

Knowledge and Utilization of Evidence-Based Nursing Practice among Nurses of Offa Specialist Hospital, Kwara State

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Abstract: *In the contemporary nursing, the clamour for scientifically based nursing practice necessitates a paradigm shift from practice based on intuition and tradition to practices that can be scientifically verified. This study assessed the knowledge and utilization of evidenced-based nursing practice among the nurses of Specialist Hospital, Offa, Kwara State. The descriptive study utilized validated questionnaire developed by the researchers. 110 questionnaires were administered to nurses who met the inclusion criteria. Data collected were coded and analyzed using descriptive statistic of Pearson correlation. The findings of the study revealed that only 35.5% were degree holders. The result also revealed that there is no significant relationship between Nurses knowledge and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice. (P-value of 0.06). And there is no significant relationship between professional qualification of nurses and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice. (P-value 0.859). Considering the identified barriers to utilization of evidence-based nursing practice such as poor attitude of nurses to change, lack of knowledge of evidence-based nursing practice, inadequate organizational support. It is recommended that sensitisation and creating more awareness for nurses' will go a long way to bridge this gap.*

Key words: *evidence based, knowledge , nursing practice, nurses, utilisation.*

I. Introduction

Historically, health care has been founded on tradition of assumptions of personal preferences, intuition and rituals but recently move towards accountability, quality assurance system and audit has necessitated a re-evaluation of the way in which health care is delivered. The emphasis on high quality, evidence-based care as well as cost – effectiveness in today's healthcare environment are posing unique challenges for the nursing profession. Although, it is well recognised that the best outcome for patients and their families are obtained through care that is based on sound clinical expertise and the best scientific evidence {14}. The goal of evidence-based nursing is to provide the highest quality and most cost-efficient nursing care possible.

According{11}. Evidence-base nursing is a process founded on the collection, interpretation and integration of valid, important and applicable research. In order to practice evidence-based nursing, practitioners must understand the concepts of research and know how to accurately evaluate this research. Evidence-based practice has gradually been widely adopted by the nursing profession in recent times, although its importance was identified decades ago. The goal of evidence-based practice is to use the knowledge created by scientific research in clinical practice. Much of what nurses do awaits definitive research to establish its efficacy. In many instances, there is evidence to support or refute current practice. Nurses' negative attitudes about research, further compound the difficulties, most nurses want to provide the best possible care for their patients, when they do not, it is usually due to lack of knowledge, their attitude or beliefs. Despite numerous calls for shift towards the use of research and scientific evidence to guide practice, most nurses continue to base practice decisions largely on anecdotal evidence, intuition trial and error and utilize treatment techniques with little scientific support. Nurses appear to rely more heavily on initial education and training when selecting treatment techniques or modalities instead of using scientific evidence to guide practice. Thus, clinical decision making had been guided by personal experience and expert opinion {2}.

1.1 Statement of Problem

The concept of implementing evidence-based practice in nursing in most parts in Nigeria is based on experience, tradition, intuition, common sense and untested theories. There is lack of research evidence in many areas of nursing practice {1}. A study conducted by {4} on credibility of research shows that, nurses involved in research activities did not implement the findings of nursing research consistently in their nursing practice. The researchers during their clinical experience observed that nurses were forced with challenges when translating best evidence into clinical practice. Despite all efforts, research finding still suggest that nurses perceived a lot of barriers to implementation of evidence-based practice in the clinical setting such as lack of time, knowledge,

limited access to literature, lack of training in information seeking and critical appraisal skills. More so, there is a psychological resistance to this new research ideology. Evidence abounds in the literature to support this. Organisational and structural issues are undoubtedly significant inhibitors to nurses' involvement in utilization of EBP. The chronic shortage of nurses also contribute to poor utilisation EBP .Lack of time and appropriate skill about evidence based practice is however a contributory factor to utilisation of EBP. Therefore

1.2 Purpose

To assess the knowledge and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice among nurses at Offa Specialist Hospital, Kwara State.

1.3. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will offer solutions to factors identified as barriers to effective utilization of evidence-based nursing practice. Measures to improve the nurse's awareness, knowledge and to facilitate effective utilization of evidence-based nursing practice in patient care through seminars and workshops in order to update nurse's knowledge. Furthermore, the findings will help the nurses to put in more effort toward the utilization of evidence-based nursing practice in the care of patients. The findings will also help the patient to have quality care, improved patient outcomes, and reduced cost of management and greater patient satisfaction.

1.2 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to find out the knowledge of nurses and the utilization of evidence-based nursing practice in the care of patient in Offa Specialist Hospital, Kwara State.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were made to achieve the aim of the study;

1. To assess the knowledge level of professional nurses of Offa Specialist Hospital.
2. To assess the level of utilization of evidence-based nursing practice in the care of patient by nurses at Offa Specialist Hospital, Kwara State.
3. To determine the extent at which their knowledge about evidence-based nursing practice has influence the management of clients in the hospital
4. To identify the factors affecting the utilization of evidence-based nursing practice in the care of patient by the nurses.
5. To find out factors that can enhance effective utilization of evidence-based nursing practice in the care of patient.

