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Effectiveness of Nursing in Paediatrics Unit: Reviewing Culturally Sensitive Care and Experiences of Nurses on the Patients' Health Recovery

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Abstract

Pediatric nurses are those nurses which care for children belonging to all age groups in a variety of healthcare settings. They possess ample knowledge about growth and development, as they are mainly involved in all round development of the child. Also, they include family members in their efforts to care for their child. Being a paediatric nurse is a highly satisfying, yet an extremely demanding career. Apart from high empathy and sensitivity skills a person should possess excellent communication skills so as form a close bond with the child. One of the main aspect of the job is understanding what the child is trying to say. Interpreting a child's behaviour forms the crux of the job as they often won't be explain clearly what or how they are feeling.

Not only this job requires patience, but dedication also. It gets ramified many times when we include the concept of culturally sensitive care. Cultural attributes of children and families, including race, ethnicity, language, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability, and socioeconomic status etc will always be a matter of great importance and the attending nurse has to be understanding to them so as to be able to provide effective healthcare. This paper effectively highlights how being culturally sensitive, can quickly form a deeper bond between the attending nurse and the patient and aid in quicker recovery. Thus, making the nurses more tolerant towards different ethnicities and cultures by training programmes will benefit the community in the long run.

Keywords: Pediatrics, Childcare, Culturally sensitive, Nursing.

INTRODUCTION

Caring is deeply ingrained in human nature. To care for the sick and injured is one of the highest forms of virtue. Caring is considered the essence of nursing and and a major focus of this profession lies on caring. It is widely considered as the basis of nursing ontology and philosophy (Ranheim, Kärner & Berterö, 2012). Nursing is a profession that is quite deeply associated with caring for those who are in dire need of it. A nurse is

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a any person (male or a female), a professional who is involved or engaged in the art of nursing. Nurses are the largest group of healthcare providers, the biggest human resource of healthcare and medical organizations (Papastavrou, Efstathiou & Charalambous, 2011). They perform a variety of works related to maintaining, providing and promoting good healthcare. They are involved in aiding treatment, safety and recovery of the ill as well as the injured person, help a healthy individual to maintain his or her health and also help in treatment during life threatening situations in a wide range of health care settings. Not only this, nurses might also be involved in various medical and nursing research. Along with that they might also be employed for performing a wide range of non clinical functions required for delivering health care to the patient (Stone J, N.D.) Society as general, relies greatly on nurses. The focus on improvement of the clinical performance and caring of patients has increased manifold over the years and as a result, the burden has fallen on the nurses to provide exceptional healthcare services (Lloyd H, Hancock H & Campbell S. 2011). The range of nursing duties are further expanding.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this review paper are:

- To explore the roles and responsibilities of nurses in paediatrics unit.
- To review the importance of cultural competencies in nursing care in paediatrics unit.
- To study the impact of culturally sensitive care on the health status of patients.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nursing Roles and responsibilities

Self efficacy is considered one of the primary attributes which determine the performance of a nurse. Any individual's belief about his or her ability to perform behaviours resulting in specific outcomes can be termed as self efficacy. It is an important attribute of human competence which enables them to perform tasks with extraordinary skill, often going beyond their limitations (Melnikov, Shor, Kigli-Shemesh, Gun Usishkin & Kagan, 2012; Zulkosky, 2009). Research conducted has shown that nurses possessing higher self efficacy perform better as compared to nurses that possess low amount of self efficacy. It about believing in one's abilities. Nurses possessing high self efficacy are more committed to their work and are more persistent against difficulties and do not give up trying in difficult situations. Research conducted in this regard has concluded that perceived self efficacy is an important factor that leads to better and improved performance, indicating a positive correlation between performance and self efficacy. Also patient's satisfaction also showed a direct relation with increased self efficacy of the nurse (Lee & Ko, 2010; Shakerinia, 2011). Self efficacy is an important factor that determines the the capacity of any individual involved in the nursing profession. Not only this, high self efficacy improves the quality of care delivered and is a crucial factor in improving the performance of any individual in an organization (Sargent 2011).

