

## **A Study To Assess The Knowledge And Preventive Factors On Ethical Sensitivity Regarding Patient's Care Among Allied Health Science (Physiotherapy) Students At Selected College, Puducherry.**

Mrs. G. Chitra<sup>1</sup>, P. Thalirmathy<sup>2</sup>, Dr. G. Muthamizhselvi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tutor in nursing, Dept. of Medical surgical nursing, SMVNC, Puducherry <sup>2</sup>B.Sc.,(Nursing)-IV Year, Sri Manakula Vinayagar Nursing College, Puducherry <sup>3</sup>Principal, Dept of Obstetrics and Gynecological Nursing, SMVNC, Puducherry.

Corresponding Author: Mrs.G. Chitra email ID: chitrag@smvnc.ac.in

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### **ABSTRACT**

Ethical sensitivity can be defined as the manner and capacity adopted by health care professionals as they try to understand the individuals whose care they have undertaken, all while responding to them kindheartedly. It can also be defined as sensitivity to ethical problems, which for nurses means being acquainted with the ethical values within a situation or situations concerning human health. Ethical sensitivity can also refer to a talent for distinguishing between ethical problems and determining their significance for individuals. Ethical sensitivity primarily constitutes the professional aspect of moral sensitivity. Although intuitions and benevolence constitute the source of moral sensitivity, the source of ethical sensitivity consists of the consciousness of an individual regarding the role and responsibilities of his/her occupation, professional ethical knowledge and ethical standards; however, these terms cannot be completely separated. While ethical sensitivity can be considered a solution and clarification for ethical problems, or as a justification for actions, it also prevents an absolute ethical dilemma. A descriptive research design was adopted for this study. A quantitative research approach was adopted for this present study. Sample size consists of 60 physiotherapy students at their selected community who fulfilled the criteria. Demographic data was collected. The major findings of the study shows that 49(82%) of them have moderate level of knowledge and 11(18%) of them have mild level of knowledge. The frequency and percentage wise distribution on preventive factors an ethical sensitivity regarding patient's care among students at the selected college were 36(60%) of them have high level of knowledge and 24(40%) of them have moderate level of knowledge. The chi square test reveals that it is statistically associated with frequency of encountering ethical problems with  $p < 0.05$  level.

**Keywords:** ethics, problems, physiotherapy, sensitivity.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

**“Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do?”**

Nowadays, ethical sensitivity has become an important concern for health care professions in particular. Ethical decision making plays an important role in the physiotherapists professions. The modern health care environment requires wide professional competencies including ethical knowledge and skills in handling moral problem. Physiotherapists as one group of rehabilitation profession encounter ethical issues weekly. According to the literature reviews during almost four decades, there has been a growing interest in physiotherapy ethics. It is difficult to decide when and how much treatment should be given, when it no longer seems effective and in the first place, to decide who gets access to physiotherapy. The next issue concerns a close emotional and physical relationship between the therapist and the patient. The patient has an active role in the success of the treatment. The issues challenge physiotherapists to listen to the patient's values and wishes, to take into account informed consent practices and to be morally sensitive, aware of how one's action affect other people. To prevent these issues, the professional ethics should be followed. The Finnish Association of Physiotherapy (FAP) has developed and published their own code of ethics, which is partly based on the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) declaration of ethical principles.

### **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

#### **SECTION A: Literature review related to ethical sensitivity**

**Kati kulju et. Al(2013)** conducted a descriptive study. This study identified and described ethical problems

encounters by physiotherapists in their practice and physiotherapists moral sensitivity in ethical situations. A questionnaire – based survey was constructed to identify ethical problems, and the Moral sensitivity Questionnaire revised version was used to measure moral sensitivity. Physiotherapists (n=116) working in public health services responded to the questionnaire. Based on the results, most of the physiotherapists encounter ethical problems weekly. They concern mainly financial considerations, equality and justice, professionalism, unethical conduct of physiotherapists or other professions and patients self-determination. The dimension of moral strength was emphasized in physiotherapists seem to have moral strength for speaking on behalf of the patient. Scarce resources make them feel insufficient but much could still be done provide quality care in co-operation with other health-care professionals.

