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Knowledge on occupational hazards and associated socio-demographic factors among nurses at Teaching Hospital Jaffna

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Introduction: Nurses are the front line of risks and victims of occupational hazards among healthcare professionals. These hazards may affect the well-being of the nurses. A thorough understanding of occupational hazards helps promote a safer workplace among nurses.

Objectives: This study assesses the knowledge of occupational hazards and associated socio-demographic factors among nurses at Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

Methodology: This hospital-based cross-sectional study was carried out among 370 nurses at Teaching Hospital Jaffna. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethical Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna. A stratified random sampling method was used to select samples based on the population proportion of the nurses in wards/units/clinics. A pre-tested and validated self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data regarding five types of occupational hazards. The data were analyzed, and the Pearson chi-square test was used to find the association between the level of knowledge and socio-demographic factors by using IBM SPSS 20.

Results: The response rate was 90.24%. The age range of the participants was 25-46 years. The mean age of the participants was 31.65 (SD±4.943) years. More than half of them were single (67.3%). Three-fourths of the participants completed a diploma in nursing (75.4%); meanwhile, 24.3% of them got BSc in nursing. The majority had working experience of less than five years (61.6%). Nearly half of them are working in units (51.1%).

Around 84.3% of them had good knowledge, respectively moderate and poor knowledge percentages were 14.3% and 1.4%. The mean score for the knowledge was 18.24 (SD ±2.952) out of a total score of 20. Age (0.001), working experience (0.031), marital status (0.009), and educational qualification (0.044) showed a statistically significant association with the level of knowledge regarding occupational hazards.

Conclusion: Even though, majority of them have a good knowledge level, providing an in-service training program regarding occupational hazards can improve the knowledge level further.

Keywords: Hospital, Jaffna, Knowledge, Nurses, Occupational hazards