1.5 Research Questions

- What is the level of knowledge of professional nurses of Specialist Hospital Offa about evidence-based nursing practice?
- What is the level of utilization of evidence-based nursing practice in the care of patient by the nurses at Offa Specialist Hospital, Offa, Kwara State?
- What are the barriers to the successful utilization of evidence-based nursing practice in Offa Specialist Hospital?
- Can evidence-based nursing practice be effectively utilized as a tool for providing holistic, scientifically based care for patients?

II. Literature Review

Nursing has a rich history of using research in practice pioneered by Florence Nightingale. Although during the early and mid 1900s, few Nurses contributed to this foundation initiated by Nightingale, the nursing profession has more recently provided major leadership for improving care through application of research finding in practice {10}. Evidence-base practice is the conscientious and judicious use of current best evidence in conjunction with clinical expertise and patient values to guide health care decisions. {7} on the other hand described evidence-based practise as a hierarchy of evidence derived from experimental research where there is strict random assignment of research subjects to groups and tight control over variables. The essence is to find the best evidence for deciding on an intervention for a clinical problem. According to {8}, best evidence includes empirical evidence from randomized controlled trials; evidence from other scientific method such as descriptive and qualitative research as well as use of information from case reports, scientific principles, and expert opinion. When enough research evidence is available the practice should be guided by research evidence in conjunction with clinical expertise and patient values. In some cases, however, a sufficient research base may not be available, and health care decision making is derived principally from non-research evidence sources

such as expert opinion and scientific principles. As more research is done in a specific area, the research evidence must be incorporated into evidence based practice.

2.1 Conceptual Analysis of Evidence Based Nursing Practice

The term evidence-based nursing practice seems to be a new one and at first glance, it may be assumed to mean the same as research based practice but there is a difference. The major difference between the two practices is the type and quality of research evidence use in the clinical decision making process. {5} described intuition as a hallmark of expert nursing practice. This means that the nurse may not have scientific explanation from her clinical decision and may not “know more than she can tell” but her clinical practice is of expert standard. In present day nursing, the clamour for scientifically based nursing practice necessitates a paradigm shift from practice based on intuition and tradition to practices that can be scientifically verified. But a quite large number of professional nurses are yet to develop research mindedness and appreciate the importance of research findings in nursing practice. Despite the length of time that research has featured in nursing and the bodies involved, only a few proportion of nurses use research as basis for practice {10}.

Evidence-based nursing is a type of evidence-based health care, drawing on some of the traditions of evidence-based medicine. It involves identifying solid research findings and implementing them in nursing practices, in order to increase the quality of patient care. The goal of evidence-based nursing is to provide the highest quality and most cost efficient nursing care possible.

Evidence-based nursing is a process founded on the collection interpretation and integration of valid, important and applicable research {11}.

In order to practice evidence-based nursing, practitioners must understand the concept of research and know how to accurately evaluate this research. This skills are taught in modern nursing education and also as part of professional training. {18} opined that for nursing profession to advance, the use of evidence-based practice (EBP) knowledge and skills in this area must be enhanced, and misconception about how to implement practice based on scientific evidence must be corrected. Achieving this expectation requires strategies that simultaneously educate, stimulate and support all nursing staff in identifying clinical nursing questions and searching for evidence-based nursing intervention to address that question.

2.2 The (6) Steps of Evidence-Based Nursing (EBP)

According to {11}, evidence-based nursing is in 5 steps.

1. The first step is to select a topic

Ideas come from different sources but are categorized into two areas: problem-focused triggers and knowledge focused triggers. When selecting a topic, nurses should formulate questions that are likely to gain support from people within the organization. An interdisciplinary medical team should work together to come up with agreement about the topic selection. The priority of the topic should be considered as well as the severity of the problem. Nurses should consider whether the topic would apply to many or few clinical areas. Also, the availability of solid evidence should be considered because providing proof of the research will increase staff’s willingness to implement nursing practice.

2. Form a Team

Forming a team increases the chance of evidence-based practice being adopted. A team becomes paramount in implementation and evaluation of the EBP. It is important to have representatives of the team from authority members of the organization and also grassroot member it is important to consider inter-disciplinary involvement to decrease rejection, and for all to have understanding of the project. All these individuals have a great impact on the possibility of successful implementation. Other factors to put into consideration include power figures in the organization who may directly or indirectly sabotage the efforts if they are not consulted and fully included in EBP implementation. The EBP team should have explanation that clearly define the types of patient, setting, outcomes, interventions and exposures. This should be in simplified language that is comprehensible to a key person. The role of the practitioners is remarkable in any meaningful gains, they are therefore inevitable and their roles become pivotal. The approach they adopt and their ability to educate co-workers, answers their questions and clarify any misconceptions greatly improves the outcomes.