**DR. David M. Gibson, et al (2003)** conducted a cross sectional study at New Jersey. A random sample of 1200 of the 7000 physical therapists licensed in New Jersey was mailed the Defining issues Test-2 (DIT-2) and a demographic questionnaire, six hundred and seventeen surveys were returned (51.48%), 453 (37.75%) were usable surveys. The P score, from the DIT, measured the level of ethical decision making. The DIT is based on the work of Kohlberg, who described six stages of ethical development. The mean P score for the 453 respondents is 40.71 (SD=15.38). The physical therapists P score (40.71) was below the range of 46.3 to

50.2 found for other health care providers. There were differences for respondents based on age, gender, employment, and location of physical therapy education. Results of the study suggest that many physical therapists use lower levels of ethical decision making skills. Physical therapy is evolving toward more autonomy in practice requiring higher refined skills in ethical decision making.

#### **SECTION-B: A literature review related to knowledge and preventive factors of ethical sensitivity**

**NOEMI MORENO SEGURA, et al (2023)** conducted a cross sectional study. This study aimed to explore ethical sensitivity and moral sensitivity in practicing physical therapists, and to compare both variables by gender. 75 physical therapists (58.7% women were; average age=34.56(8.68) years) were asked to fill in questionnaire measuring ethical sensitivity (Ethical sensitivity scale questionnaire) and moral sensitivity (revised-Moral sensitivity scale questionnaire). The sample showed high ethical sensitivity (116.14±5.36 over 54). When comparing by gender, women reported significantly higher ethical sensitivity than men (p=0.043), as well as higher scores in the following dimensions; caring by connecting with others (p=0.012) and working with interpersonal and group differences (p=0.243). Physical therapists showed high levels of ethical and moral sensitivity. While women reported higher ethical sensitivity than men. Understanding physical therapists ethical and moral sensitivity is essential to design and implement integrated education programs directed to improve the quality of care of patients in their daily clinical practice

#### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:**

A STUDY TO ASSESS THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND PREVENTIVE FACTORS ON ETHICAL SENSITIVITY REGARDING PATIENT'S CARE AMONG ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCE (PHYSIOTHERAPY) STUDENTS AT SELECTED COLLEGE, PUDUCHERRY.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To assess the level of knowledge on ethical sensitivity regarding patient's care among allied health science (physiotherapy) students at selected college.
- To assess the preventive factors of ethical sensitivity regarding patient's care among allied health science (physiotherapy) students at selected college.
- To associate the level of knowledge on ethical sensitivity regarding patient's care among allied health science (physiotherapy) students at selected college with their selected demographic variables.
- To associate the preventive factors of ethical sensitivity regarding patient's care among allied health science (physiotherapy) students at selected college with their selected demographic variables.

#### **ASSUMPTIONS:**

The allied health science (physiotherapy) students may have limited knowledge regarding ethical sensitivity.

### **III. MATERIALS AND METHODS:**

This chapter describes the research methodology followed to assess the level of knowledge regarding patient's care among allied health science (Physiotherapy) students at selected college, Puducherry. It deals with research approach, research design, population, sample, size, sampling technique, criteria for sample selection, plan for data collection and tools and instruments.

**SECTION A:** The demographic variables include age, gender, religion, educational status, department of

specialization, previous knowledge, issues faced, frequency, identifying ethical problem, symposium.

**SECTION B:** A total of 10 items were compiled by using a five point likert scale. Half of the items were phrased in a negative direction. For positive items score of 5 was given for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree, and 1 for strongly disagree. Scores for the negative items of the scale were assigned in the opposite direction (questions with \* mark indicate the negative items). The summoned score of the items provided the total score of the students.