Although, it is well known that empathy is an essential requirement in nursing profession, it is a concept that is still masked in quite a lot of ambiguity as well as controversy among the medical and social scholars. Currently defined as a neural matching mechanism made of mirror neuron system in the brain, it enables oneself to place him/her in the mental shoes of the other. As for the nursing profession, it is recommended that a nurse should feel empathy openly to a limited extent so as to understand the patient's experience without joining them. Basically it is a positive emotional competence through which the nurse can understand the patient's condition and thus handle emotional interactions with patients (Dal santo, Pohl, Saiani & Battistelli, 2013).

According to Watson, 2002, nursing is basically aiding the patient to obtain a harmony within his or her mind, body and soul. This harmony can be achieved only through having a transpersonal relationship. As of now, research that is being conducted is showing that there is an urgent need of advanced practitioners in nursing. Another factor that is gaining attention is the urgent need for the nurses to be educated to an advanced level. The intricacies of the practice, the knowledge required for deciding whether to implement new healthcare approaches as well as the evaluation of these new approaches needs the nurses to be armed with sound education. Even WHO has agreed to this fact, supporting the argument that doctorally educated clinicians would contribute better to this profession (Wilkes & Mohan, 2008).

Patient's satisfaction is a key parameter that determines the effectiveness of healthcare delivery. By assessing whether the patient is satisfied with

his or her health care, existing shortcomings in the medical profession can come to light and efforts can be made to improve it (Shinde & Kapurkar, 2014). In providing healthcare, if the person providing the care chooses to ignore the cultural diversity of the patients, it will lead to inequality, misunderstandings and ultimately discrimination, thus ultimately defeating the purpose of caring (Leininger & McFarland, 2002). The patient will not feel content with the care received at the hands of nurse. On the contrary, if the person who is providing care is understanding and sensitive towards other minorities, the situation will greatly improve. Misunderstandings between the care provider and the patient will be reduced along with discrimination and inequality. Thus being sensitive towards a patient's cultural diversity will amplify the caring provided by nurse/care provider (Tucker, Arthur, Roncoroni, Wall & Sanchez, 2013).

Roles and responsibilities of nurses in paediatrics unit

The main aim of paediatric nursing is to improve the quality of care as well as provide care to the child and its family. Children are very delicate hence they need holistic constant organized and family focused care along with empathy. paediatric nursing requires lots of patience from the nurses as they have to handle the little children (Kyle T, Carman S. 2013). Efforts taken by them include steps such as try to remove misunderstandings from the minds of patients and focus on their care and treatment methods (Valizadeh, Zamanzadeh, Ghahramanian & Aghajari, 2017). Caring for an adult is quite different from caring for a child and requires different kind of effort. The nurse has to be more patient and family oriented. Field of paediatrics is rapidly evolving with the integration of evidence based practice. The most important thing about paediatrics is that although the paediatric patient is the one cared for, the nurse has to care for the whole family as a single unit. As the whole family is engrossed with the well being of the child, therefore, in case of illness its natural for them to get extremely anxious. The illness of a child elicits strong response from the parents in terms of emotional outburst and expectations. They usually want to know all the aspects of their child's condition and demand every bit of information regarding treatment, the disease condition as well as psychological care (Hummelinck A. & Pollock K., 2005). They often feel desperate to get a hold of the life of their child (Fisher, 2001).

It is the utmost duty of the nurse to provide them with psychosocial and familial support (Patistea E. & Babatsikou F., 2003; Sallfors C. & Hallberg L., 2003). The health care professional needs to partner with the parents in caring for the child. This will help the parents in feeling empowered as they can take part in caring for their child. In case the child has developed some chronic illness, educating the parents about the condition (patient education) is a key factor for family empowerment.