3. Evidence Retrieval

One of the most challenging issue in using EBP in the clinical setting is learning how to adequately frame a clinical question so that an appropriate literature review can be performed. When forming a clinical question, the following should be included: the disorder or disease of the patient, the intervention of finding being reviewed, possibly a comparison intervention, and the outcome. An acronym used to remember this is called the “PICO” model;

- P - What is the patient population?
- I - What is the potential intervention or area of interest?
- C - Is there a comparison intentional or control group?
- O - What is the desired outcome?

Once the topic is selected, the research relevant to the topic must be reviewed, in addition to other relevant literature. It is important that clinical studies, systematic reviews (including meta analyses, meta syntheses and meta aggregation) and well-known and reliable existing EBP guidelines are accessed in the literature retrieval process. When reviewing any article for evidence retrieval read it very closely. Articles can appear to be precise and factual on the surface but with further and much closer examination, flaws can be found, this lowering the credibility and quality of the article {16}.

4. Apply the evidence

{12}) opined that after determining the internal and external validity of the study, a decision at whether the information gathered does apply to the initial question. It is important to address questions related to diagnosis, therapy, harm, and prognosis. The information gathered should be interpreted according to many criteria and should always be shared with other nurses and/or fellow researchers.

5. Implementing findings

According to {6}. The stage describes what is done with identified research findings. The validity of the research finding dictates what would be done with them. successful implementation of research findings in practice requires four components.

- Clinical expertise
- Patient's preference for alternative forms of care
- Clinical research evidence and
- Available resources

6. Evaluation of performance

The evaluation process occurs after a time lapse from the implementation to allow for the measurement of the indices for change. For instance, in case of wound healing, evaluation will be compared with what was the nature of the healing process in the past and what it is presently. This process is achieved through the use of questionnaire, interviews, records and observation.

2.3 Implementing evidence-based nursing practice

Technology is dramatically altering the ways in which we diagnose, treat care for and manage patients. Information technology breakthrough has been a key factor in the development of (EBP) and has supported this growing trend. The advancement of science and technology will continue to affect nursing profession. In the past, nurses relied on their experience, observations and intuition but today, nursing has a unique body of knowledge specific to the profession [10]. [9], asserted that multifaceted implementation strategies are needed to promote use of research evidence in clinical and administrative health care decision making. Although, {25}, suggest that multifaceted intervention are no more effective than single intervention. As noted by others, the same intervention may meet with varying degrees of effectiveness when applied in different context.

2.4 The benefits of evidence-based nursing practice

Nurses are responsible for the care they provide to their patient. evidence-based nursing practice means making decision about the care of the patient on the basis of current available evidence. It helps the nurse to provide high quality care to her patients based on research and knowledge.

- **Efficiency:** It increases the efficiency of nurses. Making decisions based on knowledge that is backed by research makes it easier for a nurse to choose what care to provide to her patient as opposed trial and error.
- **Better patient outcome:** Nurses regularly make decisions on what care to provide for their patients. These decisions can impact the patient's health. the patient will likely experience a better outcome when the care is based on researched and proven methods.
- **Keeps nursing practice current:** For nurses to apply evidence-based practice in the care of patient, they have to stay informed on any new discoveries. This encourage them to read materials on nursing research thus keeping their practice current.
- **Decision making:** Using evidence-based practice to provide care increases the nurse's confidence. This is because she knows that she is basing her decision about patient care on valid information that has been researched.

- **Magnet status:** Incorporating evidence based practice into nursing care achieve magnet status. The magnet recognition programme recognises quality of care, nursing excellence and innovation in nursing practice {4}.

2.5 Barriers to Utilization of Evidence-Based Nursing Practice

A survey that was carried out by the 27 proved that 69% have only a low to moderate knowledge of evidence-based practice and half of those that responded did not feel sure of the steps in the process. Many responded that “lack of time during their shift is the primary challenge to researching and applying evidence-based practice”. There is always and will always be a desire to improve the care of our patients. The ever increasing cost of health care and the need for more accuracy. In the field proves a cycle in need of evidence-based health care. The necessity to gain knowledge from a variety of literature not just the basics. There is a definite need for nurses, and all practitioners to have an open mind when dealing with the modern inventions of the future because these could potentially improve the health of patients.

{26} opined that there are many barriers to promoting evidence-based practice. The first of which would be the practitioner’s ability to critically appraise research. This includes having a considerable amount of research evaluation skills, access to journals and clinic/hospital support to spend time on evidence-based nursing. Time, workload pressures and competing priorities can impede research and development. The causes of these barriers include nurse’s lack of knowledge of research methods, lack of support from professional colleagues and organization and lack of confidence and authority in the research arena.

