

A Study to Measure the Quality of Nursing Care in a Medical Ward at Selected Hospital

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Abstract: Health care organization has changed and grown. Quality of care is being recognized as a right rather than privilege. Measuring quality of care in the hospital has become very important aspect in evaluating health care services. Thus, it is very important to measure patients' perception of Quality of nursing care in a medical ward. A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted and a total of 250 patients recruited for the study by using purposive sampling technique. Patients' satisfaction with nursing care quality (PSNCQQ) questionnaire was used to measure the patients' perception of quality of nursing care after obtaining reliability. The results revealed that nearly half of the patients (43.2%) were between the age group of 41-60 years. The mean and standard deviation of patients' perception of overall quality of nursing care was 62.63 ± 9.57 . Most of the patients perceived overall quality of nursing care was good whereas 54 patients (21.6%) and 26 patients (10.4%) had perceived low quality in the aspect of provision of information and in skill and competency, respectively. Thus, it was concluded that nurses need to update knowledge and improve skill and competency by attending Continuing education and skill training programmes.

Keywords: Patients' perception, quality of nursing care

1. Introduction

Quality of nursing care is defined as care that is provided according to job requirement and hospital standards.^{1,2} Quality of care has traditionally been measured against standards and expectations of professionals rather than also being grounded in the views of patients as well as nurses.³ The US national centre for health services research and development (NCHSRD, 1970) has formulated criteria for evaluating the performance of the health care system which included three categories such as mortality, morbidity and patients' satisfaction. Among these three, patients' satisfaction is probably the most difficult aspect to measure, but it is very important in determining quality of care.⁴

The importance of patient's perspective on quality is highlighted by Ovreteit's analysis of quality into three dimensions which are managerial, professional and client based. Managerial quality can be assessed in terms of cost-effective use of resources whilst nurse can determine the professional dimension of quality and client dimension can be measured by how patient perceive nursing care received.⁵

Health organizations including hospitals are constantly influenced by economic and political activities, technological changes and globalizations that forced them to reach efficient standards. Thus, health care managers have been investing in the search for new administrative strategies that improves quality of care provided, facilitate cost reduction and increases patients satisfaction.⁶

Nowadays, Health care industries are more concerned about quality of nursing care and each hospital is accountable to its consumers or patients. Consumers expect value for their money and count on the existence of services when needed. More and more patients are demanding that they need to be informed about decision regarding their health, and their concerns are now directed at the whole spectrum of their care whilst in a health care institution. As doughty and

marsh emphasize, patient now complain, demand, report and sue and have realized that quality of nursing care is an important factor in patient outcome.⁷

Another reason is that quality of nursing care is based on the principles of cost saving and principles of elimination of reputation.⁸ Assessing and improving the quality of nursing care is important in variety of health care settings. Further, professional organization, accrediting bodies, hospital policies and procedures demand for high standard of quality of nursing care which emphasis on need for the evaluation of quality of nursing care delivered in health care settings.⁷ Thus, it was decided to conduct the study to measure the quality of nursing care in a medical ward at selected hospital.

Problem statement

Measuring the Quality of Nursing care in a medical ward at selected hospital.

Objectives

- 1) Identify the patients' perception of quality of nursing care in various dimensions in a medical ward
- 2) Measure the patients' perception of overall quality of nursing care in a medical ward

2. Materials and Methods

A cross sectional descriptive study is used to measure the Patients perception of quality of nursing care in a female medical ward of a selected hospital. Total of 250 patients were recruited for the study by using purposive sampling techniques, based on inclusion criteria such as adult medical patients aged 18 years or older, also who have spent minimum 3 days or more days in the ward, can understand Tamil or English, and agreed to participate in the study and signed informed consent. Selected patients were interviewed by using Standardized instrument.

Patients' satisfaction with nursing care quality questionnaire (PSNCQQ), standardized instrument, was used to measure patients' perception of quality of nursing care which has 22 items on five point likert scale. The scoring level was interpreted as low quality nursing care (<50%), Moderate or good quality nursing care (50-75%) and High Quality nursing care (75%). Section I consisted of patients' demographic data and section II consisted of patients' perception of quality of nursing care.

Study approval was sought from the human ethical committee, in compliance with institutional ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from the participants after getting formal permission from concerned authorities.