**SCORING INTERPRETATION FOR THE STUDENTS KNOWLEDGE TOWARDSETHICAL SENSITIVITY**

S.NO	INTERPRETATION	SCORING
1.	High level of knowledge	50-41
2.	Moderate level of knowledge	40-31
3.	Mild level of knowledge	30-21
4.	Low level of knowledge	20-10

**SECTION C:** A total of 10 items were compiled by using a five point likert scale. A score of 5 was given for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. The summoned score of the items provided the total score of the students.

**SCORING INTERPRETATION FOR THE PREVENTIVE MEASURES TOWARDSETHICAL SENSITIVITY**

S.NO	INTERPRETATION	SCORING
1.	High level	50-41
2.	Moderate level	40-31
3.	Mild level	30-21
4.	Low level	20-10

**RESEARCH APPROACH:**

A quantitative research approach was adopted for this present study.

**RESEARCH DESIGN:**

A descriptive research design was adopted for this present study.

**SETTING OF THE STUDY:**

The study was conducted among allied health science (physiotherapy) students at selected college, Puducherry.

**POPULATION:**

The target population for this study includes all the among allied health science (physiotherapy) students at selected college, Puducherry.

**SAMPLE:**

In the study, the sample comprises of among allied health science (physiotherapy) students at selected college, Puducherry.

**SAMPLE SIZE:**

In this study, the sample size consists of 60 allied health science (physiotherapy) students.

**SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:**

A purposive sampling technique was adopted for this study.

**CRITERIA FOR SAMPLE SELECTION:**

**INCLUSION CRITERIA:**

Physical therapist includes both male and females

Physical therapist who are willing to participate in data collection  
Physical therapists available at the time of data collection

**EXCLUSION CRITERIA:**

Physical therapists who is not willing to participate in the study.

#### IV. RESULTS:

The major finding of the study for section B, Many of the physiotherapy students have moderate level of knowledge 49(82%) and 11(18%) of them have mild level of knowledge and the mean and standard deviation of knowledge of ethical sensitivity is  $33 \pm 3.39$ . For section C, most of the students have high level of knowledge 36(60%) and 24(40%) of the have moderate level of knowledge and the mean and standard deviation of preventive factors is  $41.5 \pm 5.12$

**Table 1: Frequency and percentage wise distribution of demographic variables**

[N=60]

S.NO	DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1.	Age		
	a. 8-20	6	10
	b. 20-30	54	90
	c. 31-40	0	0
	d. 41 and more	0	0
2.	Gender		
	a. male	20	33.3
	b. Female	40	66.7
3.	Religion		
	a) Hindu	45	75
	b) Christian	4	6.7
	c) Muslim	9	15
4.	Educational status		
	a) 10 <sup>th</sup>	2	3.3
	b) 12 <sup>th</sup>	9	15
	c) UG	49	81.7
	d) PG		
5.	Department of specialization		
	a) lab technicians	0	0
	b) physiotherapists	60	100
	c) radiologists	0	0
	d) cardiologists	0	0
6.	Do you have Previous knowledge about ethical sensitivity		
	a) yes	27	45
	b) no	33	55
7.	Have you faced any ethical sensitivity issues while handing patients at hospital		
	a) yes	13	21.7
	b) no	47	78.3
8.	Frequency of encountering ethical problems		
	a) daily	1	1.7
	b) weekly	3	5
	c) monthly	6	10
	d) rarely never	50	83.3
9	Identifying ethical problem is		
	a) easy	5	8.3
	b) quite easy	15	25

	c) quite difficult	29	48.3
	d) difficult	11	18.4
10.	Have you underwent any educational seminar/ symposium on ethical sensitivity		
	a) Yes	20	33.3
	b) No	40	66.7

**TABLE – II: Association on assess the Knowledge on Ethical Sensitivity regarding Patient's Care among allied health science (physiotherapy) students [N = 60]**