Another barrier is that the practice environment can be resistant to change and conventional methods of practice. This can be caused by reluctance to believe result of research study over safe, traditional practices, cost of adopting new practices, or gaining momentum to rewrite existing protocols. It is important to show nurses who may be resistant to change in nursing practice the benefit that nurses, their patient, and their institutions can reap from the implementation of evidence-based nursing practice, which is to provide better nursing care {13}

{23} is of the opinion that lack of continuing education programs is another barrier to utilization of evidence-based nursing into practice.

Practices do not have the means to provide workshops to teach new skills due to lack of funding staff and time; therefore, available treatment may never be utilized in patient care. Another barrier to introducing newly learned methods for improving patient care is the “fear of stepping on one’s toes”. New nurses might feel it is not their place to suggest to even tell a superior nurse that newer, more efficient methods and practices are available.

Conceptual Framework

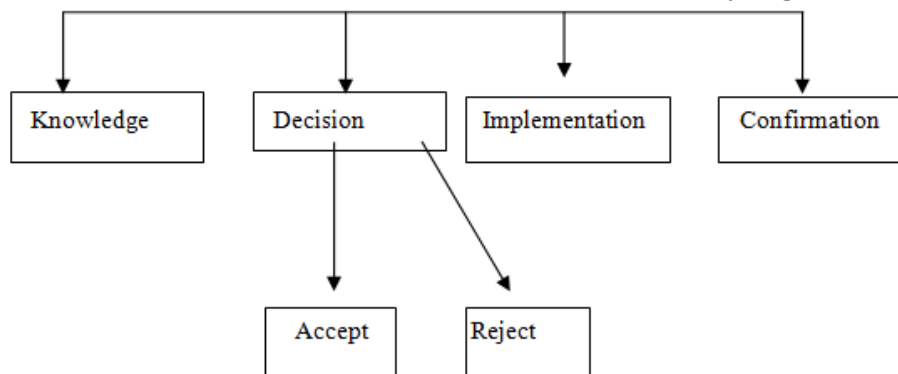
The theoretical/conceptual framework used in this theory is the modified theory of diffusion of innovations developed by Everett Rogers in 1995.

- Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system.
- Innovation is an idea, practice or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit for adoption.

In diffusion of innovation each member of the social system faces his/her own innovation, decision that follows a 5 – step process:

1. **Knowledge:** Person becomes aware of an innovation and has some idea of how it functions.
2. **Persuasion:** Person forms a favourable or unfavourable attitude towards the innovation.
3. **Decision:** Person engages in activities that lead to a choice adapt or reject the innovation.
4. **Implementation:** Person put an innovation into use.
5. **Confirmation:** Person evaluate the result of an innovation already made.

Schematic Presentation Of The Diffusion Innovation Process By Rogers (1995)



2.6. Application of Diffusion of Innovation Theory to the Study

For evidence-based practice to be adopted into clinical area, the adopt decision-making must be individualized, and it follows a step-by-step process. The knowledge of evidence based practice is the key to its adoption, this inspires the nurse to find more information by attending conferences, seminars and use of database. Having the knowledge, the nurse will form favourable or unfavourable attitude towards the concept thus deciding whether to adopt or reject the concept. Thereafter the nurse will determine the usefulness of evidence-based practice nursing practice in the care of patient and may also search for further information about it. With implementation of evidence-based practice into the clinical area, the nurse will be able to evaluate the result of implementing evidence-based practice in nursing care. When new innovations are confirmed the nurse finalizes her decision to continue using them to its fullest for patient care and positive outcome.

III. Method

3.1 Research Design

This is a descriptive study to find out the knowledge and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice among the nurses of Specialist Hospital, Offa Kwara State.

3.2 Study Setting

The study was carried out in Specialist Hospital, Offa Kwara State. The Specialist Hospital was established in 1948 through the Offa Community effort and was taken over by Kwara State Government in 1960. The hospital was upgraded to a Specialist Hospital in 1997 and is currently being used as training hospitals for Doctors on housemanship and pharmacy internship. The hospital was established to cater for the medical needs of Offa Community and its environs which consist of Erin-Ile, Ikotun, Ajase Ipo and Igosun. The various departments in the hospital include the following:

Pharmacy, Theatre, Laboratory, Medical Record, Administrative Department, Store, Revenue, Female Surgical Ward, Male Surgical Ward, Maternity Ward, Amenity Ward, Behavioural Unit, Children Ward, Antenatal Clinic, Family Planning Unit, Orthopaedic Ward and Eye Clinic.

3.3 Target Population

The target population for this study was the professional nurses working in each units of the Specialist Hospital Offa, Kwara State.

