

Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Nursing Process among Nurses in Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu, Imo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The nursing process, upon introduction by North American Nurses Diagnosis Association (NANDA) has proved to be a means of standardizing nursing care and in maintaining professional autonomy. However, despite its benefits, many nurses are yet to fully understand and put to practice the nursing process. This may have led to poor patient care and outcome; and it is the basis for this study which assessed the knowledge, attitude and practice of nursing process among nurses in Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu, Imo State. A cross-sectional descriptive survey design with a sample of one hundred and thirty nine (139) selected through a cluster and purposive sampling techniques was employed for this study. The target population comprised of all the 214 staff nurses working as a permanent nursing staff of Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu. Self-constructed/administered questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data and analysis of findings was done using frequencies and percentages and presented in tables. Findings from the study showed that although the nurses at the hospital had good theoretical knowledge and positive attitude towards the use of nursing process however, they did not apply it in the care of their patients. There are several challenges to this lack of application including inadequate staff, work overload, management's inability to provide the needed materials among others. It was recommended that the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria should embark on regular seminars, workshops and symposia focused on practical implementation of the nursing process in Nigeria. Health facilities should recruit more staff nurses and the nurses should be advised to apply nursing process while caring for patients in the ward.

Keywords: *Knowledge; Attitude; Practice; Nursing Process; Nurses*

Introduction

Nurses are the largest group of health professionals in all countries. Nursing quality is closely related to a healthcare system's effectiveness. In order to achieve quality of healthcare service, quality of nursing care is the key element and to fill this demand application of the nursing process has a significant role, but, in practice, application of the nursing process is not well developed [1]. Nursing care has continued to evolve from the era of disease model to today's scientific based care and holistic approach. Patients in the past were treated based on illness suffered without considering the psychological and social factors that always accompany physical illness. Nursing process application combines the art and science of nursing which has proved to be a valuable tool that has continued to revolutionize nursing practice as well as patient outcome globally. Nurse practitioners therefore must keep abreast with good scientific understanding of all the tasks done [2]. The use of the nursing process in the clinical areas enhances high quality nursing care, improves health of patients and promotes nursing profession scientific discipline [3]. Learning and using the nursing process are two different things with most of the nurses only practicing nursing process when they have one individual patient or a few patients but as the number increases the practice is compromised.

A study conducted by Anyasor and Oluwatoyin (2017) revealed that the knowledge of nursing process among the participants is good as positive responses were obtained in almost all the items on knowledge of nursing process. Although all the respondents (100%) claimed to have received training on the use of nursing process, however, only 66.7% said that they have an adequate understanding of nursing process [4]. A study conducted by Hagos, Alemseged, Balcha, Berhe and Aregay, (2014) revealed that majority 180 (90%) of the respondents have poor knowledge and 99.5% of the respondents have a positive attitude towards the nursing process [1]. A study by Abebe, Abera and Ayana (2014) revealed that 46 (37.1%) always use nursing process, 62 (50%) sometimes apply nursing process in the care of their patients whereas and the rest 16 (12.9%) do not use nursing process to care for their patients [5]. A study by Afolayan, Donald, Baldwin, Onasoga and Babafemi (2013) showed that although the trained nurses had good theoretical knowledge of the nursing process, they did not apply it in the care of their patients, several challenges to this were; lack of application including inadequate practical knowledge, inadequate staff, work overload, management's inability to provide the needed materials among others [6].

A study conducted by Akpan-idiok, Asuquo, Duke and Igbeng (2017) to examine the knowledge and practice of nursing process among nurses in university of Calabar Teaching Hospital, Cross River State, Nigeria revealed that most nurses do not carry out nursing process due to lack of time, excess workload, no nursing process booklet or stationaries, poor incentives and that nursing process is a foreign culture brought into Nigeria without it being adapted to fit into the culture. Some nurses regard the nursing process as the United States culture and an American concept, hence implementation of the idea could not be bought over completely to the African set-up with different culture [7]. In a study conducted by Mbithi, Mwenda and Karonjo (2018) to observe the utilization of the nursing process among nurses in selected public health care facilities in Kenya revealed that only 29% of the respondents were able to carry out their procedures and document according to the steps of nursing process [8].

Atnafe, Tadessa, Habte, Negesa (2017) explained that almost all the nurses in Sweden used the standardized nursing care plan and practice nursing process in their everyday work [9]. A study done by Grace, Karani, Ogutu and Gachoka (2017) revealed that knowledge factor influenced the use of nursing process more than other variables such as profession, attitude and institution [10]. A study conducted by Adeyemo and Olaogun (2013) in Nigeria on factors influencing the implementation of nursing process revealed that knowledge factor has the most important influence on the use of nursing process [11]. Also, Agyeman-Yeboah, *et al.* (2017) study revealed that the nurses were not implementing the nursing process in the ward because they do not really understand it [12]. Implementation of the NP has economic benefits to a country as it leads to increase in patients' working time and decrease in the cost of health care as a result of patients' reduced hospital stay which is a result of quality health care from nurses [13]. In addition, it promotes critical thinking, creativity, problem solving and decision making skills in clinical practice [14].

