

The Paradigm of Forensic Nursing for Nursing Students in the Current Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

In India, forensic nursing is becoming more and more acknowledged as a critical field that connects the legal and medical systems. As the number of violent, sexual assault, and domestic abuse cases rises, forensic nurses are essential in helping victims get the full care they need while carefully gathering and safeguarding evidence. The survey aimed to assess the knowledge of nursing students regarding forensic nursing subjects in the current curriculum. The methodology was after approval from the Gian Sagar ethical committee and permission taken from selected Nursing colleges of Punjab. The Google link for the survey was sent to selected colleges of Punjab by enrolling 170 nursing students in the survey. A non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to select the samples. A self-structured questionnaire was used for data collection, and the result shows a level of knowledge regarding forensic nursing. A maximum of 63.5% had good knowledge scores, followed by 27% with average knowledge, 9% below average, and 0.5% with poor knowledge scores. The mean was 21.44, median 21, SD 6, range 25, minimum 5, and maximum 30.

Keywords: Forensic nursing, Curriculum, Nursing students, Knowledge

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INTRODUCTION

A fundamental principle of nursing, social justice, is ingrained in forensic nursing.¹ In this particular area of nursing practice, nursing expertise is combined with a deep comprehension of forensic medical concepts and the criminal justice system. Healthcare professionals with advanced education and training in the medical-legal aspects of caring for victims and suspects of abuse, trauma, or crime while upholding professional and ethical standards and the highest level of patient confidentiality are known as forensic nurses.²

Using an interdisciplinary approach, forensic nurses assist impacted individuals, families, and communities during all stages of a disaster.³ Their positions in the criminal justice system are recognized by a variety of names across the globe, including forensic nurse death investigators (FNDIs), sexual assault response teams (SARTs), sexual assault referral centers (SARCs), custody nurses, prison/correctional nurses, immigration center nurses, and sexual assault nurse examiners (SANE) or sexual assault forensic examiners (SAFE).⁴

In India, forensic nursing is a developing subspecialty with the potential to revitalize the nation's medico-legal system. The biggest hope for forensic nursing in India, given the country's sharp rise in crime, is the development of a fresh, all-encompassing strategy for handling legal matters about patient care in both hospital and community settings. In the graduate nursing program, forensic nursing was added by the Indian Nursing Council in 2021. The addition of forensic nursing as a subject to nursing curricula exposes students to a broader role in modern nursing practice that supports public

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health safety as well as our own.⁵

A health professional who is qualified to treat the trauma connected to the wrong that has been done to them—be it sexual assault, intimate partner abuse, neglect, or other types of intentional injury—is necessary to provide care for victims of abuse and violence. Another essential resource for the fight against violence is forensic nursing. They gather information and provide testimony that can be utilized in court to identify and bring charges against those who carry out violent and abusive crimes.⁶

Need of the study

In India, forensic nursing is becoming more and more acknowledged as a critical field that connects the legal and medical systems. As the number of violent, sexual assault, and domestic abuse cases rises, forensic nurses are essential in helping victims get the full care they need while carefully gathering and safeguarding evidence. They have received

sensitive trauma handling training, so they can make sure that medical procedures don't taint the integrity of legal investigations. The specialised skills of forensic nurses are invaluable in a nation where procedural delays and insufficient evidence can impede access to justice. They work together with social workers, law enforcement, and attorneys to assist victims as they proceed through the legal system, which improves the effectiveness of the criminal justice system. India's advancement in forensic nursing. The development of forensic nursing in India promises to not only improve victim care but also contribute significantly to the prosecution of perpetrators and the overall deterrence of crime.⁷

Nurses with at least six months of experience working in an emergency department who were either registered or enrolled with the South African Nursing Council participated in a quantitative exploratory, descriptive survey using a questionnaire. Two comprehensive care clinics (state), two provincial (state), and two private hospital emergency departments were utilized. Results: Due to a lack of training and expertise in the field of forensic nursing, the majority of the forensic tasks that the Emergency Department nurses were required to complete were rated as never or seldom completed. Nonetheless, the respondents did mention how crucial forensic nursing was to their day-to-day work in the emergency rooms. South African emergency nurses are dealing with new. Emergency nurses in South Africa are facing new challenges in acquiring the skills to effectively care for crime victims. It is becoming extremely important for these nurses to correctly manage the forensic evidence, as failure to do so can have far-reaching legal consequences.⁸ This study was done to assess the knowledge of nursing students regarding forensic nursing subjects in the current curriculum

MATERIAL AND METHODS

After approval from Gian Sagar's ethical committee and permission taken from selected Nursing colleges of Punjab. The Google link for the Survey was sent to selected colleges of Punjab. By enrolling 170 nursing students in the survey from different nursing colleges in Punjab. Non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to select the samples. A self-structured questionnaire was formulated and validated by 10 experts in the fields of Medical-surgical, Child Health, Obstetrics and Gynecology and forensic medicine department. The reliability of the tool was checked by the Split half method ($r = 0.78$). The tool was divided into two sections. Section I is socio-demographic variables like age, gender, academic class, and organization name and section II is 30 multiple choice questions regarding forensic nursing, fundamental rights of victims, and legal procedure in Nursing. After the data collection excel sheet was filled. One mark was given for the right answer and zero for the wrong answer. The criteria used for the assessment of knowledge were Good knowledge score (20–30), Average knowledge score (13–19), below average score (6–12) and poor (≤ 5). All the students were informed about the study. The anonymity and confidentiality of the

participants about the findings while reporting the study. Data was analyzed by using Excel, SPSS version 21 and SSP for descriptive statistics use of percentage, mean, median and SD were calculated.