3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample

The sample was selected by using a non-probability convenience sampling techniques. All the nurses met on different shifts of all the units will be selected as sample and in total of 110 of the 121 professional nurses from the level of Senior Nursing Officer (SNO) which make up 110 out of the 121 professional nurses will be used for the research.

The hospital has a total number of 121 nurses together with the Assistant Director of Nursing in-charge and they are posted to each unit as follows:

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Female Surgical Ward | 18 Nurses |
| Male Surgical Ward | 15 Nurses |
| Maternity Ward | 15 Nurses |
| Amenity Ward | 15 Nurses |
| Behavioural Unit | 6 Nurses |
| Children Ward | 15 Nurses |
| Antenatal Clinic | 12 Nurses |
| Family Planning Unit | 6 Nurses |
| Orthopaedic Ward | 12 Nurses |
| Eye Clinic | 12 Nurses |

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire which is divided into four sections: Section A: consist of questions on demographic characteristics of the respondent. Section B: is to elicit information on the respondent's knowledge of evidence based nursing practice. Section C: contain questions about the attitude of nurses towards utilization of evidence-based nursing practice. Section D: contain questions on the nurses utilization of evidence-based practice in the management of clients while section E: investigate barriers to utilization of evidence-based nursing practice.

3.6 Validity of Instrument

The developed questionnaire for the study was given to the project supervisor for critiquing to ensure validity and after approval and endorsement. It was administered to the respondents.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

A letter of introduction was collected from the school, with self-introduction and explanation of the purpose and the authorizing letter, permission was obtained from the Deputy Director of Nursing in-charge of the Nursing Department and the Principal Medical Officer (PMO) in-charge of the hospital.

Informed consent was sought for after giving detail information on the purpose of the research. Respondents were informed that participation is voluntary and confidentiality will be maintained and anonymity will be maintained by not writing names on the questionnaire.

3.8 Procedure for Data Collection

Permission was obtained from the Deputy Director of Nursing and the Principal Medical Officer of the hospital. After which the purpose of the study was explained to all the participants and their consent were sought for. Nurses from SNO above present in each units at all the three different shifts (morning, afternoon and night duties) was given a questionnaire to answer while the researcher will wait to collect the answered questionnaires for the Nurses on morning and afternoon duties and come back the following day for those on night duty. The respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The completed items were collected and edited to detect errors, it was also be coded and analysed by using descriptive and inferential statistics and the results was presented in tables, inferential statistics of correlation was used to test or establish the hypotheses.

IV. Results

In this chapter, the results of investigations carried out are presented. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the demographic characteristics of the respondents while the second part deals with the Research Questions and Research Hypotheses tested and generated in the study. The statistical methods of analysis used were descriptive statistics, percentage and Pearsons correlation analysis which was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The results obtained from the data analysis were presented in tables and discussion follows;

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Table 4.1 revealed that 18.2% of the respondents sampled were in the age bracket 20 – 30 years and 41-50years. 50.9% were in the age bracket 31-40years while 12.7% of the population sampled were 51 years and above. The gender distribution showed that 7.3% of the population sampled were male nurses while 92.7% of them were female nurses. Moreover, professional qualifications of the nurses shows that 2.7% of them were registered nurses (RN only 12.7% were Registered Midwife (RM), only 49.1% were Registered Nurse with other Post basic qualification while those who have degree in nursing were 35.5% of the population sampled. Furthermore, 34.5% of the nurses sampled were Senior Nursing Officer (SNO), 17.3% of them were Principal Nursing Officer (PNO), only 27% of the nurses were Assistant Chief Nursing Officer (ACNO), 38.2% of the nurses were Chief Nursing Officer (CHO) while 7.3% of the population sampled indicated others.

Research Questions

Research Question1: What is the level of knowledge of professional nurses of specialist Hospital Offa about evidence-based nursing?

Table 2 shows that 4.5% of the nurse were rated low, 18.2% belongs to the medium class, while 77.3% of the population sampled were rated high .Responding on awareness of the concept of evidence-based practice in nursing 95.5% of the nurses sampled were aware while only 4.5% were not aware of the concept. Also, 95.5% of them agreed that evidence-based practice is a problem solving approach, 85.5% agreed that it enhances delivery of highest quality of care. Moreover, all the nurses were of the opinion that it combines research with knowledge and theory. Those who agreed that it fills the gap between research theory and practice when utilized were 97.3% while only 2.7% had contrary opinion. Also, 85.5% of the population sampled agreed that it allows for individualized care while 14.5% of them had contrary opinion.

Research Question 2: What is the level of utilization of evidence –based nursing practice in the care of patient by nurses of Specialist Hospital, Offa, Kwara State

Table 4 showed that 30.9% of the nurses use journals on evidence – based practice to improve nursing care more often, 55.5% use it occasionally while 13% of the population sampled never use it.

