



RESEARCH ARTICLE

PERCEPTION OF NURSES WORKING IN KOZHIKODE TOWARDS EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE A CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY PROTOCOL

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: It has been quoted that the health care professionals are bound to deliver services based on high quality research results. Therefore, Evidence Based Practice (EBP) is given much thrust in recent years. Perceptions, knowledge and attitudes of health professionals towards EBP influence adoption and implementation of best practices in healthcare. There is a scarcity of research about perception of nurses towards Evidence Based Practice in Kerala. So we decided to conduct a cross sectional study about perception of EBP among nurses in Kozhikode district, Kerala.

Method: Cross sectional study with purposive sampling technique will be used in the present study. 30 final year MSc nursing students, 30 nurses working in hospitals and 30 nursing faculties each will be included in the study. Perception of Nurses on Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Questionnaire will be used. SPSS software version 18 will be used for data analysis.

Result: The result will provide insight regarding the level of perception about EBP among nurses in Kozhikode. Further it will add more knowledge regarding the variation in perception among nurses, nursing students and nursing faculties regarding EBP. The study will help in highlighting the current status of EBP knowledge and utilization among nurses in this area.

Discussion: The findings of the present study will provide information about the perception about EBP among various nursing professionals and guide policy makers and curriculum designers in adopting effective strategies to enhance the use of EBP in nursing practice. The present study will act as a background for more extensive research in the current topic and enhance knowledge base regarding Evidence Based Practice in nursing profession.

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INTRODUCTION

Evidence-based practice (EBP) has been defined as the 'conscientious, judicious and explicit use of current best evidence available in making decisions about the care of individual patients', integrating individual clinical expertise, the needs and values of the individual patient and the best available research (Enkin, 2004; Sackett *et al.*, 1996). 'Best' research evidence means systematic identification, critical appraisal (of methodology) and synthesis of scientific literature; and not merely searching for (and citing) randomized controlled trials or systematic reviews to support a given action/decision/guideline/recommendation (Martis *et al.*, 2008; Mathew, 2010; Straus, 1998). 'Patient values' include the unique circumstances (such as health-care setting, personal/social issues, etc) of individual patients for/ by whom health-care decisions are made (Straus, 1998).

EBP marks a transition among health care professionals from a traditional restriction to authoritative opinions to an open decision making on data extracted from prior research and studies (Diane, 2003; Sackett *et al.*, 1997; Majid *et al.*, 2011). The importance of evidence-based practice (EBP) in health professions to deliver patients with effective and efficient care is well established (Glasziou, 2005; Tunnecliff *et al.*, 2015). Findings from research support that the implementation of EBP leads to a best quality care, improved patient outcomes, and decreased healthcare costs through reduction of morbidities, mortality, medical errors, and eliminating the geographic variation of healthcare (Melnik *et al.*, 2012; Specht, 2013). However the more practical application of EBP depends on the progress made in educating health professionals on accessing evidence-based research, evaluating and correctly interpreting research studies, the provision of quick, easy and free access to evidence and an understanding on how to implement the findings into clinical practice (Martis *et al.*, 2008; Muir, 2001; Veness *et al.*, 2003; Grol, 2004).

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Nursing evidence based practice (EBP) is the use of current best evidence in the delivery of nursing care to individuals, groups, and communities (Specht, 2013; Abbott, 2001). A meta-analysis demonstrated that evidence based best practice improves patient care, as compared to traditional practices (Heater, 1988). Although evidence based healthcare results in improved patient outcomes and reduced costs, nurses do not consistently implement evidence based best practices (Enkin *et al.*, 2004). Through a comparison of participants' experiences with EBP across three distinct health professions, a study demonstrated that both individual factors and workplace structure act together as enhancer and barrier to EBP (Asadoorian *et al.*, 2010). Barriers to implementing EBP have received more and more attention in recent studies (Majid, 2011). A number of studies determining nurses' perceptions show that nurses generally view EBP positively and consider its importance in bettering patient care (Upton, 2006). Majority of the studies are done in developed western countries (Majid, 2011). To the best knowledge of the authors, no such study is published from Kozhikode, an area of the world with a different work culture and environment.

