

Original Research Article

Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Nurses towards HIV/AIDS' Patients

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Abstract: *Background:* Health care workers are key players in the prevention and management of HIV-infection. *Materials and method:* Descriptive cross-sectional hospital based study was conducted in Omdruman Teaching Hospital, Aim to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice of nurses towards HIV/AIDS' patients, in the period between September to December 2019. Data was collected from 125 nurses, by using two methods: Self-administered questionnaire and observation check list. *Results:* Study result showed that, there was high knowledge about causative organism (96%), poor knowledge regarded the body fluids contains virus and methods of sterilization that kill the virus (19.2%). Satisfied knowledge was found about mode of transmissions, nursing procedures may lead to exposure to infection (72.8%), precaution measures taken by the nurses against HIV/AIDS while there was a poor practice of universal precautions. On the other hand, observation of hospital wards revealed insufficient measures to reduce the risk of HIV transmission (e.g. non-functioning water taps, lack of supplies and equipment). Study indicates there was a considerable percentage incidence of accidental needle sticks injuries (48.8%), but measures to be taken (post-exposure prophylaxis guidelines) after occurrence was poor. *Conclusions:* In general, negative attitudes and misconceptions were observed. 46.4% of nurses were afraid of caring an AIDS' patients. It is suggested that continuous in-service training be instituted to improve practice, to dispel misconceptions and to develop favorable attitude.

Keywords: Nurses, HIV/AIDS' patients, Knowledge, Attitude and Practice.

INTRODUCTION

An estimated 35 million people live with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) globally with more than two-thirds (70%) of these people residing in sub-Saharan Africa [1]. The first known case of AIDS in Sudan was detected in 1986 [2]. HIV/AIDS poses serious threat to social & economics development and even political stability. It has no known cure or vaccine.

It is a world-wide health problem and is constantly evolving epidemically and rapidly expanding. At the end of 2002, UNAIDS estimated that, worldwide, approximately 42 million of people living with HIV /AIDS, an estimate 5 million of people acquired HIV in 2002, and death is 3, 1 million [4] Sudan National AIDS control program in the 2nd Quarter 2003, estimated that, total number of cases in Sudan is 10,410, total number of a symptomatic cases is 5319 & total number of AIDS cases is 5091 [5].

Sudan is the largest country in Africa. Eight countries share its boundaries. Some of these neighboring countries are suffering either from famine, wars or both. Their migrating habits as refugees across the borders have increased the risk of HIV/AIDS transmission and spread. Also Sudan has different societies which include so many tribes each has a particular traditions, religious beliefs, culture and customs.

Nurses are care providers to all types of patients and that by itself makes their job an occupational hazard. In other wards nurses are more susceptible for infection and disease than any others groups. Their continuous direct and proximal contact with patients is an obvious cause.

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The route of infection spread other diseases could be by skin contact, coughing and droplet infection and in HIV/AIDS case is by needle stick injuries and body fluids.

HIV is a blood borne infection that can be transmitted in health care settings. Although there are only 57 documented cases so far, 24 are nurses. Nurses among all professionals have the most documented seroconversions to HIV. 48 of these documented seroconversions reflected needle stick injuries exposure to HIV as occupational risk [26] 22 of these 57 health care workers have died from AIDS. 26 nurses are included in an additional 138 health care workers who have developed HIV, but have no identifiable risk factors and have no documented seroconversion to HIV.18

Finally I want to stress that Health care workers are at risk to exposure to HIV in health care setting, unless they assume that blood or blood product and body fluids are potentially infectious and applied the International Human Immuno deficiency virus/AIDS strategy. Sudanese Health care workers must consider HIV/AIDS problem seriously and avoid vatlism. Efforts to educate Sudanese health workers about HIV/AIDS should be intensified. This knowledge helps all health workers especially the nurses to change their passive attitudes towards HIV/AIDS patients. It will be improve the level of precautions measures taken when dealing with HIV/AIDS patients.

METHODOLOGY

Study design

This descriptive cross-sectional hospital based study, assessing knowledge, attitude and practice of nurses towards HIV/AIDS in Omdruman Teaching Hospital.