S.NO	DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	Moderate level of knowledge		Mild level of knowledge		X <sup>2</sup>
		N	%	N	%	
<b>1</b>	Age					X <sup>2</sup> =1.497 Df=1 P=.2212
	a) 18-20	6		0		
	b) 20-30	43		11		
	c) 31-40					
	d) 41 and more					
<b>2</b>	Gender					X <sup>2</sup> =.223 Df=1 P=.6370
	a) male	17		3		
	b) Female	32		8		
<b>3</b>	Religion					X <sup>2</sup> =5.232 Df=3 P=.1556
	a) Hindu	39		6		
	b) Christian	2		2		
	c) Muslim	6		3		
<b>4</b>	Educational status					X <sup>2</sup> =.540 Df=2 P=.7634
	a) 10 <sup>th</sup>	2		0		
	b) 12 <sup>th</sup>	7		2		
	c) UG	40		9		
	d) PG					
<b>5</b>	Department of specialization					X <sup>2</sup> =1 constant
	a) lab technicians	0		0		
	b) physiotherapists	49		11		
	c) radiologists	0		0		
	d) cardiologists	0		0		
<b>6</b>	Do you have Previous knowledge about ethical sensitivity					X <sup>2</sup> =1.710 Df=1 P=.1910
	a) yes	24		3		
	b) no	25		8		
<b>7</b>	Have you Faced ethical sensitivity issues while handling patients at hospital					X <sup>2</sup> =.096 Df=1 P=.7562
	a) yes	11		2		
	b) no	38		9		
<b>8</b>	Frequency of encountering ethical problems					X <sup>2</sup> =9.774* Df=3 P=.0206
	a) daily			1		
	b) weekly	1		2		

	c) monthly	5		1	
	d) rarely never	43		7	
9	Identifying ethical problem is				X <sup>2</sup> =1.258 Df=3 P=.7391
	a) easy	5			
	b) quite easy	12		3	
	c) quite difficult	23		6	
	d) difficult	9		2	
10	Have you underwent any educational seminar/ symposium on ethical sensitivity				X <sup>2</sup> =.223 Df=1 P=.6370
	a) Yes	17		3	
	b) No	32		8	

\*-p<0.05, significant and \*\*-p<0.001, highly significant

**TABLE – III: Association on assess the Knowledge on Ethical Sensitivity regarding Patient's Care among allied health science (physiotherapy) students [N = 60]**

S.NO	DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	High level of knowledge		Moderate level of knowledge		X <sup>2</sup>
		N	%	N	%	
1	Age					X <sup>2</sup> =.123 Df=1 P=.7253
	a) 18- 20	4		2		
	b) 20-30	32		22		
	c) 30-40	0		0		
	d) 41 and more	0		0		
2	Gender					X <sup>2</sup> =.312 Df=1 P=.5762
	a) male	11		9		
	b) Female	25		15		
3	Religion					X <sup>2</sup> =4.653 Df=3 P=.1991
	a) Hindu	29		16		
	b) Christian	3		1		
	c) Muslim	4		5		
4	Educational status					X <sup>2</sup> =6.769 Df=2 P=.0339
	a) 10 <sup>th</sup>	0		2		
	b) 12 <sup>th</sup>	3		6		
	c) UG	33		16		
	d) PG	0		0		
5	Department of specialization					X <sup>2</sup> =1 constant
	a) Lab technicians	0		0		
	b) physiotherapists	36		24		
	c) radiologists	0		0		
	d) cardiologists	0		0		
6	Do you Previous knowledge about ethical sensitivity					X <sup>2</sup> =4.052 Df=1 P=.0441
	a) yes	20		7		