Empowerment can be categorised into seven groups: (1) biophysiological (2) functional (3) cognitive (4) Social (5) Experiential (6)Ethical (7) Economic. Biophysiological empowerment refers to ample knowledge regarding the physiological signs and symptoms, and a sense of control over these problems. Functional empowerment is the ability to take functional control over daily life and the whole situation. Cognitive empowerment indicates to having ample knowledge and information so as to use that knowledge for improving one's health. Social empowerment is being able to do meaningful and social interactions with others. Experiential empowerment refers to give attention to one's previous experiences and self esteem. Ethical empowerment is being able to experience oneself as a valued and respected individual with a unique mind and personality. Economic empowerment refers to being able to afford technical aids and other support available (Heikkinen *et al.*, 2007; LeinoKilpi, Luoto, & Katajisto, 1998).

Previously, under traditional approach, in patient education, patient was merely viewed as a passive recipient and doctors had the complete authority based on expertise. Primary importance was given to the physical illness and family was not included in any stage of treatment (Barber-Paker, E.D., 2002). However, with changing scenario, new approaches have been employed for patient education. Utmost importance is given to learning and understanding the needs of the patient and developing a patient oriented treatment approach. Parents and other family members were encouraged to participate in making efforts for the well being of the patient. Healthcare professionals and parents share a common goal for the well being of the patient. Patient education has many aspects such as assessment, planning, implementation and planning. Resulting from patient management, both the patient and his family showed greater knowledge and self management. Certain issues regarding patient education were nurses were not much aware of the teaching process. So, they did not take into account of the individual needs before educating the patient and his family. It was simply treated as ad-hoc event without any dedicated

teaching goals (Aujoulat I., d'Hoore W. & Deccache A. 2007; Funnell M. M, 1991).

Health professionals should also keep in mind that educating a child is different that educating adults. Counselling of children and their families is quite a difficult task that requires more patience and dedication. Educating the children is quite an uphill task as it might require the use of certain aids.

Research conducted has shown that there have been numerous benefits for a child and its parents after they were given patient education, there is room for improvement. Before imparting patent education, the needs of the child and the patients has to be assessed. Nurses need to recognize this as an essential process and prepare accordingly. They should take an empowerment approach for imparting patient education. Nurses should be trained so that they are able to impart quality and empowering patient education. If this education process is standardized, it will be a big help to educate the parents about the delicate matters. Setting up some sort of evaluation will help in further redefining the process. Also the ultimate benefit of patient education is for the patient and his or her family, therefore, this whole system should be developed keeping them in mind (Kelo M., Martikainen M. & Eriksson E., 2013).

Three different categories describing significant patient education sessions were identified: the starting point for patient education, the educational outcome, and professional aspects. Challenges with clients or resources, successful or deficient outcome, professional success, professional development experience, and professional learning were considered elements of significant sessions. These results revealed that patient education of children and their parents could be challenging in several ways, as Gibson *et al.* (2003) stated, but it could also be very rewarding and educating to nurses. Further, the outcome of the education seemed important to the educator. Patient education can be classified into three categories- (1) starting point for patient education (2) the educational outcome and (3) professional aspects. Not only was educating the patient and its family, rewarding to the nurses, it was quite challenging too. In spite of the difficulties and critical issues, imparting "empowering patient education" was critical for the healthcare provider (Gibson F., Fletcher M. & Casey A., 2003).

On evaluation of may instances of patient education, many issues were identified. The patient education was imparted according to the patient need assumed by the nurses instead of assessment of individual need of the patients. Also, no instruments were used for proper assessment. Nurses did not plan the patient education, they did not set any goal for that. These education sessions were often busy and noisy and the major issue that was discussed was the biomedical condition of the patient. The education session also took place in such a setting.

that nurse's authority was emphasized and the individual needs of the child and the parents were swept aside the major focus was given to advising the parents overall there a lot of improvements that are required so to make patient education. As of now analysis of the session are marked by insufficient knowledge of the nurses, insufficient time and last but not the least ineffective teaching skills (Patistea E. & Babatsikou F., 2003; Hummelinck A. & Pollock K., 2005; Barber-Paker E. D., 2002; Marcum J *et al.* 2002).

