about their sexual wellbeing. It should include orientation about puberty and reproduction, abstinence from sex, safe sex through condoms and other contraceptions, prevention of sexual abuse, relationships, sexual orientation, gender identification and body image. It is sometimes called sex education, sexual orientation or sex relationship education.¹The purpose of sex education is to develop moral responsibility, self-worth, and self-awareness while equipping students with the knowledge and abilities to prevent and resist sexual encounters.²

Material and Methods

Quantitative research approach and descriptive research design were used for the present study. The sample consisted of 100 students of diploma in general nursing and midwifery of class I and II year from Ruffaida College of nursing, Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi selected through convenient sampling.

The tools used were knowledge questionnaire for assessment of knowledge regarding sexuality and a 5 point likert scale for assessment of attitude regarding sexuality among students. The tools were divided under following headings:

Tool 1: It consists of two sections, first section consisted of demographic data on age, gender, type of family, educational status of father, educational status of mother,

Section two consisted of 30 multiple choices on domains of sex education and each correct response was scored as 1 and incorrect response as 0. Knowledge categories based on scores were divided into two categories, adequate knowledge with score range from above 75% and inadequate knowledge for scores below 75%.

Tool 2: A 5 point likert scale was used with total of 22 items. The score ranged from 22 to 110. Attitude categories based on scores were divided into two categories, favorable attitude with score range from above 75% and unfavorable attitude for scores below 75%.

Reliability of the tools were assessed and found to be 0.79 for knowledge questionnaire assessment & 0.82 for likert scale for attitude assessment regarding sexuality. Formal administrative approval for collection of data was taken concerned authorities. Informed consent was taken from willing participants. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured by coding. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and is done under two sections.

SECTION I: -Finding related to the demographic data of the subjects.

The data presented in table no. 1 shows that with regard to age, maximum of the students i.e. 58 (58%) were in the age group of 19-22 years, 32 (32%) in the age group of 17-19 years and 10 (10%) in the age group of 22-26 years. Majority of the students were females (72%) followed by males (28%). As per the year of study majority of the students i.e. 63 (63%) were from DGNM 1st year followed by 37 (37%) from DGNM 2nd year. Regarding the type of family, most of the students i.e. 71 (71%) were from nuclear families followed by 21 (21%) from Joint families and 8 (8%) were from single- parent families

With regard to religion, majority of them i.e. 78 (78%) were Muslims, 17 (17%) were Hindu followed by 4 (4%) were Christian and 1 (1%) were Buddhist. With regard to educational Status of father 10 (10%) were illiterate followed by 25 (25%) of them with primary/secondary education followed by 43 (43%) were graduate and 22 (22%) were postgraduate.

Table I. Finding Related to the Demographic Data of the Subjects

N=100

S.No	Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age		
	17-19yrs	32	32%
	20-22yrs	58	58%
	23-26 yrs	10	10%
	above 26yrs	0	0

2	Gender		
	Male	28	28%
	Female	72	72%
	others	0	0
3	Year of Study		
	DGNM I year	63	63%
	DGNM II year	37	37%
4	Type of Family		
	Nuclear	71	71%
	Joint	21	21%
	Single-parent	08	8%
5	Religion		
	Hindu	17	17%
	Islam	78	78%
	Christian	04	04%
	Buddhism	1	1%
	Any other	0	0
6	Educational Status of Father		
	Illiterate	10	10%
	Primary/Secondary	25	25%
	Graduate	43	43%
	Post graduate & Above	22	22%
7	Educational Status of Mother		
	Illiterate	26	26%
	Primary/Secondary	52	52%
	Graduate	20	20%
	Post graduate & Above	2	2%

With regard to educational Status of mother 26 (26%) were illiterate followed by 52 (52%) of them with primary/secondary education followed by 20 (20%) were graduate and 2 (2%) were postgraduate.

Section-II: Findings on assessment of knowledge regarding sexuality

According to data in table 2, only 6 (6%) nursing students had adequate knowledge regarding sexuality and the major-

ity i.e. 94 (94%) nursing students had inadequate knowledge regarding sexuality.

Section III: Findings on the assessment of Attitude regarding sexuality

According to data in table 3, Majority of nursing students i.e. 81 (81%) had a favorable attitude and 19 (19%) of nursing students had unfavorable attitude regarding sexuality.

Table 2. Frequency & Percentage of Student Nurses by Their Knowledge Scores Regarding Sexuality

N=100

Category of knowledge	Range of scores	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate	0-22	94	94%
Adequate	23-30	06	6%

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage of Student Nurses by Their Attitude Scores Regarding Sexuality

N=100

Category of Attitude	Range of scores	Frequency	Percentage
Unfavorable	0-82	19	19%
Favorable	83-110	81	81%

Discussion

The findings of present study revealed that majority of the nursing students (94%) have inadequate knowledge and majority of them (81%) had positive attitude regarding sexuality. Similar findings were reported in a study conducted by Ajibade B. L, Olagunju R.O. Oyediran S on 300 school students where it was found that they had positive attitude to sex education. Regarding knowledge it was found that they had inadequate knowledge regarding sex education as most (53%) of them did not actually comprehend the meaning of sex education.³

Similar results were seen in another study conducted by Altekar S, Sanade MM, Gavandi S, Shinde J on adolescent students in which it was found that majority i.e. 72% of the students had inadequate knowledge regarding sexuality and most of them (66%) had an uncertain attitude regarding sexuality.⁴ In contrast to the present study, Elizabeth J, Lathamangeswari C, Singh S did a study on 120 nursing students and found that (6%) were having poor knowledge (56%) were having average knowledge and only (38%) of them had good knowledge regarding sex education.⁵

The present study was limited to a selected university and small number of samples, for better generalizations of the findings, similar study can be replicated on large sample. Sex education needs to be implemented in schools, beginning at the primary level. Age-appropriate topics should be introduced as students progress through high school and college. It should focus on issues like HIV/AIDS education, sex abuse, teenage pregnancy, pre-marital sex, etc. as these issues are now a days very much widespread in India. Specialized training for teachers should be provided to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively deliver sex education and create a comfortable environment for discussions.

Conclusions

Nursing students had inadequate knowledge but positive attitude towards sexuality which indicates the need to provide appropriate information to adolescents about issues related to sexuality. Favorable attitude regarding sexuality among students indicates that they have a positive outlook for sexuality but poor knowledge scores indicates that there is lack of proper information. Encouraging adolescent sexual health is essential for their overall development. Sex education must be provided in school initiating at the the

primary level and introducing topics gradually as per their age as they progress through high school and college. It should be inclusive of information regarding reproductive health, life skills, safe sex, STIs, and pregnancy. Specialized training for teachers should be provided to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively deliver sex education and create a comfortable environment for discussions.

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