

# A Study to Assess the Knowledge Regarding Legal and Ethical Concepts in Care of Children among Staff Nurses in Selected Hospital in M.P

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**Abstract:** A survey approach was adopted for the study and descriptive design was used. The setting selected was selected hospital of M.P and non probability randomized sampling technique was used and the sample size was 100 staff nurse's. The tool used for the study was structured questionnaire. The present study reveals that overall mean knowledge score obtained by staff nurse's is 20.88 and Standard deviation is 5.90. The finding showed that majority of staff nurses are having good and average knowledge regarding legal and ethical concepts in nursing care of children among staff nurses in selected hospital in M.P.

**Keywords:** Legal and Ethical concepts, Children, Staff Nurse

## 1. Introduction

Children are perceived as the happiness of the family. They satisfy parent's emotional, psychological, social and spiritual needs. Children prolong the parent's existence into future.[1] Today's health care delivery system is more dynamic and role of nurses has expanded rapidly, which expects specialization, autonomy and accountability from both ethical and legal perspective. This expansion has focused new concerns among nurses especially paediatric nurses to have heightened awareness of legal and ethical principles as child lack decisional power. This has provoked the researcher to test knowledge and of nurses towards legal and ethical concepts in child care.[2] Knowledge of laws that regulate and affect paediatric nursing practice is needed for two reasons:

- a) To ensure that the paediatric nurses decisions and actions are consistent with current legal principles.
- b) To protect the paediatric nurse from liability.[3]

Nurses are confronted every day with situation in which difficult decision must be made based on the determination of right and wrong. Nurses caring for children in critical care areas encounter ethical dilemmas therefore it is important for nurses to have a basic understanding of the laws that affect their practice and the ethical guidelines that can be used to resolve dilemmas.[4]

Ethical considerations are vital in any area dealing with human beings because they respect values, rights and relationships. Nurses are obligated to provide ethical and legal client care that demonstrates respect for others.[1]

## 2. Literature Survey

a) Butz Am, Redman BK, conducted a study in USA on ethical conflicts experienced by certified pediatric nurse practitioners (CPNP) in ambulatory settings. Five hundred fifty-nine CPNPs, identified by the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Associates and Practitioners, received survey questionnaires in the mail and were asked to participate by describing an ethical conflict in their practice. One third (34%) of the perceived ethical conflicts

fell in the child/parent/practitioner relationship category. Most conflicts (31%) were experienced as a moral dilemma where 2 or more clear moral principles apply but they support mutually inconsistent courses of action. Most ethical conflicts (22%) were unresolved. It conclude that professional and institutions/agencies need to collaborate on how to initiate appropriate ethics education and consultation for professional staff to recognize, discuss, and resolve ethical conflicts in the workplace.[5]

- b) Hakan Ozdemir M conducted A study on midwives and nurses awareness of patient's right. The method of cross-sectional descriptive survey conducted among participants working in university hospitals, state hospitals and village clinics. Questionnaires were distributed to 150 midwives and 350 nurses. The findings is fifty-one per cent (n = 152) of midwives and nurses stated that they had not read any legislation related to patients' rights. Seventy-five per cent (n = 222) of respondents were aware of the legal arrangements. Only 34% (n = 74) of participants who knew of any legal basis for patients' rights said that legislation was in the form of a directive. The study concluded that violation of patients' rights and health professionals' ignorance of appropriate practice means that there is an urgent need to reconsider how to approach this issue. It should be included in continuing education programmers at both graduate and postgraduate midwifery and nursing schools, and also demands more research.[6]
- c) Remya U conducted a study in Chennai on legal, ethical knowledge, attitude and practice in caring for children among nurses working in NICU and PICU. A sample of 50 nurses working in NICU and PICU was taken. In which 10%, 64%, 26% of nurses were having inadequate, moderate, adequate knowledge respectively. The study conclude that the nurses need more strengthening of their knowledge to improve their attitude and practices in child care.[2]
- d) Barnabas, et.al. conducted a comparative study in Christian Medical College and Hospital, Ludhiana, Punjab, on the Nursing Graduates and the Diploma Graduates. The Data from 91 nursing graduates was obtained. Structured questionnaire schedule was developed. The objective of the study was (1).To assess the knowledge of legal responsibilities in patient care among nursing graduates. (2).To compares the knowledge