Table 5 shows that 57.3% of the nurses indicated that they have written protocol or guidelines for implementing evidence-based nursing practice while 42.7% disagreed. 85.5% nurses indicated that they use Ensol and Savlon solution for dressing while 8% of them indicated Normal saline and honey as well. Furthermore, 43.6% of the nurses indicated that they use pain assessment chart in management of pain in their hospital while 56.4% had contrary opinion.

Those who indicated that they share patient public hair before surgery were 84.5% while 15.5% of them had contrary opinion. 85.5% indicated use of methylated spirit in clearing umbilical cord while 14.5% had contrary opinion. Also, 52.7% indicated use of worm sponging for treatment of hyperthermia while 47.3% had contrary opinion. 92.7% of the population sampled indicated that they practice universal precaution in their hospital while 7.3% disagreed on the issue. Those who agreed that they have ever trained on hand washing techniques were 88.2% while 11.8% of the population sampled had contrary opinion.

Research question 3: What are the barriers to the successful utilization of evidence –based nursing practice in Offa Specialist Hospital?

The findings of the study shows that 70.0% of the nurses agreed that poor attitude of nurses to change is a barrier to utilization of evidence –based nursing practice while 30.0% of them disagreed on the issue. 81.8% of the nurses agreed that lack of knowledge of evidence-based nursing practice is a barrier, 13.6% of them disagreed while 4.5% of the population sampled were indifference. Also, 65.5% observed that inadequate organizational support is a barrier, 23.6% of them disagreed while 10.% of the population sampled were indifference 51.8% of the nurses indicated insufficient time work, 36.4% had contrary opinion while 11.8% were undecided. Also, 79.1% of the nurses were of the opinion that inadequate resources for utilization of evidence-based practice is a barrier, 17.3% disagreed while 3.6% of them could not decide on the issue. Furthermore, 66.4% of the nurses identity lack of continuing education for nurses, 29.1% of the nurses disagreed while 4.5% could not decided. Also, 54.5% of the nurses agreed that one of the barrier is the fact that relevant research is not available, 42.7% disagreed while 2.7% were not able to decided. 38.7% observed that doctors will not cooperate with the implementation, 43.6% disagreed while 18.2% could not decide whether doctors will not cooperate with the implementation or not.

Research Questions 4: Can evidence-based nursing practice be effectively utilized as a tool for providing holistic, scientifically based cure for patients?

Table 7 shows that 91.8% of the nurses agreed that evidence-based practice can be effectively used in the care of patients, only 8.2% of the nurses had contrary opinion. In addition, 92.7% of the nurses agreed that nurse’s knowledge is required to utilize the concept , only 3.6% of them disagrees of while 3.6% could not decide. 20.9% of the nurses agreed that shortage of nurses may not allow utilization while 79.1% of the nurses disagreed. 88.2% of the nurses agreed that evidence-based practice make nursing more scientific while 8.2% disagreed. Those who could not decided on the issue were 3.6% of the population sampled. Also, 80.9% of the nurses agreed that evidence-based gives autonomy to nursing while 10.9% of them disagreed. Also, 8.2% could not decide on the issue. Moreover, 88.2% of the nurses agreed that it enhances accountability and promoted quality assurance in patient cure. 3.6% of them disagreed while 8.2% could not decide on the issue. 37.3% of the nurses agreed that evidence based practice is not possible in nursing, 59.1% disagreed while 3.6% of the population sampled could not decided on the issue.

Research hypotheses

Research hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between nurses knowledge and utilization of evidence-based nursing.

Table 8: Relationship between nurses knowledge and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice

As shown by the analysis of this findings $r = 0.180$, $r^2 = 0.0324$, $p = 0.06$ at 0.05, level of significance. There is no significant relationship between nurses knowledge and utilization of evidence -based nursing practice. ($p = 0.06$). Hence, the null hypothesis not rejected. .

Research hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between the professional qualification of nurses and utilization of evidence -based nursing practice.

Relationship between professional qualification of nurse and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice

As shown in the analysis, $r = 0.032$ $r^2 = 0.001$, $p = 0.859$ at 0.05 level of significant relationship between educational qualification of nurse and utilization of evidence –based nursing practice ($p = 0.859$). Hence, we accept the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between professional utilization of nurse and utilization of evidence based nursing practice.

Research Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between nurses attitude and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice .

Table 10: Relationship between nurses attitude and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice

The data analysis shows that $r = -0.23$, $r^2 = 0.056$, $p = 0.013$ at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between nurses attitude and utilization of evidence-based nursing practices is rejected ($p = 0.013$).

