A Descriptive Study to Assess the Perception Regarding Current Scenario on Covid-19 among Nursing Students in TIPS, Agartala, Tripura

Rupa Ghosh, M.Sc. (N)
Associate Professor, Department of OBG Nursing,
Tripura Institute of Paramedical Sciences, Agartala, Tripura

Abstract:-

Background:

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused a devastation in all the sectors around the world, including the education sector. The clinical and academic practice of nursing students were interrupted heavily. However, professional courses such as Medicine, Nursing, etc. required more clinical and lab-based practice. As we move towards what is the new normal in the era of Covid-19, the need to reconsider education in a new light to face emerging challenges and opportunities, is increasing. With the emergence of vaccination & as per UGC guidelines, state agreed to open colleges in phase-wise manner. This research was carried out to assess the perception of current scenario's on Covid-19 among nursing students.

Objectives:
1) **To assess the perception regarding current scenario on Covid-19 among the nursing students.**
2) **To find out the association between perception regarding current scenario on Covid-19 and their selected socio-demographic variable.**

Method:

A quantitative & descriptive design was used for the study. A 5- point Likert scale was used to collect data from 120 nursing students through convenience sampling.

Result:

The findings of the study showed that, 93.33% (n-112) has positive perception and 6.67% (n=8) has negative perception regarding recent scenario's on Covid-19. The study also showed that there is a significant association between perception regarding recent scenario's on Covid-19 and age, year of studying, monthly family income, type of family, place of residence, time used to collect information on Covid-19 on a day and whether the student was vaccinated or not at $p<0.05$ level of significance.

Interpretation and conclusion:

The present study attempted to show that 66.7% of the students believe that vaccine will prevent the transmission of Covid-19 virus & 35.8% of the students agree to the statement that offline class is safe.

I. INTRODUCTION

On December 31, 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO), received a report on the presence of unknown causes of pneumonia disease in Wuhan, China. Later, this disease was defined as a novel Coronavirus disease and declared as a public health emergency of global concern by January 30, 2020. The novel corona virus disease is similar to the SARS-CoV and the Middle East respiratory syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) that have earlier occurred. Since the first report, confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Wuhan, China, the world has been witnessing severe unparalleled mortality and morbidity due to this disease which has resulted in many serious public health crises.[1]

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of India has brought to the public's attention, an awareness about the current outbreak and has taken required actions to control the spread of corona virus. Moreover, Government of India had initially instigated a 55-days lockdown throughout the country that had started on March 25th, 2020, to reduce the spread of the virus.[2]

In India, the government has shut down schools and educational institutions when the lockdown was put into effect, the result of which, learners from the range of school children to graduate students are affected. Therefore, the government has provided e-learning programme. The students have responded in an overwhelming manner to the e-learning platform. The e-learning opportunity has become a cost-effective boon to college students as they are able to attend classes from distant places. E-learning is more interactive and attention grabbing in comparison to traditional classroom learning. [3]

The government has approved the opening of schools and other educational institutions and the students are able to attend with parental permission. The "new normal" is affecting the behavior of the population as well as changing the norms and procedures which in turn leads to change in the way governance is done. Teaching virtually impacts the relationship between peers and the relationship the students have with teachers, schools, and the community.[4]

The pandemic outbreak has forced educational institutions to close for an uncertain amount of time. Throughout the world many places are affected, and the fear of an unsteady future and the loss of semesters is looming. Many universities, schools, and colleges have given up on in-person teaching. The pandemic situation has forced educators to adapt the online platform to teach, overnight.[5]
Though e-learning has come forth as a temporary solution, it has weaknesses as well. The human touch aspect and direct communication between the educator and learner cannot happen. The hindrance of network problems affects the learning and teaching process by slowing it down.[6]

Problem arises from the nonserious behavior of the students. Not all the students have the same capabilities and vary in confidence levels. This combined with tardiness is a serious problem in the learning process. Some of the students are not comfortable with online learning and this leads to not understanding the concepts, confusion, and frustration. The lack of compatibility between the technology's design and the psychology of teaching and learning creates an obstruction in the process of teaching and causes an imbalance. [5]

In, Nepal, a survey was conducted among nursing students and their perception towards online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. Almost half of the students had a negative perception towards online learning, according to the survey. But a majority felt that online learning should be continued in the time of pandemic. Although it is recommended that students and teachers should have a face-to-face interaction and create an environment for online learning at home.[7]

In a similar manner, 377 medical and dental students in Pakistan also participated in a descriptive cross-sectional study, to determine their perception towards online learning during lockdown time. The survey was conducted through email by providing a self-administered questionnaire. The results have shown that although a majority of the students have adjusted to e-learning, the limitation of the clinical and laboratory aspects of learning that is important to the field of study has proven it less appealing.[8]

A nurse's competence is measured based on their skill and the knowledge taught to them. The education of nurses is mainly conducted in a clinical environment. The professional development of the nursing students is impacted by clinical conditions. Optimal clinical environment leads to a positive impact on the professional development of the nursing students and a non-optimal clinical environment has negative impact on their professional development. [9] But, the introduction of e-learning in hindering clinical based practice and directly affecting the professional growth of the nursing students as virtual simulations are not enough. The nursing students learn the behavior needed to treat patients in a clinical setting when they interact with humans, as their reactions depend upon the patient's knowledge and perception. This speculation is according to the researcher who has experience in the field of nursing clinical education.