Materials and Methods

The study adopted a cross sectional descriptive survey design. The study was conducted in Imo State University Teaching Hospital (IMSUTH), Orlu. The hospital is located at Umunna in Orlu Local government area, Imo state, a non-riverine and non-hilly area. It is bounded on the north by Umudike village, on the east by Umudara village, on the south by Owerri-eberi village and on the west by Umusasa village. The hospital covers approximately 306 hectares of land. The hospital was established in 2004 to serve the health needs of Imo people and beyond, and training for students in Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences in Imo State University, house officers and all interns. The teaching hospital is arranged in wards and clinic with different offices. It has facilities such as Accident and Emergency (Paediatrics and Adult), Intensive Care Unit (ICU), Medical and surgical wards (Male and Female), Orthopaedics, Pediatric (Medical and Surgical), Gynaecology, Pre-natal, Labour and Post-natal, Urology, Eye, Dental, Outpatient Departments, Theatre, etc. Laboratory services such as X- ray, ultrasonography, medical microbiology lab etc are also available. The study population was 214 with a sample of 139 determined by Taro Yamane and were selected through a cluster and purposive sampling techniques. A self-developed close ended questionnaire was used which gave a reliability index of 0.87. The copies (139) of the questionnaire were administered on face to face basis by the researcher and all were adequately filled and retrieved thereafter. The data were analyzed using frequency distribution and percentages and presented using tables. Ethical approval was obtained from the ethical committee of the hospital. The respondents gave verbal/oral approval before the questionnaire was given.

Results

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (in years)	Below 30 years	37	26.6
	31 - 40 year	54	38.8
	41 - 50 years	29	20.9
	51 and above	19	13.7
Gender	Male	8	5.8
	Female	131	94.2
Professional Qualification	Diploma in Nursing	14	10.1
	Bachelor of Science in Nursing	97	69.8
	Master of science in Nursing	28	20.1
	PhD in Nursing	0	0
Cadre in Nursing	Staff Nurse	61	43.9
	Nursing officer	35	25.2
	Senior nursing officer	27	19.4
	Principal nursing officer	11	7.9
	Chief nursing officer	5	3.6
Years in active service	1 - 5 years	33	23.7
	6 - 10 years	57	41.0
	11 - 15 years	29	20.9
	16 - 20 years	14	10.1
	21 years and above	6	4.3

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents.

Many respondents (38.8% and 26%) fall under the age brackets of 31 - 40 years and below 30 years respectively whereas 20.9% and 13.7% were under the age brackets of 41 - 50 years and 51 years and above respectively.

Majority (94.2%) were females while males were only 5.8%.

Also, majority (69.8%) of the respondents had Bachelor of Science in Nursing, 20.1% and 10.1% had MSc. and diploma in nursing respectively. None of the respondents obtained PhD in Nursing.

Most (43.9% and 25.2%) of the respondents were staff nurses and nursing officers respectively. Fewer respondents (19.4%, 7.9% and 3.6%) occupy higher cadres in Nursing and were senior nursing officers, principal nursing officers and chief nursing officers respectively.

Majority (41.0%) had up to 10 years of experience in service, 23.7% and 20.9% had up to 5 years and 15 years of experience in active service whereas very few (4.3%) had more than 20 years of experience.

Majority (84.2%) of the respondents have good understanding of the definition of nursing process, 98.6% of the respondents have adequate knowledge on the correct sequence/step for solving nursing process. Also, almost all the respondents (99.3%) were able to identify the phase of nursing process (i.e. evaluation) that has review of patient’s care. Summarily, majority (94.2%) of the respondents have good knowledge of nursing process.

Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Understanding of Nursing Process	117	84.2
Correct sequence/step for solving nursing process	137	98.6
Review of patients' care	138	99.3
Grand Total	392	282
Average (Mean)	131	94.2

Table 2: Overall knowledge of respondents on nursing process.

Statements	S.A	A	D	S.D	Total	Mean	Remark
I am willing to apply nursing process in the care of my patient	108	105	90	32	335	2.4	Negative
I will prefer the use of nursing process in all situations	124	141	106	8	379	2.7	Positive
Application of nursing process should be the duty/responsibility of all nurses	116	93	94	31	334	2.4	Negative
It is important to use nursing process in practice	100	111	62	36	309	2.2	Negative
Nursing process is essential tool for nursing care	156	147	54	24	381	2.7	Positive
Application of nursing process improves patient's outcome	172	171	42	18	403	2.9	Positive
Applying nursing process makes so much difference in patient's recovery	112	93	74	43	322	2.3	Negative
Nursing process enables me to provide quality care	92	111	62	48	313	2.3	Negative
Application of nursing process should be for all shifts	124	141	78	22	365	2.6	Positive
Total	1104	1113	662	262	3141	22.5	Positive
Average	122.7	123.7	73.6	29.1	349	2.5	

Table 3: Respondents' attitudes towards the use of nursing process.

