Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of Nurses on the Pain Assessment and Management in Level 3 Hospitals in Manila

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Abstract : Pain, often a missed and undertreated symptom, affects the quality of life of individuals. Nurses are key players in providing effective pain management to decrease morbidity and mortality of patients in pain. Nurses' knowledge and attitude on pain greatly affect their ability on assessment and management. The Pain Society of the Philippines recognized the inadequacy and inaccessibility of data on the knowledge, skills, and attitude of nurses on pain management in the country. This study may be the first of its kind in the county, giving it the potential to contribute greatly to nursing education and practice through providing valuable baseline data. Objectives: This study aims to describe the level of knowledge and attitude, and current practices of nurses on pain assessment and management; and determine the relationship of nurses' knowledge and attitude with years of experience, training on pain management and clinical area of practice. Methodology: A survey research design was employed. Four hospitals were selected through purposive sampling. A total of 235 Medical-Surgical Unit and Intensive Care Unit (ICU) nurses participated in the study. The tool used is a combination of demographic survey, Nurses' Knowledge and Attitude Survey Regarding Pain (NKASRP), Acute Pain Evidence Based Practice Questionnaire (APEBPQ) with self-report questions on non-pharmacologic pain management. The data obtained was analysed using descriptive statistics, two sample T-tests for clinical areas and training; and Pearson product correlation to identify relationship of level of knowledge and attitude with years of experience. Results and Analysis: The mean knowledge and attitude score of the nurses was 47.14%. Majority answered 'most of the time' or 'all the time' on 84.12% of practice items on pain assessment, implementation of non-pharmacologic interventions, evaluation and documentation. Three of 19 practice items describing morphine and opioid administration in special populations were only done 'a little of the time'. Most utilized non-pharmacologic interventions were deep breathing exercises (79.66%), massage therapy (27.54%), and ice therapy (26.69%). There was no significant relationship between knowledge scores and years of clinical experience ($p = 0.05$, $r = -0.09$). Moreover, there was not enough evidence to show difference in nurses' knowledge and attitude scores in relation to presence of training ($p = 0.41$) or areas (Medical-Surgical or ICU) of clinical practice ($p = 0.53$). Conclusion and Recommendations: Findings of the study showed that the level of knowledge and attitude of nurses on pain assessment and management is suboptimal; and no relationship between nurses' knowledge and attitude and years of experience. It is recommended that further studies look into the nursing curriculum on pain education, culture-specific pain management protocols and evidence-based practices in the country.

Keywords : knowledge and attitude, nurses, pain management, practices on pain management