A Study to Assess the Level of Knowledge and Anxiety towards COVID-19 Pandemic among B.Sc. Nursing Students of College of Nursing NEMCARE Foundation, Assam

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Abstract: _Background:_ _COVID-19 is a new disease caused by a novel (new) corona virus .As it is a pandemic and pandemics can lead to heightened levels of stress. And anxiety is a common response to any stressful situation._ _Aim:_ _To assess the level of knowledge and anxiety towards COVID-19 among B.Sc. Nursing students of College of Nursing NEMCARE Foundation, Assam._ _Methods:_ _An online survey was conducted by administering self-structured questionnaire. A total no of 43 participants were received._ _Results:_ _The participants had a moderate level of knowledge with moderate anxiety about COVID-19. There is a significant association of level of knowledge and anxiety with selected demographic variables at 0.05 level of significance. There is a significant negative correlation between level of knowledge and anxiety (r= -0.091, p=0.000) at 0.01 level of significance._ _Conclusion: Present study concluded that students are having moderate level of knowledge with moderate anxiety._

Keywords: Knowledge, anxiety, COVID-19, B.Sc. nursing students

1. Introduction

Corona viruses are a large family of viruses transmitting between human and animals that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV). Older people and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

The novel corona virus (COVID-19) cases have been confirmed in large number of countries. It seems that the current widespread outbreak has been partly associated with a delay in diagnosis and poor infection control procedures. The understanding or having enough information regarding sources, clinical symptoms, mode of transmission and preventive measures among nursing students can play role for this assessment.

The knowledge of the nursing students can prevent the transmission of disease. And to improve the knowledge many online courses/webinars are initiated for awareness of students around the world. The goals of these courses were to limit transmission, provide early care, communicate key information and minimize social and economic impacts.

COVID-19 is a new virus and we are still learning about it. The uncertainty about the virus and the changes that are unfolding can make most people feel a bit anxious. This is normal, and it actually can help motivate us to take action to protect ourselves and others, and to learn more about the pandemic.

COVID-19 infection is a highly contagious disease and has affected a large population; the total number of deaths caused due to this virus has exceeded that caused by any of its predecessors. As COVID-19 is a new disease and is having the most devastating effects globally, its emergence and spread, causes anxiety and fear among the general public. WHO is providing expert guidance and answers to public questions, to help people manage fear and anxiety. The COVID-19 pandemic can cause stress and anxiety because it is disrupting normal life of the students.

Aim
To assess the level of knowledge and anxiety towards COVID-19 among B.Sc. Nursing students of College of Nursing NEMCARE Foundation, Assam.

2. Methods and Materials

An online survey was conducted among B.Sc. Nursing students of College of Nursing NEMCARE Foundation, Assam. A total of 43 participants both male and female were taken during the study period.

The study was started after getting ethical approval from the institution. An online self-structured questionnaire was developed by using Google forms. The link of the questionnaire was sent through WhatsApp to the participants. Participants with age more than 18 years, able to understand English and willing to give informed consent were included. The data collection was initiated on 24th April 2020 and closed on 27th April 2020. On receiving and clicking the link the participants got auto directed to the information about the study and informed consent.

The online self-structured questionnaire was developed by the researcher contained the following sections related to demographic variables, knowledge, and anxiety during the pandemic of the COVID-19.There were 15 multiple choice questions in the knowledge section. For each correct answer is carrying '1' marks and wrong answer carries '0' marks. Anxiety related to COVID-19 had 8 items that were

supposed to be rated on a 5-point Likert scale (0-4) ranging from never, occasionally, sometimes, often and always. The collected data were analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 20. Descriptive statistics have been used in the study to analyze the findings. Mean, standard deviation and chi square test have been used to estimate the results of the study. P value less than 0.05 was considered significant.

3. Result

The study was conducted on 43 B.Sc. Nursing students of College of Nursing NEMCARE Foundation, Assam. Among the general characteristics of the study participants it was found that majority of the students are female (93%).A maximum of 46.5% students are studying in B.Sc. Nursing 1st Year. It was found that majority of the students are belongs to Hindu religion (53.5%) and most of them are resides in rural area (55.8%). It was found that 60.5% student's fathers are doing govt. employee and mothers are unemployed (53.5%).

Level of Knowledge of the Participants
Findings of the present study revealed as shown in Table:1 shows that majority of the participants (76.74%) are having moderate level of knowledge and Table:2 shows that majority of the participants (65.12%) are having moderate level of anxiety.

Table 1: "Descriptive Analysis of Level of Knowledge towards COVID-19", N=43

Criteria	Score range	n	%	Mean	SD
Inadequate	0-11	3	6.98		
Moderate	12-14	33	76.74	13.56	1.053
Adequate	15	7	16.28		

Level of Anxiety of the Participants
Table 2: "Descriptive Analysis of Level of Anxiety towards COVID-19", N=43

Criteria	Score range	n	%	Mean	SD
Low	0-13	7	16.28		
Moderate	14-23	28	65.12	18.40	4.757
High	24-32	8	18.60		

The present study revealed that there is a significant association of level of knowledge and anxiety with selected demographic variables of College of Nursing NEMCARE Foundation at 0.05 level of significance. There is a significant negative correlation between level of knowledge and anxiety ($r= -0.091$, $p=0.000$) at 0.01 level of significance.

4. Discussion

The pandemic situation has turned more critical for every individual to some extents and anxiety is a common response to any stressful situation. Students are facing several challenges during this pandemic situation. As it is a new disease and less knowledge/awareness may adversely affect the students to meet the challenges. It may adversely affect the mental well-being of the students. As the educational institutions have been shut down due to COVID-19 and postponement of examinations is also a stressor for

anxiety. The participants had adequate level of knowledge regarding the mode of transmission, symptoms and preventive measures. It was possibly due to the webinar, government and media emphasizing more on the transmission and preventive measures. Majority of the participants are agreed with social distancing and personal hygienic measures.

Anxiety affects a maximum of students which may adversely affects the mental health of the students. COVID-19 induced anxiety and stress result in sleep disturbances, depression, worry, confusion, fear, anger, lack of patience etc. among the students. Present study found that approximately 37.2% of participants reported sleep disturbances and 32.6% are reported depression. Approximately 37.2% of participants are reported their worries related to the discussion of COVID-19 pandemic. The present study shows that 1st Year B.Sc. Nursing students are having more anxiety compare to 2nd year and 3rd year students. It may be happened because of less exposure to clinical field.

5. Recommendations

- Similar study can be conducted among larger sample size to generalize the study.
- The study can be replicated in different settings.
- A comparative study can be done among the staff nurses and student nurses.

6. Conclusion

The present study has concluded that students are having moderate level of knowledge with moderate anxiety. Online education, webinar, motivation, psychological supports are required to the students to overcome the anxiety.

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