Study population

Study population are certified nurses graduated from Technical secondary school of nursing, and recently work in Omdruman Teaching Hospital.

Study area

Omdruman Teaching Hospital is the site of the study. It is one of the main federal Hospitals in Sudan. It is located in Omdruman State. It is referral hospital established 1898, has many different departments' medical, surgical, ophthalmic, dental, dermatological, and gynecology words, coronary care unit, pharmacy. The total number of beds about 597 for different departments. Also it has Technical Secondary School received students from different hospital and clinic and gradated yearly about 54 students.

The hospital equiped with blood bank and different laboratories. In it there is day outpatient clinic that received Patients for different cure specialties and also casualty for emergency.

Staff nursing who working in Omdruman Teaching Hospital are 52 nurses, 150 certified nurses, and 163 students under training

Sampling method

Convenience sampling (125) total coverage of nurses (66 females and 59 males) working at different wards departments were included in the study.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected by using two methods: Self-administered questionnaire of 22 statments concerning basic knowledge of the huma.

immunodeficiency virus (HIV), modes of transmission, precautions, protections, attitude towards HIV/AIDS patients and hospital facilities and obervation check list through 30 nurses to record the observance precautions measures taken by the nurses.

These were formulated according to literature review and objective of the research. A pretest was done 10 questionnaire filled and modification and exclusion of some questions followed.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data was analysed by SPSS

RESULT

125 certificate nurses with different work experience participate in the study. Their age and sex profile is showing in table (1) and Fig (1) 43.2% of the respondent think the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is 1.6% while most of them (96%), identified the causative agent correctly.

The knowledge of the nurse concerning the presence of the virus in the body fluid, 34.4% of the participant think the semen, blood & vaginal contain the virus of the participant is display in fig (2).

A graphical presentation that display the response of the to the question about the mode of transmission is shown in table (2), unsterile needles, sexual intercourse and sharing sharp instrument was assumed to be the main mode of transmission by at the respondent (63.2%) the different responses of the participant are shown in table (2).

The aware ness of participant HIV/AIDS related was explored symptoms was displayed 56.8% of participant. They listed diarrhoea, loss of weight, hover in amatory infections as the main related clinical symptoms. The perception of different participant of HIV/AIDS main symptoms is showing in table (3).

Variable responses were obtaining concerning the length of the incubation period; the different responses are summarizing in Fig (3).

The information about the response to the question about sterilization methods; the different response of participant are showing in table (4).

Regarding to question about importance of sterilization, the respondent think that protect health care workers and patients 36%, the different response of participant are shown in table (5).

Question nurses explored the contribution of mass media and health education to the awareness of nurses, 39.2% of the participant attributed their knowledge to health education, mass media, lectures, workshops seminar poster. The contribution of the different sources of knowledge & information to the study participant is showing in table (6).

Considerable proportion of participant (72%) were able to identified the nursing procedure which may lead to exposure to HIV/ AIDS, sample taken blood handling blood transfusion, intravenous injections, suture injuries, dressing and canula as the nursing that may lead to HIV/AIDS the participant response is summarized in table (7), the participant think that a number of production measures that must be taken by nurse for protection against AIDS, 76.8% of the enlisted wearing gloves, gowns, mask during normal delivery wearing gloves during dressing injection the other participant the same measure partially of their response is shown in table (8).

The participant think that are a number of protections measures that should followed often being injured, 65.6% of them washing by soap & water, dressing preparing of the accident as a protection measure, another group (1.6) added to the afore mentioned & measure taken of a sample.

60% of the participant received a training course about the caring for AIDS patients. 46.4% of the respondent fear from caring of AIDS' patients and explained that by different reasons shown in fig (4) and (5). A considerable percentage admits that they become scared when they take care of HIV/AIDS patients.

50.4% of the participant thinks that taking care of HIV/AIDS patient is more difficult and they minted a number of reasons that are displayed in fig (6).