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of legal responsibilities in patient care among Diploma and B.Sc. Nursing graduates. The major findings of the study revealed that the overall nursing graduates' legal responsibility knowledge score (LRKS) was good in the areas that were directly related to patient care i.e., fundamental duties, safe environment, maintaining professional confidence, negligence on admission, transfer discharge and property (ATDP). The B.Sc. Nursing graduates exhibited better (Mean% = 71.43) legal responsibility knowledge score than the Diploma Graduates (Mean % = 68.5)[7]

- e) Houghton CE, et.al. [ 2010] conducted An study an Ethical challenges in qualitative research: examples. This study examines the many ethical challenges that are specific to qualitative research. These challenges concern the issues of informed consent procedures, the researcher-participant relationship, risk-benefit ratio, confidentiality and the dual role of the nurse-researcher. Each challenge will be examined and practical examples of how it was dealt with, using examples from multiple case study, will be described.[8]
- f) Annie J. Davis conducted a descriptive study in Canada to assess the knowledge of legal responsibilities in patient care among nursing graduates using structured knowledge questionnaire. Data was obtained from 91 nursing graduates. The Nursing Graduate's overall knowledge of legal responsibilities was good. The B.Sc. Nursing graduates exhibited better (Mean% = 71.43) legal responsibility knowledge score than the Diploma gradates (Mean % = 68.5).The overall nursing graduates' legal responsibility knowledge score was good in the areas that were directly related to patient care[9]

### 3. Methodology

The research approach used in the study is survey approach. The research design adopted for the study is non experimental descriptive research design. In the study dependent variables are staff nurse's knowledge regarding legal and ethical concepts in care of children, independent variable is the information booklet and demographic variables age, gender, religion, marital status, education, experience and attended any inservice education programme. The setting selected was selected hospital of M.P and non probability randomized sampling technique was used and the sample size was 100 staff nurse's. The tool used for the study was structured questionnaire.

- Section- A: Demographic Data. It is comprised of items seeking general information about age, sex, religion, marital status, education.
- Section- B: Structured Questionnaire. It deals with items to assess the knowledge of staff nurses regarding legal and ethical concepts in care of children.

The kalpaerson formula was used to find out the reliability of the tools. The reliability was found to be 0.88 which indicate that the structured questionnaire thus prepared is reliable. The data analysis was planned to include descriptive statistic i.e. percentage, mean, standard deviation, inferential statistic i.e. Chi-square. Chi-square is used to find out the association between the demographic variables with the score of staff nurse's knowledge regarding legal and ethical concepts in care of children.

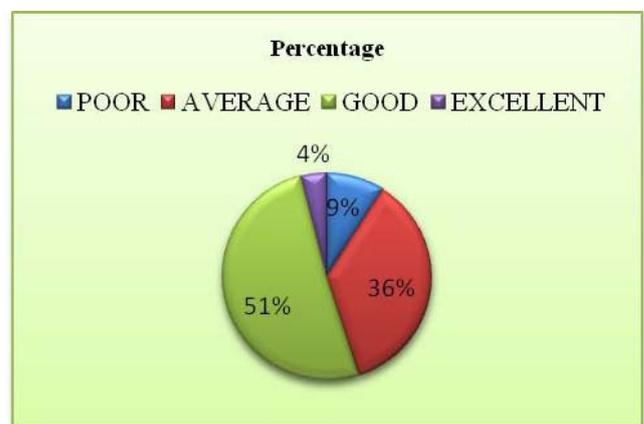
### 4. Results and Discussion

In the study data was collected from 100 samples by using structured questionnaire by simple random sampling technique. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to find out for analysis of data, chi square test to determine the association between the selected demographic variables.

**Table 1:** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Demographic Variables.

Demographic variable	Frequency	Percentage
1. Age		
a) 21-30yrs	85	85%
b) 31-40 yrs	14	14%
c) 41 and above	1	1%
5. Gender		
a) Male	16	16%
b) Female	84	84%
6. Marrital Status		
a) Married	22	22%
b)Unmarried	72	72%
7. Religion		
a)Hindu	29	29%
b)Christian	60	60%
c)Muslim	5	5%
d)Others	6	6%
8. Professional Qualification		
a)A.N.M	0	0%
b)G.N.M	36	36%
c)P.B.Sc Bursing	1	1%
d)B.SC Nursing	63	63%
9. Total Experience		
a)Less than 1 yr	26	26%
b)1-5 yr	59	59%
c)6-10yr	11	11%
d)Above 10yr	4	4%
10. Experience in Pediatric Unit		
a)Less than 1 week	22	22%
b)1-2 weeks	33	33%
c)More than 2 weeks	45	45%
11. Attended any Inservice Education Programme		
a)Yes	16	16%
b)No	84	84%

Majority of staff are having average and good knowledge as they are freshers with 1-5 yrs of experience.