	b) no	16		17	
7	Have you Faced ethical sensitivity issues while handling patients at hospital				X <sup>2</sup> = <b>.016</b> Df=1 P=.8982
	a) yes	8		5	
	b) no	28		19	
8	Frequency of encountering ethical problems				X <sup>2</sup> = <b>34.867</b> **Df=3 P=.000
	a) daily	1		3	
	b) weekly			5	
	c) monthly	2		12	
	d) rarely never	33		4	
9	Identifying ethical problem is				X <sup>2</sup> = <b>5.088</b> Df=3 P=.1655
	a) easy	2		3	
	b) quite easy	10		1	
	c) quite difficult	17		12	
	d) difficult	7		4	
10	Have you underwent educational seminar/ symposium on ethical sensitivity				X <sup>2</sup> = <b>.312</b> Df=1 P=.5762
	c) Yes	11		9	
	d) No	25		15	

\*- $p < 0.05$ , significant and \*\*- $p < 0.001$ , highly significant

**Table IV t-test Shows that, comparison of level of Knowledge on Ethical Sensitivity regarding Patient's Care among allied health science (physiotherapy) students**

\*- $p < 0.05$ , significant and \*\*- $p < 0.001$ , highly significant

Group	Mean	S.D	Mean difference	"t" value independent t test	Df	"p" value
Section B	33.5	3.39	7.650	9.650	118	.0001
Section C	41.15	5.12				

The findings of this study shows that calculated independent's value of  $t=9.650$  shows statistically significant difference between the study to assess the level of knowledge on ethical sensitivity regarding patient's care among allied health science (physiotherapy) students at selected college, Puducherry.

## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION:

This study was assessing the level of knowledge and preventive factors of ethical sensitivity among allied health science (physiotherapy) students. The quantitative research was used in this study. The data was collected from 60 samples. For section B, Many of the physiotherapy students have moderate level of knowledge 49(82%) and 11(18%) of them have mild level of knowledge and the mean and standard deviation of knowledge of ethical sensitivity is  $33 \pm 3.39$ . For section C, most of the students have high level of knowledge 36(60%) and 24(40%) of the have moderate level of knowledge and the mean and standard deviation of preventive factors is  $41.5 \pm 5.12$

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on findings of the present study, the following recommendation have been made

- The same study can be conducted allied health science(physiotherapy) students at selected college, Puducherry.
- The study can be replicated for larger samples for better generalization.

- The study can be implemented at the various states of India.

#### **NURSING IMPLICATION:**

The present study can help the allied health science (physiotherapy) students at selected college, to enrich their knowledge on ethical sensitivity regarding patient's care. The findings of the study have implication related to nursing administration, nursing service, nursing research and nursing education.

#### **NURSING ADMINISTRATION:**

Nurse administrator can make necessary policies to implement the nursing care services knowledge towards the level of Knowledge on Ethical Sensitivity regarding Patient's Care among allied health science (physiotherapy) students at selected college, Puducherry.

#### **NURSING SERVICES:**

Nurse as a counsellor and educator should provide the level of Knowledge on Ethical Sensitivity regarding Patient's Care among allied health science (physiotherapy) students at selected college, Puducherry. Nurse should be polite and approachable in communicating with others.

#### **NURSING EDUCATION:**

- Physiotherapy students should be provided with level of Knowledge on Ethical Sensitivity regarding Patient's Care among allied health science(physiotherapy) students at selected college, Puducherry
- Physiotherapy students should strengthen the evidence based nursing practices among level of Knowledge on Ethical Sensitivity regarding Patient's Care among allied health science(physiotherapy) students at selected college Puducherry

#### **NURSING RESEARCH:**

- The findings of the study help the nurses and students to develop the inquiry by providing baseline. The general aspects of the study result can be made by further replication of the study.
- Different studies have to be conducted future to evaluate the factors associated with level of Knowledge on Ethical Sensitivity regarding Patient's Care among allied health science(physiotherapy) students
- The researcher should conduct periodic review of research findings and disseminate the findings through conferences, seminars, publications in journals and in the World Wide Web.

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