RESULTS

Section-I Frequency and percentage distribution of socio-demographic variables of nursing students.

Section-II Frequency and percentage distribution of knowledge scores of nursing students related to forensic Nursing.

Section II Item analysis of participants giving written answers regarding forensic nursing.

Section-I Frequency and percentage distribution of socio-demographic variables of nursing students

Table 1 depicts the frequency and percentage distribution of nursing students. The majority, 86.5%, were female students, out of which 55.8% belonged 21 to 22 years of age, with a majority of 37.2% from Gian Sagar College of Nursing and 61% already heard about forensic nursing maximum got information

Table 1: The frequency and percentage distribution of nursing students

S. No.	Socio-demographic variables	f	%
1.	Gender		
	Male	23	13.5
	Female	147	86.5
2.	Age in years		
	19–20	63	37
	21–22	95	55.8
	23–24	07	4.2
	25–26	05	3
3.	Organization Name		
	Army College	05	3
	Banda bahadur	21	12.2
	Devendra College	20	11.7
	DMC	14	8.2
	Gian Sagar	53	31.2
	LLR	25	15
	Ratan College	09	5.2
	RIMT	04	2.3
	Silver Oaks	19	11.2
4.	Have you ever heard about forensic nursing		
	Yes	104	61
	No	66	39
	If yes specify the source of information.		
	Guest lecture	04	3.9
	Internet	03	2.9
	Lab technician	04	3.9
	Mortuary	01	1
	Syllabus	58	55.7
	TV	34	32.6



as forensic nursing is added in the new curriculum (N-170).

Section-II Frequency and percentage distribution of knowledge scores of nursing students related to forensic Nursing

Figure 1 shows the frequency distribution of knowledge level of Nursing Students regarding forensic nursing. Table 2 depicts

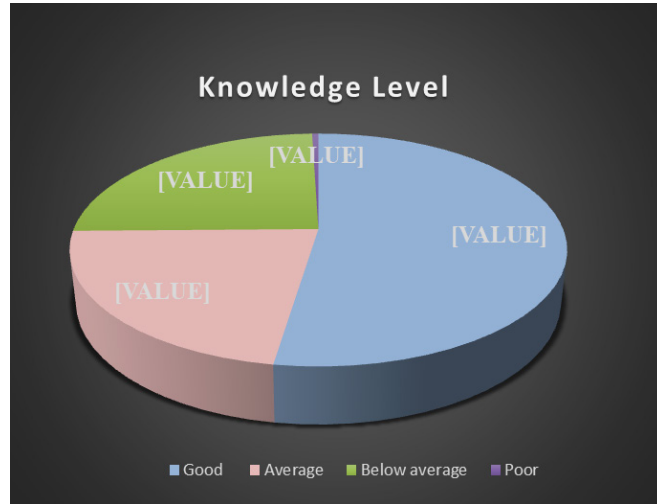


Figure 1: The frequency distribution of knowledge level of Nursing Students regarding forensic nursing

the descriptive statistics of the level of knowledge regarding forensic nursing. A maximum of 63.5% had good knowledge scores followed by 27% with average knowledge, 9% below average and 0.5% with poor knowledge scores. The mean was 21.44, median 21, SD 6, range 25, minimum 5 and maximum 30 (N-170).

Section II Item analysis of participants giving written answers regarding forensic nursing.

Table 3 depicts the percentage of items that give the right answer related to forensic nursing. The major item with a huge percentage of 87.6% was (Virginia Lynch the first forensic nurse) and the item with least percentage than other items 63.5% (Fair treatment and access to justice, rehabilitation and counselling are the rights of the victim). Overall, the percentage of right answers was almost high for all the items (N-170).

DISCUSSION

The descriptive statistics of the level of knowledge regarding forensic nursing. A maximum of 63.5% had good knowledge scores followed by 27% with average knowledge, 9% below average and 0.5% with poor knowledge scores. The mean was 21.44, median 21, SD 6, range 25, minimum 5 and maximum 30.