**Figure 1:** Pie diagram showing the percentage of knowledge of staff nurses

The association of staff nurse's knowledge regarding legal and ethical concept for care of children indicates that there is no association of staff nurse's knowledge regarding legal and ethical concept in care of children between demographic

variables like marital status, religion, total experience and attended any in-service education programme but variables like age, gender, professional qualification and experience in paediatric unit is having high significance at  $p < 0.05$  level.

**Table 2:** Association of Knowledge between the Various Socio-Demographic Variable

<i>Demo-graphic variable</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Avg</i>	<i>good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Chi-sqr value</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Tabulated value</i>	<i>Level of significance</i>
Age	9	36	51	4	35.71	6	12.59	Significant
Gender	9	36	51	4	13.7	3	7.82	Significant
Marital status	9	36	51	4	11.27	9	16.92	Not Significant
Religion	9	36	51	4	7.34	3	7.82	Not Significant
Proff. Quail.	9	36	51	4	17.90	9	16.92	Significant
Total expe.	9	35	52	4	8.84	9	16.92	Not Significant
Exp. in paedia unit	9	36	51	4	15.6	6	12.59	Significant
Attended any in service educ .programme	9	36	51	4	3.18	3	7.82	Not Significant

## 12. Conclusion

The main aim of the study was to assess the knowledge regarding legal and ethical concepts in care of children among staff nurses in selected hospital in M.P with a view to provide an information booklet

It is found that among staff nurses 9% are having poor knowledge, 36% are having average knowledge, 51% are having good knowledge and 4% are having excellent knowledge regarding legal and ethical concepts.

## 13. Future Scope

The findings of the study have implications in various field of nursing, these are

1. Nursing education
2. Nursing practice
3. Nursing administration
4. Nursing research

### 1. Nursing Education

- Nurse educators should emphasize more on preparing students to impart health information about technology, advancement in medicine, legal limits and societal changes etc regarding legal and ethical issues in nursing practice.
- More knowledge should be provided to students regarding ethical principles, code of ethical guide lines, factors which influences and prevention of legal and ethical issues in care of children.
- Nursing students should be taught about the importance of ethical principles, factors which influence and decision making during dilemma and selection of various alternative methods while providing nursing care.
- Students can be encouraged to take up projects and studies on legal and ethical issues in care of children in different area of workplace.

### 2. Nursing Practice

- It is the responsibility of the Nurses to be aware of the advancement which takes place in medical research.
- As practicing of nurses, they can make all the attempts to create awareness regarding code of ethics, ethical principles and standards of nursing practice.

- Motivate the patients to make use of the benefits of the advanced technology challenges and competence in care. Make the clients known of the various advantages for the patient as well as for family members.
- Nurses need to involve themselves more consciously while taking decisions in emergency situations in preparing such strategies.
- The overall objective of nurses that the ethical principles should be made used and not discarded; the strategies adopted to achieve their objective should be carefully selected to match the unique demographic, trans- cultural and religious characteristics of the patients.

### 3. Nursing Administration

- Nurses as administrators should take initiation in formulating standards, policies, rules and protocols for short and long term in nursing practice.
- Effectively collaborate the hospital with the advanced technology in medicine, societal need, changes in society and existence of new diseases can be practiced in all hospitals.
- Encourage clinical research in wards on prevention of legal and ethical issues in care of children by adopting ethical principles.
- Facilities should be made available for nurses to acquire training regarding factors which influence, extending and expanding roles of nurse, new technology in medicine and management of new diseases in different culture and religious patients.

### 4. Nursing Research

- Findings of the present study suggest the education and administration should encourage nurses to read, discuss and conduct research to improve body of knowledge behaviour and attitude about code of ethics, INC standards, patient rights and ethical principles and bring about awareness for nurse and students.
- Encourage to disseminate knowledge by publications and organizing journal clubs workshops, seminars and conferences.

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### Author Profile



**Princy Koshy**, I received B.sc Degree in Nursing from P.G College of Nursing, Janvikas Nyas, Gwalior (M.P) in 2010. During 2010-2012 I was working as clinical instructor. I received M.Sc Degree in Pediatric Nursing from P.G College of Nursing, Janvikas Nyas, Gwalior (M.P) in 2014. Recently I am working as Asst. Prof. in Bombay Hospital College of Nursing, Indore (M.P).