The original instrument in English was translated into Tamil. The reliability score for **Patient satisfaction with nursing care quality questionnaire (PSNCQQ)** was obtained by using spearman brown formula with the value of 0.92

3. Results and Discussion

The results showed that 73 patients (29.2%) were between the age group of 21-40 years and 108 patients (43.2%) were between the age group of 41-60 years. Nearly half of the patients were illiterate (35.2%) or underwent Primary education (21.2%). More than half of the female patients (62.8%) were homemakers and nearly one fourth of the patients (20.8%) were manual laborer. Majority of the patients (60.4%) spent 3-4 days in medical ward and got first time admitted in this hospital. Most of the patients (83.6%) rated nursing care as positive. Belgen MA, Vaughn T and Vojir CP found that the largest portion of the patients (67.6%) were hospitalized for 5 days or less.⁹

Table 1 revealed various dimensions of patients perception of quality of nursing care such as provision of information, concern and caring, skill and competency and Management

of patients and recommendation. Ninety three patients (37.2%) had perceived high quality in the aspects of management of patients and recommendation and 214 patients (85.6%) had perceived good quality in the aspect of concern and caring whereas 54 (21.6%) and 26 patients (10.4%) had perceived low quality in provision of information and skill and competency aspects, respectively. Similar results were found in the study conducted on patients' perception of nursing care at large teaching hospital in India by Mufti Samina, Qadri GJ, Tabish SA, Mufti Samiya and R Riyaz that relatively higher percentage of patients (31.6%) had poor perception regarding 'explanation and information'¹.

Study revealed that 208 patients (83.2%, mean value and SD 62.63 ± 9.57) perceived good quality in overall aspects of quality of nursing care.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of patients perception of quality of nursing care in various dimensions among patients in a medical ward

S.No	Dimension of Quality of Nursing Care	Low quality		Good quality		High quality	
		NO	%	NO	%	NO	%
1.	Provision of information	54	21.6	182	72.8	14	5.6
2.	Concern and caring	17	6.8	214	85.6	19	7.6
3.	Skill and competency	26	10.4	203	81.2	21	8.4
4.	Management of patients and recommendation	2	0.8	155	62.0	93	37.2

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage of overall perception of quality of nursing care

Quality of nursing care	Percentage of score	frequency	Percentage of patients	Mean	Standard deviation
Low	<50%	15	6.0	62.63	9.57
Moderate/ Good	50-75%	208	83.2		
High	75%	27	10.8		

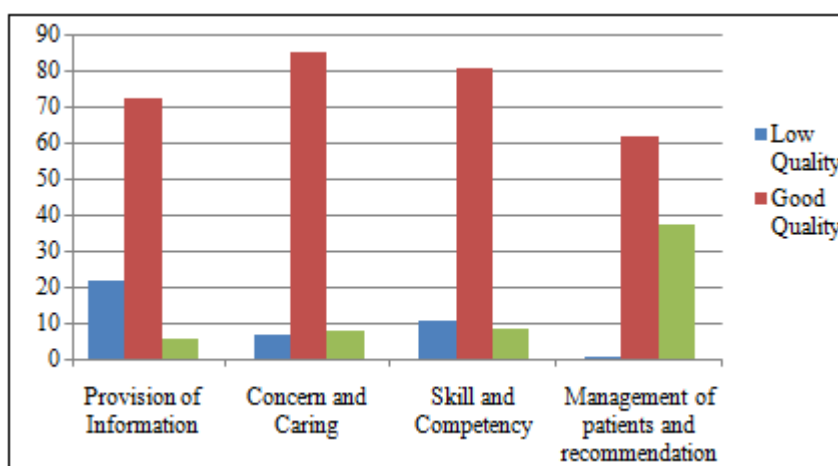


Figure 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of patients perception of quality of nursing care in various dimensions among medical patients

4. Conclusion

The study gives valuable insight into patients' perception of overall quality of nursing care and various aspects of quality of nursing care. Patients perceived high quality in the

aspects of management of patients and recommendation. But, patients also perceived low quality in provision of information and skill and competency aspects. Thus, it is important that nurses need to update their knowledge and improve their skill and competency by attending continuous

education programmes and skill training workshops in order to provide information to the patients which in turn result in improvement of patients perception of quality of nursing care.

5. Future Scope

Since patients' perception of quality of nursing care may be influenced by many variables. Further, qualitative studies are recommended to fully capture the realities of these constructs.

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