Greater expertise and application of EBP in clinical practice by nursing faculties may influence the manner in which the EBP materials is presented to students, which may affect the manner in which students perceive EBP and implement in their professional life later (González-Torrente *et al.*, 2012). Exploring the perception of nursing faculties about EBP would provide an insight into how they view EBP and how their prejudices, either for or against EBP, influence the manner in which they teach nursing students. So we intent to investigate the perception, attitude and knowledge of EBP among nursing students, working nurses and nursing faculties in Kozhikode. The objective of this study was to explore nursing student's, nurse's and nursing faculty's awareness, knowledge, beliefs and attitude toward EBP and factors likely to encourage or create barriers to adoption. In addition, training needs, information sources used by nurses and their literature searching skills were also investigated.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A Multicentre Cross sectional study is planned for this study. Purposive sampling technique will be used for sample selection. The sample size will be 90, comprising of 30 final year MSc nursing students, 30 nursing faculties and 30 working nurses. The participants will be recruited from the nursing colleges and hospitals in Kozhikode area. Demographic data including age, sex, location of work etc will be collected. To evaluate the perception, knowledge and attitude towards EBP, Perception of Nurses of Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Questionnaire will be used (Majid, 2011). Perception of Nurses of Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Questionnaire is a standardized questionnaire developed by a team comprising information studies faculty of the Nanyang Technological University and nursing representatives from the National University Hospital, Singapore. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section collected demographic information about the participants, such as their professional education, job title, length of nursing experience, specialty, and training in EBP. The second section sought information about their attitudes toward and knowledge of EBP, including motivators and barriers to adopting EBP. The third section of the questionnaire solicited responses related to information sources used by nurses for patient care and clinical

decision making. It also collected information about search features they used for literature searching as well as their knowledge of Boolean and proximity operators. To assess the nurses' database searching skills, a hypothetical topic was given to them along with five possible search statements. They were expected to pick the most appropriate search statement for the given topic (Majid, 2011). The content validity and internal consistency of each subsection of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach alpha coefficients and was between 0.681 to 0.954 (Majid, 2011). We are planning in person administration of the questionnaire. Informed Consent will be taken from all eligible participants prior to the initiation of the study. All nurses participating in the study will be informed that they could abandon the study at any time.

SPSS software version 18 will be used for data analysis. Being the study is descriptive in nature, descriptive statistics will be used for calculating means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages. Chi square statistic will be applied for the categorical data. Further the frequencies of observations will be utilized to know the trend towards perception, knowledge, and attitude towards EBP among the various groups.

RESULTS

The result of the study will provide insight regarding the level of perception about EBP among nurses in Kozhikode. Further it will add more knowledge regarding the variation in perception among nurses, nursing students and nursing faculties regarding EBP. The study will help in highlighting the current status of EBP knowledge and utilization among nurses in this area.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study will provide information about the perception about EBP among various nursing professionals and guide policy makers and curriculum designers in adopting effective strategies to enhance the use of EBP in nursing practice. The present study will act as a background for more extensive research in the current topic and enhance knowledge base regarding Evidence Based Practice in nursing profession. Locally conducted or published research plays an important role in changing the professional practice of nurses. The proposed study will positively influence nurse's professional practice in Kozhikode. Our findings provide a useful foundation from which to plan future interventions and directions for EBP among nursing professionals in Kozhikode as well as in developing countries like India. The result of the study will help to develop an appropriate strategy to promote EBP among nurses and overcoming associated barriers in Kozhikode. A cross-comparison study investigating differences in EBP perception between medical, nursing and other allied health disciplines in Kozhikode is warranted. The findings will help in developing comprehensive training programs to improve the literature searching and utilization skills of nurses and other medical professionals. The current study will have some limitations. First, as is the case with most research that relies on self-reported questionnaires, social desirability bias (when respondents provide socially desirable answers) cannot be ruled out. Besides, linguistic or cultural differences may affect respondents' interpretation of select questions. Also small samples of nursing professionals to be included in our study cannot be assumed to be representative

of all professional nurses. Lastly, purposive sampling approach may introduce a degree of selection bias to the study; as such participants may have attitudes and perceptions of EBP that may not necessarily be representative of the entire cohort. The current study will generate the necessity of similar researches in various parts of the country, which will enhance the knowledge base regarding evidence based practice among nurses. More extensive study with larger sample size will help in generalizability of the result. Data collected through certain qualitative research techniques, such as interviews and focus group discussions, could further this study.

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