V. Discussion of findings

The findings of the study reveals that 18.2% of the respondents were in the age bracket 20-30 years and 41—50 years while 12.7% were 51years and above. Male nurses used for the study were 7.3% while female nurses constitute 92.7% of the population sampled. The professional qualification of the nurses shows that 2.7% were registered nurses only (RN), 12.7% were registered midwife only (RM), 49.1% were registered nurses with other post basic qualification while those who have degree in nursing were 35.5%. The designation of the nursed revealed that 34.5% of the nurses were Senior Nursing Officer (SNO), 17.3% were Principal Nursing Officer (PNO), 2.7% were Assistant Chief Nursing Officer (ACNO) and 38.2% were Chief Nursing Officer (CNO).

Research Question 1: What is the level of knowledge of professional nurses of Specialist Hospital Offa about evidence-based nursing.

The data analysis shows that 4.5% of the nurses were rated low, 18.2% belongs to the medium class and 77.3% were rated high. Also, 95.5% of the nurses were aware of the concept of evidence-based practice. 85.5% of the nurses were of the opinion that evidence-based nursing practice enhances delivery of highest quality of care and individualized care. This however contradicts the findings of {8} which observed that 69.0% of the population studied had low knowledge of evidence-based nursing practice.

Research Question 2: What is the level of utilization of evidence-based nursing practice in the care of patient by nurses of Specialist Hospital, Offa, Kwara State .

It was reliably gathered from this study that 30.9% of the nurses use journals on evidence –based practice to improve nursing care more often, 55.5% used it occasionally while 13% never use it. Less than half of the nurses sampled use pain assessment chart (43.6%), while 57.3% indicated that they have written protocol or guidelines for implementing evidence-based nursing practice. This implies that utilization of evidence-based nursing practice was low. This corroborates the findings of {12} observed that nurses involved in research activities did not utilize the findings of nursing research consistently in their nursing practice.

Research Question 3: What are the barriers to the successful utilization of evidence –based nursing practice in Off Specialist Hospital. Table 6 shows that there were various barriers hindering the successful utilization of evidence-based nursing practice among were poor attitude of nurses to change (70.0%), lack of knowledge of evidence-based nursing practice (81.8%), inadequate organizational support (65.5%), inadequate resources for utilization of evidence-based practice (79.1%) and lack of continuing education for nurses (66.4%). This is supported by the findings of {8} identified lack of time which did not allow time for other researching and applying research based-practice. Also, {7} identified various barriers hindering utilization of evidence-based nursing practice. Among are inadequate amount of research evaluation skills, access to journals and work load pressures.

Research Question 4: Can evidence-based nursing practice be effectively utilized as a tool for providing holistic, scientifically based cure for patient.

Table 7 shows that evidence-based nursing practice can be effectively utilized as a tool for providing holistic, scientifically based cure for patients (91.8%). Those who agreed that nurses knowledge is required to utilize this concept were 92.7% while 88.2% of the nurses observed that evidence-based practice make nursing more scientific. Also, 80.9% agreed that it gives autonomy to nursing while 88.2 indicated that it enhanced accountability and promotes quality assurance in patient care . This is in line with the findings of {10}

identified efficiency of evidence-based nursing practice. They observed that it enhances highest quality of care, it combines research with knowledge and theory, it fills the gap between research and theory and allow for individualized care.

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between nurse's knowledge and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice.

Table 8 shows that there is not significant relationship between nurses knowledge and utilization of evidence-based nursing ($P = 0.06$) we accept the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between nurses knowledge and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice. There is no significant influence of knowledge on utilization of evidence-based practice. This contradicts the findings of {4} which established significant relationship between knowledge and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between professional qualification of nurses and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice.

Table 9 shows that there is no significant relationship between professional qualification of nurses and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice ($P = 0.859$). Hence, we accept the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between professional qualification of nurses and utilization of evidence based nursing practice. There is no significant influence of professional qualification on utilization of evidence-based nursing practice. Contrary to the findings in this study {4} reported that nurses with higher education expressed favourable attitude towards research.

Research Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between nurse's attitude and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice.

Table 10 shows that there is significant relationship between nurses attitude and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice ($p = 0.013$). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between nurses attitude and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice. Hence, there is significant influence of attitude on utilization of evidence based nursing practice among the nurses. Contrary to the findings in this study, {12} found that attitude about nursing research was a stronger motivation than education.

VI. Implication of findings for Nursing Education

The findings of this study revealed that the nurses' knowledge about evidence-based nursing practice was high, the level of utilization was low, there were various barriers to the successful utilization of evidence – based nursing practice in Offa Specialist Hospital. However, it was discovered that evidence-based nursing practice can be effectively utilized as a tool for providing holistic, scientifically based cure for patient. The nurse, therefore, should endeavour to put their knowledge of evidence-based nursing practice to use, emphasize more on use of evidence-based nursing practice in Offa specialist Hospital. The nurses and the hospital management should work on barriers hindering the use of evidence-based practice in Hospitals, especially, in the study area.