Importance of cultural competencies in nursing care in pediatrics unit

Nurses caring for children often find themselves troubled with cultural beliefs and values. The clash of thoughts and ideologies usually occurs between family's culture beliefs and culture of the health system (Blenner J. L., 1991).These differences usually revolve around communication, food preferences, family relationships and beliefs surrounding the disease. All this affect the quality of nursing that is being delivered. This indicates that all the phases of nursing need to be done in a culturally sensitive and congruent manner thus benefiting the patient as well as his family. It can only be possible if a culturally sensitive approach is taken (Hart, 1999). This can be done if a cultural assessment form is included in the regular admission assessment form. Also, questions associated with culture should be clearly identified in that form. Staff education classes on implementation of the cultural assessment process may help the nurses in overcoming the barriers of how to perform the cultural assessment. Last but not the least, advanced practice nurses can engage in role modelling and collaborate with interdisciplinary teams to formulate and implement a balanced healthcare (Hart, 1999).

Impact of culturally sensitive care on the health status of patients

Cultural sensitivity refers to being aware of knowledge of different ethnicities and different religions. It also includes utilizing this knowledge to understand the responses and characteristics of a person belonging belonging to a different

ethnicity (Chang & Kelly, 2007). In any healthcare setting there are numerous factors that affect or influence the act of providing care to the patients, one of them being, the differences in culture between the nurse and the patient. Although caring is a universal thing but the way it is depicted or its perception is totally dependent on our culture (Cortis, 2000). Different cultures have their different ways of showing care. Many aspects such as eye contact, conversational style, eye contact, religious customs, dietary preferences, personal space, touch etc. vary from culture to culture hence making healthcare and healing or providing healthcare, a sensitive issue (Knott, 2002). It might be possible that actions which are caring in one culture might not be interpreted in the same form in other culture (Leininger, 1988). Culture competency can go to a long way in reducing disparity in healthcare provided by the nurses to the patients. Nurses that attend a competency training programme have reported that it benefited them in numerous ways. Apart from a better grasp over the healthcare needs of the patients belonging to different backgrounds, they had a better knowledge about how to handle a cross cultural situation (Khanna, Cheyney & Engle, 2009). Also, we don't often realize how relevant culture is in our life. Our culture and religious beliefs shape every experience of our life and our beliefs about illness,pain and of life. Thus culture plays a big role for the nurses who are engaged in providing paediatric palliative care (Wiener, McConnell, Latella & Ludi, 2012). Every individual, belonging to whichever culture has the right to healthcare service that is culturally sensitive and appropriate. However, it has become a matter of concern that healthcare needs of minority ethnic groups are often ignored. This scenario can be changed by educating the nurses about the needs of different cultures and making them more competent in providing transcultural service (Narayanasamy, 2003).

The culturally diverse patient population in hospitals or any other medical institution will continue to increase. In such a case, it is necessary to educate the nursing community so that they are well prepared to handle this growing culturally diverse population.

CONCLUSION

The review paper clearly highlights the necessity of the paediatric nurses to be culturally sensitive and tolerant towards the culture and traditions of patients belonging to different religious communities. Not only it develops a trust between the patient and the attending nurse but it makes easier for the parents to trust the guidance and advice of the nurse. It further helps the ensure in taking a better care of the patient. Patient education, as discussed above is also an important aspect that should be taught to the nurses which helps in better managing of the patient's family members. It is well known that a paediatrics nurse has to take care of the patient's family too as they grow most anxious, and in those time, patient education will come to the rescue. Being able to take better care of the patient, will also increase the satisfaction of the nurse, bringing a positivity in her work. Thus, cultural tolerance is an utmost requirement in the outlook of a person who is or is aspiring to be a paediatric nurse.

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