The findings of the study were supported by a similar study conducted the purpose of the study was to compare

Table 2: The descriptive statistics of the level of knowledge regarding forensic nursing

Levels of Knowledge	f	%	Mean	Median	SD	Range	Minimum	Maximum
Good (20–30)	108	63.5						
Average (13–19)	46	27	21.44	21	6	25	5	30
Below average (6–12)	15	9						
Poor (≤5)	01	0.5						

Table 3: The percentage of items that give the right answer related to forensic nursing

Sr. No.	Items	f	%
1.	Forensic nursing is a branch of nursing focused on legal aspects.	147	86.4
2.	In the year 1980 forensic nursing became a recognized field.	135	79.4
3.	Virginia Lynch was the first forensic nurse.	149	87.6
4.	Providing medical care to the victim and Collecting evidence for legal cases is the primary role of a forensic nurse.	125	73.5
5.	Forensic nurses typically work in hospitals.	101	59.4
6.	SANE stands for sexual assault nurse examiner.	129	75.8
4.	Biological samples, photography evidence, clothing and personal effects are the evidence that forensic nurses might collect in medical-legal cases.	128	75.2
8.	Unwelcome touching or other physical conduct is the meaning of sexual harassment.	127	74.7
9.	Domestic violence can be done when women living in the same home with domestic people	134	78.8
10.	Memory recall is not one of the components of forensic documentation.	125	73.5
11.	The study of death and its causes includes post-mortem studies	116	68.2

12.	Blood, Semen, and Saliva these types of fluids are useful for DNA collection.	121	71.1
13.	An eyewitness is the least reliable source of evidence.	128	75.2
14.	In 1993 the National Human Rights Commission of India constituted.	110	64.7
15.	The headquarters of the National Human Rights Commission is located in New Delhi.	125	73.5
16.	Article 21 of the Indian constitution provides the Right to a lively and liberal life.	124	72.9
17.	POCSO stands for the Protection of children from sexual offences.	126	74.1
18.	The Supreme Court is the highest and final judicial tribunal of India.	122	71.7
19.	Anyone below 18 years of age is a child as per the POCSO Act.	128	75.2
20.	The police are required to report the matter of child sexual abuse to the child committee within 24 hours of the report being received.	111	65.2
21.	The statement of the child under the POCSO Act shall not be recorded at any place near the local police station.	116	68.2
22.	Objectives of the POCSO Act 2012 are to protect children from offences of sexual harassment, to protect children from offensive pornography, and to provide for the establishment of special courts for the trial of offences against children.	109	64.1
23.	In domestic violence cases, the forensic nurse documenting injuries and collecting forensic evidence.	113	66.4
24.	Forensic nurses play a crucial role in collecting evidence for legal cases.	110	64.7
25.	When dealing with child abuse cases will Identify and document signs of abuse.	114	67
26.	Assisting post-mortem examination is the primary responsibility of a forensic nurse in cases where the cause of death is unclear.	122	71.7
27.	By providing a clear and detailed examination of procedures forensic nurses ensure a trauma-informed approach to care during examination.	112	65.8
28.	Emotional strain from dealing with traumatic cases, maintaining objectivity in legal proceedings and balancing medical and legal responsibilities are the challenges forensic nurses might face in their role in medical-legal cases.	116	68.2
29.	Fair treatment and assess to justice, rehabilitation and counselling are the rights of the victim.	108	63.5
30.	Sexual assault forensic evidence kit is the full form of a SAFE kit.	114	67

participant knowledge and practical competence using two distinct learning modalities—medium fidelity simulation and in-person lectures—to see if there were any differences. Random assignment was used to place participants in an optional online course on forensic nursing science into either the intervention or control groups. Three two-hour forensic simulation sessions were provided in the laboratory to the eighteen participants in the intervention group. Three in-person lectures on various aspects of forensic science were attended by the seventeen members of the control group. The identical forensic course materials were distributed to each research participant via the online Blackboard platform. There were no discernible variations in knowledge or practical competency between the two groups. Due to insufficient power resulting from the small sample size, the lack of results could have been significantly influenced.⁹

The percentage of items gives the right answer related to forensic nursing. The major item with a huge percentage of 87.6% was (Virginia Lynch the first forensic nurse) and the item with least percentage than other items 63.5% (Fair treatment

and access to justice, rehabilitation and counselling are the rights of victims). Overall, the percentage of right answers was almost high for all the items.

The findings of the study were supported by a similar study conducted in an investigation the program was assessed by forensic nurses employed in Ontario, Canada's sexual assault treatment facilities. This study included 47 nurses. Pre- and post-training questionnaires were used to measure changes in participants' perceived expertise and competence in providing trans-affirming care on a 5-point Likert scale, with 5 being the highest level. Thirty-one competency-based statements grouped thematically into four domains (Initial Assessment, Medical Care, Forensic Examination, and Discharge and Referral), were given to participants to rate their degree of agreement with. Results: The pre-training and post-training levels of expertise and competence of the participants improved significantly in all content domains: forensic examination and initial assessment. Additionally, there were notable gains in competency related to the clinical vignette from before to after training (M score = 2.13, SD = 1.06 vs. M score = 3.23, SD = 0.87, $p < .001$).¹⁰



CONCLUSION

In India, forensic nursing is a developing subspecialty with the potential to revitalize the nation's medico-legal system. Furthermore, given the country's sharp rise in crime, India needs to move quickly to establish recommendations and procedural guidelines for integrating this rapidly changing field of study into the health care system. Planning and implementing quality improvement initiatives that evaluate the efficacy of forensic nursing as it becomes more popular.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest

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