Summary of findings

The findings in this study can be summarized as follows:

- The nurses have high knowledge of evidence-based nursing practice.
- The nurses level of utilization of evidence-based nursing practice was low.
- Evidence-based nursing practice can be effectively utilized in nurses
- There were various barriers hindering the utilization of evidence-based nursing practice in Offa Specialist Hospital, Offa.
- There is no significant relationship between nurses knowledge and practice of evidence-based nursing practice ($p = 0.06$).
- There is no significant relationship between nurses professional qualification and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice among nurses ($p = 0.859$).
- There is significant relationship between nurses attitude and utilization of evidence based nursing practice ($p = 0.013$).

VII. Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Nurses should endeavour to put their knowledge of evidence-based nursing practice to use .
- ii. Nurses should be educated more on the use and importance of evidence-based nursing practice
- iii. Hospital management should make concerted effort to eliminate barriers hindering utilization of evidence-based nursing practice among nurses.
- iv. Hospital management should organized seminars for nurses on utilization of evidence-based nursing from time to time.

Suggestion For Further Studies

Based on the findings of this study, It is suggested that the same study should be carried out in other hospitals. A comparative study of General and Teaching Hospitals knowledge and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice could be carried out.

VIII. Conclusion

The result of findings in this study revealed that nurses in Offa Specialist Hospital, Ilorin have high knowledge of evidence-based nursing practice, their utilization of evidence-based nursing was low, there were various barriers hindering utilization of evidence-based nursing practice in Offa Specialist Hospital. However, it was discovered that evidence-based nursing practice can be effectively utilized by nurses in the Hospital. It was observed from the result of findings that there is no significant relationship between nurses' knowledge and practice of evidence-based nursing practice. There is no significant relationship between professional qualification of nurses and utilization of evidence based nursing practice. On the other hand, there is significant relationship between nurses' attitude and utilization of evidence-based nursing practice. Efforts by the management to ensure effective utilization of evidence-based nursing practice cannot be over emphasized.

Acknowledgement

We are indeed grateful to God almighty for the successful completion of this study.

Table 1: Level of knowledge of professional nurses about evidence-based nursing

| Level | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| low(1-100) | 5 | 4.5 |
| Medium (101- 150) | 20 | 18.2 |
| High (151-220) | 85 | 77.3 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

Table 2: knowledge of evidence-based nursing

| Item | Item | Frequency | Percentage |
|------|---|-----------|------------|
| 1. | Are you aware of the concept of Evidence-based practice in nursing | Yes | 105 |
| | | No | 5 |
| | Total | 110 | 100.0 |
| 2. | Evidence-based practice of a problem solving approach | Yes | 105 |
| | | No | 5 |
| | Total | 110 | 100.0 |
| 3. | It enhances delivering of highest quality of care | Yes | 94 |
| | | No | 16 |
| | Total | 110 | 100.0 |
| 4. | It combines research with knowledge and theory | Yes | 110 |
| | | No | - |
| | Total | 110 | 100.0 |
| 5. | It fills the gap between research theory and practice when utilized | Yes | 107 |
| | | No | 3 |
| | Total | 110 | 100.0 |
| 6. | It allows for individualized one | Yes | 94 |
| | | No | 16 |
| | Total | 110 | 100.0 |

Table 3: utilization of evidence-based nursing practice

| | Items | | Frequency | Percentage |
|----|---|------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1. | Have written protocol or guideline for Implementing Evidence-based nursing practice | Yes | 63 | 57.3 |
| | | No | 47 | 42.7 |
| | Total | | 110 | 100.0 |
| 2. | Solutions used in dressing : | Ensol and savlon | 94 | 85.5 |
| | | Normal saline | 8 | 7.3 |
| | | Honey | 8 | 7.3 |
| | | Total | 110 | 100.0 |
| 3. | Use pain assessment chart in the management of pain. | Yes | 48 | 43.6 |
| | | No | 62 | 56.4 |
| 4. | Shave patient public hair before surgery | Yes | 93 | 84.5 |
| | | No | 17 | 15.5 |
| 5. | Uses methylated spirit in cleaning of babies umbilical | Yes | 94 | 85.5 |
| | | No | 16 | 14.5 |
| 6. | Use warm sponging for the treatment of hypethemia | Yes | 58 | 52.7 |
| | | No | 52 | 47.3 |
| | Total | | 110 | 100.0 |
| 7. | Practice universal precaution in your hospital | Yes | 102 | 92.7 |
| | | No | 8 | 7.3 |
| | Total | | 110 | 100.0 |
| 8. | Have you ever trained on hand washing techniques | Yes | 97 | 88.2 |
| | | No | 13 | 11.8 |
| | Total | | 110 | 100.0 |

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