67.2% of the participant think that hospital does not offer all methods for protection and precaution they pulpit some of shortage table (9).

DISCUSSION

This study was carried out in order to evaluate knowledge, attitude and practice of nurses towards HIV/AIDS patients.

High knowledge about causative agent (96%), is expected because as result of increasing campaigns but 34.4% of study population agree that the body fluids containing virus, blood, semen & vaginal secretion and others, this knowledge disgracefully poor, as in previous study. In Sudan (35%) [16] And in Bond *et al.* 1989 study reported a disappointing lack of knowledge among all disciplines of community nursing [10].

In assessing the level of knowledge about mode of transmission, (63.2%) of respondents were aware of mode of transmission this was agreeable level of knowledge, as similar study.

Among in-service nurses in Calcutta: showed satisfactory level of knowledge (74.3%)²⁹, as in previous study In Sudan (44%)¹⁶, Madagascar study: showed scientific knowledge about transmissibility of HIV infection was poor³⁰.

60% interviewer were received courses about caring of HIV/AIDS patients, while in previous study In Sudan (3%) [16]. The information about sterilization methods that kill the virus, the most of nurses showed unreasonable of knowledge regard the sterilization methods, (19.2%) of the participants mention that heat and antiseptics. as in previous study.

In Sudan said that both heat and antiseptics (28%)²⁷. This study showed that 77% were not know the specific guideline for management of HIV/AIDS, 61% know nothing about the protective measure were those who managed cases of HIV/AIDS before.

The awareness of target group about the importance of sterilization, 36% of respondents agree that for protection of both health care workers and patients, this result showed inadequate knowledge.

Regarded to procedure that may lead to expose to HIV/AIDS 72.8% of participants had adequate knowledge about they did not take care themselves 48.8% of the nurses had history of exposures to infected needle stick injuries or sharp instrument, 65% know proper management but 1.6% of respondents reported accident.

In assessing the precautions measures ha must be taken by the nurses for protection against HIV/AIDS 76.8% of study population, this satisfied but in compare with their practice, was poor observance of universal precaution. 60.4% among who receive courses and not receive 39.6%. The differences are not significant. As a study among in-service nurses in Calcutta: misconceptions regarding disinfections and precautionary measures were present²⁹.

From direct observation check list, according to Universal precaution guide line which was introduced by Centers for Disease and Control and Occupational Safety and Health Administration in United States, among 30 respondents. The result showed that protective barriers are available inadequate (20% of respondents were wearing gloves in regarded different procedures, masks and gowns are not available). Hand washing 10% of respondents did this procedure, because non-functioning water taps. No specific containers for sharp instruments. Sterilization of instruments not by proper steps used boiling more than oven.

Disposal able containers for waste product it is available but not safe. Not wearing gloves when taken sample. The procedures regarded environment not complete. As in Nigeria study the nurses had a poor knowledge about universal precautions. There was also a poor observance of universal precaution [18].

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome can evoke irrational emotions and fears in health care Providers, include nurses and the general public.

If unexplained, fears may produce barrier to successful educational efforts about HIV/AIDS. Result in a variety of adverse out comes generally, health care professionals and the general public have been reported to have negative attitude towards people with HIV/AIDS and usually nursing showed great fear of contagion, negative emotions.

This study showed 46.4% of the respondent fear from caring of AIDS' patients, 61 % among who receive course, (p-value.942) but result not significant.

50.4% of the participant thinks that caring for HIV/AIDS patient is more difficult than others diseases, but result of nurses who receive course about caring of HIV/AIDS patient is 63.5% and the (p-value. 479) is not significant.

There are many factors associated with negative HIV/AIDS related attitude. These include: level of knowledge, late diagnosis unavailable protective barriers, not knowing someone with AIDS, study of general practitioners by Gallagher *et al.* (1989) reported similar findings with 6% of study sample saying they did not wish to deliver care to patients on their list who might develop AIDS, and further 20% expressing doubts about doing so [12]. As study among in-service nurses of Calcutta [19], also in Madagascar study negative attitude towards HIV-positive patients were noted.

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