The respondents have positive attitudes to the following statements in other of hierarchy; Application of nursing process improves patient's outcome, Preference of the use of nursing process in all situations, Nursing process is essential tool for nursing care, and Application of nursing process should be for all shifts. They also have negative attitudes to the following statements; It is important to use nursing process in practice, Applying nursing process makes so much difference in patient's recovery, Nursing process enables me to provide quality care, Application of nursing process should be the duty/responsibility of all nurses, and I am willing to apply nursing process in the care of my patient. The average mean of respondent's attitude towards nursing process is 2.5 which shows that the respondents generally have positive attitude towards nursing process.

Practice	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Use of nursing process in patient care	48	34.5
Drawing and use of nursing process in the last one week	37	26.6
Frequency in the use of nursing process		
Always	9	6.5
sometimes	17	12.2
rarely	22	15.8
never	91	65.5

Table 4: Practice of nursing process among respondents.

Table 4 above showed that few (34.5%) of the respondents use the nursing process in care of their patients. Also, very few (26.6%) of the respondents drew and used the nursing process in the last one week. Very few (6.5%, 12.2%, 15.8%) of the respondents always, sometimes and rarely apply nursing process respectively whereas many (65.5%) never used nursing process in caring of their patients.

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High patient nurse ratio/work load	129	92.8
Poor teaching of nursing process at nurses’ training schools	49	35.3
Poor knowledge of nursing process	27	19.4
Non-availability of the care plan forms in the ward	70	50.3
Lack of time	131	92.2

Table 5: Factors that are responsible for the nonuse of nursing process in the hospital.

N.B: Multiple Responses.

Majority (92.8% and 92.2%) of the respondents affirmed that high patient nurse ratio/work load and lack of time respectively were responsible for their non-use of nursing process in caring for their patients. A little above half (50.3%) of the respondents claimed that it was as a result of the non-availability of the care plan forms in their wards. Others, (35.3% and 19.4%) of the respondents opined that their non-usage of nursing process in caring for their patients were as result of poor teaching of nursing process at their training schools and poor knowledge of nursing process respectively.

Discussion

Nursing process is globally recognized and accepted as a scientific method used to guide procedures and provide quality nursing care. However, poor use of nursing process in providing quality care to patients has been observed in most healthcare facilities. In this study, knowledge, attitude and practice of nursing process among staff nurses of Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu was assessed. Additionally, study identified factors that are responsible for the non-implementation of the nursing process in the hospital.

The demographic variable revealed that majority of the staff nurses in this study were from the age of 31 - 40 years. This indicates more younger nurses are joining the nursing fraternity compared to the attrition rate. In their gender, majority of the respondents were female. This shows that the nursing profession in Nigeria is still having less male compared to female despite the long existence of nursing as a profession in this country. Majority of the nurses had Bachelor of Science in Nursing and none had Phd in nursing in regards with professional qualification. In the cadre of nursing, majority were staff nurses and in regard to years of active service, 6 - 10 years active service was the highest.

Knowledge of nursing process among nurses in Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu

The study revealed that 94.2% of the respondents have good theoretical knowledge of nursing process as positive responses were obtained in almost all the items on knowledge of nursing process. This conforms to a study by Anyasor and Oluwatoyin which revealed that majority (66.7%) had adequate understanding of nursing process [4]. These findings did not support Hagos, Alemseged, Balcha, Berche and Aregay (2014) findings which showed that nurses have poor knowledge of nursing process and skill of writing care plan [1]. Majority of nurses who had good knowledge of the nursing process (NP) from this study were those had Bachelor of Science in Nursing and MSc. hence the discrepancy with the findings of Hagos, Alemseged, Balcha, Berche and Aregay.

Attitude of nurses in Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu towards use of nursing process

The findings from this study revealed that generally, the staff nurses in Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu have positive attitude towards nursing process with a mean score of 2.5. This is in line with Hagos, Alemseged, Balcha, Berche and Aregay (2014) which revealed that majority of their respondents (99.5%) have positive attitude towards nursing process [1].

Practice of nursing process among nurses in Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu

The study revealed that nurses do not carry out nursing process in their wards as only 26.6% use nursing process in the care of their patients. This finding agreed with the study of Abebe, Abera and Ayana (2013) which revealed that majority (62.9%) of the respondents fail from not practicing the nursing process [5]. Reasons for nonuse of nursing process in order of hierarchy include; lack of time, high patient- nurse ratio/work load, none availability of care plan forms in the ward, and due to lack of time. These reasons were in line with a study by Afolayan, Donald, Baldwin, Onasoga and Babafemi (2013) which indicated inadequate practical knowledge, inadequate staff, work overload, management's inability to provide the needed materials as factors that hinder the practice of nursing process [6].

Conclusion

The study comprehensively assessed the knowledge, attitude and practice of nursing process among staff nurses of Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu. Findings of this study has shown that nurses working at Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu have good knowledge of nursing process and positive attitude towards the use of nursing process but it is not often utilized/practiced. Major factors which hindered the use of nursing process included inadequate staffing, excess workload, non-availability of materials, and time constraint. Hence it is important that the management of the hospital should recruit more staff nurses and avail all necessary equipment for patient care since it highly affects the implementation of nursing process. This will in turn correct the suboptimal practice of nursing process observed and also equip them with passion to render quality care to their clients using the nursing process.

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