A Survey of Nurses' Knowledge and Self-reported Performance regarding Legal issues of Nursing Care in Hospitals of Ardabil City

Abstract

Background and Aim: It is necessary for nurses to pay attention to patients' legal issues while providing clinical care. The aim of this study was to investigate the knowledge and self-reported performance of nurses regarding legal aspects of patient care among nurses working in teaching hospitals of Ardabil, Iran.

Methods:

In this descriptive, cross-sectional study, 305 nurses working in different settings of five general hospitals were included to the study. Stratified random sampling method was used to select the respondents. Data collection was performed using a questionnaire composed of two parts which measures the legal knowledge and self-reported performance of nurses about common legal issues. Data were analyzed using SPSS software version 26.

Results: Of 305 nurses, 259 (84.9%) were female and 46 (15.1%) were male. The average age was 33.22 years, ranging from 22 to 53 years. Regarding legal knowledge, 23.30% had a poor level, 47.50% had a moderate level and 29.20% had optimum or acceptable level. İn terms of legal performance, the majority of nurses had a moderate (41%) or optimal status (41.60 %) and only 17.40% of nurses fell in poor status. Legal knowledge score had statistically significant correlation with variables of educational level (P=0.01), workplace setting (P=0.01), prior targeted education (P=0.01) and work experience (P=0.01). A well, self-reported legal performance showed a significant correlation with prior targeted education (P=0.04) and legal knowledge (P=0.01).

Conclusion: According to the findings of this study, it is recommended for hospital nursing managers to improve nursing staff's legal competencies using possible methods such as ward seminars, coded courses, and clinical mentorship. Strengthening undergraduate nursing curricula can also be a basic way for training of legally competent nurses.

Keywords: legal knowledge, self-reported legal performance, nurse, hospital