

## **SUMMARY**

Children often experience acute pain occurring as a result of surgery. This pain is often described as the most distressing part of the hospital stay. The knowledge base and attitudes of nurses have been shown to impact the management of pain.

### **Aim of the Study:-**

The current study aimed to explore pediatric nurses' current level of knowledge and attitudes toward pediatric postoperative pain management and to determine the impact of the educational program on their knowledge and attitudes.

### **Subjects and Setting:-**

The study involved 55 nurses working at the Surgical Unit in Benha Specialized Children Hospital. These nurses were divided into five equal groups in order to receive the educational program.

### **The Tools Used in The Current Study Were:-**

#### **Tool I:-**

A socio-demographic structured interview sheet was designed and used to collect data about the general characteristics of the studied nurses such as name, age, educational qualification, position and years of experience.

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**Tool II:-**

The PMNAS was used to assess nurses' needs regarding postoperative pain management, and to help in designing the educational program. It included items such as asking the nurses to determine the most important topics related to pain management in which they need information about, to identify the top barriers preventing them from managing pain properly, and to select the preferred methods of teaching and appropriate time to receive the educational program.

**Tool III:-**

The PNKAS-RP was used to assess pediatric nurses' knowledge and attitudes regarding postoperative pain management. The total score ranged from minimum score zero to maximum score 40, then these scores were converted into a percent score in which 80% or more was considered as an acceptable score to achieve.

The nurses were interviewed and asked to respond to the previously mentioned tools, then based on this initial assessment their needs were determined and the program was developed.

After program implementation, the nurses were asked to respond to the PNKAS-RP twice; once immediately after implementing the program and then three months later to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

After data collection, data entry was done using a computer software package. The statistical tests used in the current study were chi square and ANOVA test.

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## **Findings Obtained from the Current Study Indicated the Following:-**

More than half of the studied nurses' age ranged from 20-25 years, while their years of experience ranged from one to five years. The highest percentage of them were females representing 90.9%.

As regard the educational qualification, about three quarters of them (74.5%) obtained diploma in nursing, while one fifth of them obtained bachelor degree in nursing. In addition, four-fifths of them (80%) were working as bedside nurses and the majority of them (94.5%) didn't attend previous educational programs related to pain management.

Nurses in the current study selected the pain assessment, the pharmacologic management of pain, and pain management in young children as the most important three topics in which they need information about. In addition, they ranked the high workload and/or the lack of time as the top barrier preventing them from managing pain properly.

Furthermore, more than half of the nurses (54.5%) stated that the most influencing factor inhibiting them from administering narcotic analgesia was the reluctance of medical staff to order narcotics. Moreover, the majority of them (63.6%) pointed out that they were greatly influenced by the fluctuations of the patient's vital signs when deciding to relieve pain.

Beyond that, the nurses reported that case studies, lectures, and books were the top three preferred methods of education. Also, the majority of them (69.1%) preferred the morning shift to receive the educational program than the evening shift.

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Before implementing the program, nurses lacked knowledge and held poor attitudes regarding pediatric postoperative pain management, but a great improvement was observed after the program implementation. A positive statistically significant difference was found between nurses' knowledge and attitudes scores pre and post program implementation.

No one of the studied nurses achieved a satisfactory level of knowledge and attitudes before the program implementation, but after implementing the program, the majority of them achieved a satisfactory score. A positive statistically significant difference was found between nurses' satisfactory and unsatisfactory levels of knowledge and attitudes regarding postoperative pain management pre and post program implementation.

Before implementing the program, older nurses with greater years of experience achieved higher scores than younger less experienced ones. However, after the program implementation, the younger less experienced nurses achieved higher scores than older ones.

A positive statistically significant difference was found between nurses' knowledge and attitudes scores pre and post program implementation in relation to their gender, educational qualification, position, and attending previous educational programs.

### **Conclusion:-**

- Nurses had unsatisfactory knowledge and poor attitudes regarding postoperative pain management in children before implementing the educational program.
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- The educational program was effective in improving the nurses' knowledge and attitudes toward pain management.

**It Is Recommended from the Current Study that:-**

- Pediatric pain education program should be integrated into pediatric nursing curricula to enhance knowledge and skills regarding children's pain management during the early stage of nursing career.
- Nurses should have drug handbooks available in the unit as a reference for medication administration.
- Ongoing planned education to develop nurses' knowledge should be included in the hospitals' quality improvement programs.

***For future research:***

- Further research about the factors contributing to nurses' knowledge deficit should be conducted.
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