

ORIGINAL PAPER

Knowledge and Attitudes of Nurses about Pain Management in Turkey

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Abstract

Background: Despite the growing awareness on pain management, mild and severe pain is still common among hospitalized patients. Inadequate treatment has been mostly linked to health care workers' failure to assess patients' pain and to intervene appropriately.

Objective: To determine the pain management knowledge and attitudes of the nurses working in training and research hospital in Turkey and their relationship to demographic and educational factors.

Methods: Descriptive and cross-sectional study design was used. The Nurses' Knowledge and Attitudes Survey Regarding Pain (NKASRP) was used to determine the pain-related knowledge and attitude of the nurses.

Results: A total of 246 nurses were included in the study. The percentage working at a surgical unit was 48.8% and 77.2% were staff nurses. Only 11.8% had taken a pain management course and 31.7% had read a book or journal on pain. The rate of correct responses to the NKASRP scale was 39.65% while the mean number of correct answers to all questions was 15.86 ± 7.33 with a range of 0 to 37. A statistically significant difference was found regarding education level, working unit, whether a pain management course had been taken, whether a book or journal on pain had been read, and the evaluation of the nurse's efficacy regarding pain ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: We found that the nurses did not have adequate knowledge and the positive attitude for pain management although it is a very important part of patient care. We suggest that results be taken into account when the content of graduate and postgraduate training programs is determined and guidelines are prepared.

Key Words: Attitudes, Education, Knowledge, Nurses, Pain Management, Turkey