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Title :- Knowledge and self-reported practices on post-operative pain management among nurses working in surgical wards in two selected Teaching Hospitals

Abstract :-

A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted at Colombo South Teaching Hospital (CSTH) and Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital (SJGH) to describe knowledge and self-reported practices on post-operative pain management (POPM). Data were collected from a convenience sample of 132 nurses working in adult surgical wards using a pre-tested self-administered questionnaire. Data were analyzed using SPSS (version-16). Mean age and years of experience of the participants were 32.5 \pm 7.7 and 7.0 \pm 7.9 respectively. Those who had previous education on POPM were 87.1 %. The mean score for overall knowledge was 64.9 \pm 1.4. The mean score for overall practices was 55.0 \pm 1.6. The participants had an average level of knowledge and moderate level of self-reported practices on POPM. Most participants were knowledgeable on subjectivity of pain (58.3 %), use of pain scales for pain assessment (79.5 %), and the need for administering analgesia round the clock (68.2%) while 75 % were unaware of measuring pain to assess analgesic efficacy. A majority (56.1 %) were unaware of intravenous opioids being the best method to treat sudden onset of severe pain. Administration of opioids were minimized by nurses \diamond Always \diamond (50.8 %) and \diamond Sometimes \diamond (42.4 %) because of the potential risk of patients becoming addicted. A total of 34.1 % nurses have given a placebo to patients to confirm the truth of their complaint on pain. Almost a half of the sample (48.5 %) has \diamond Never \diamond used pain scales but 70 % \diamond always \diamond have asked about the presence of pain. Degree holders ($p=0.000$) and those who had previous education through in-service training programs ($p=0.048$) had significantly high level of knowledge. Nurses who had work experience for more than 5 years ($p=0.035$) and previous education on pain management ($p=0.018$) had significantly high practice scores. Provision of nursing knowledge through specific training on POPM may contribute to improve nurses \diamond practices on POPM and hence to improve post-operative patient outcomes.

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