Vaccinations are considered as one of the most successful measures taken towards the health of the populace in the twentieth century in fighting infectious diseases.[8] Healthcare students need to accept vaccinations as they have an important role to play in informing and educating the patients as well as guiding them to take the right decisions medical-wise. With the emergence of Covid-19 vaccination & as per UGC guidelines, state agreed to open colleges in phase-wise manner. As we approach the new normal in the Covid-19 era, there is a need to consider nursing education anew in the light of emerging opportunities and challenges.

Hence, the researcher felt the need to assess the perception of nursing students on recent scenarios on Covid-19.

➢ *Objectives*:
1. To assess the perception regarding current scenario on Covid-19 among the nursing students.
2. To find out the association between perception regarding current scenario on Covid-19 and their selected socio demographic variable.

➢ HYPOTHESIS:
- H1: There will be significant association between perception regarding current scenario on Covid-19 and with their selected socio demographic variable.

II. METHODS & MATERIALS

➢ *Research Approach* : Quantitative research approach
➢ *Research design*: Non-experimental descriptive research design
➢ *Research Setting*: Tripura Institute of Paramedical Sciences (Nursing Section), Agartala, Tripura
➢ *Target population:* All the 2nd year, 3rd year, 4th year B.Sc. Nursing students studying in Tripura Institute of Paramedical Sciences (TIPS).
➢ *Sample and sampling technique:* Sample size consist of 120 subjects selected by convenience sampling technique.
➢ *Inclusion Criteria*: B. Sc Nursing students who were
- Willing to participate in the study
- Available at the time of data collection
➢ *Exclusion Criteria:* B. Sc Nursing students who were
- Not available at the time of data collection
- Not willing to participate in the study
➢ *Selection and development of tool*: The tool comprised of 2 sections:
- Section A: Demographic variables which comprised of age, sex, educational qualification, family income, place of residence, source of information, time spent on gathering information and vaccination status.
- Section B: Likert scale which consisted of 16 items: 8 items each of positive and negative statement to assess the perception regarding current scenario on Covid-19, according to their degree of agreement i.e. strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree.
➢ *Criteria Measure:*
- Positive perception: Above 40
- Negative perception: less than or equal to 40

Data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics in terms of mean, median range and by distribution, chi- square test for association.

III. RESULTS & FINDINGS

➢ *Section 1: Description of sociodemographic variables (Table 1)*

Group	Sub-group	N=120	Percentage
Age	19-20 years	46	38.33
	21–22 years	55	45.83
	23–25 years	19	15.83
Gender	Male	40	33.33
	Female	80	66.67
Year of studying	2nd year	50	41.67
	3rd year	25	20.83
	4th year	45	37.50
Monthly family income	Less than Rs. 15000/-	45	37.50
	Rs. 15001 - 25000/-	43	35.83
	Rs. 25001 – 35000/-	13	10.83
	Above Rs. 35000/-	19	15.83
Type of family	Nuclear	99	82.50
	Joint	15	12.50
	Single parent	06	5.00
Place of residence	Rural	48	40.00
	Urban	72	60.00
Hours spent on gathering information related to COVID 19 in a day	Less than 3 hours	62	51.67
	3 -5 hours	39	32.50
	5 – 7 hours	11	9.17
	More than 7 hours	08	6.67
Source of information	Social media	36	30.00
	Official website	06	5.00
	Television and newspaper	75	62.50
	Friends and family	03	2.50
Are you vaccinated?	Yes	101	84.17
	No	19	15.83

Table - 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of Respondents by Personal Characteristics

Analysis of data showed that 38.33% were in age group of 19-20 years, 45.83% were in the age group of 21-22 years and 15.83% were from 23-25 years. Among all the respondents, 33.33% were male and 66.67% were female. Among all the respondents, 41.67% were from 2nd year BSc Nursing, 20.83% were from 3rd year BSc Nursing and 37.50% were from 4th year BSc Nursing.

Majority of the respondents (37.50%) family income were less than Rs. 15000/- per month; 35.83% respondents family income were between Rs. 15001 -25000/- per month,

10.83% respondent's family income was between Rs. 25001 – 35000/- per month and 15.83% respondent's family income were above Rs. 35000/- per month.

Majority of the respondents (60%) were from urban area and 40% of the respondents were from rural area. Majority of the respondents (51.67%) spent less than 3 hours' time for gathering information related to Covid-19 in a day; 32.50% respondents spent 3-5 hours per day, 9.17 % respondents spent 5-7 hours per day and 6.67% spent more than 7 hours per day.

62.50% of the respondent's source of information were television and newspaper, 30% used social media as the source of information, 5% respondents used official website and 2.50% respondents gathered information from friends and family.

Majority of the respondents (84.17%) were vaccinated with covid vaccine and 15.83% were yet get vaccinated.

➢ *Section 2: Perception of respondents regarding current scenarios on COVID-19. (Table 2)*

Perception	Frequency (N=120)	Percentage
Negative (below 40)	08	6.67
Positive (Above 40)	112	93.33

Table – 2: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their level of perception regarding current scenario on COVID-19 among the nursing students in TIPS.

The above analysis shows that 6.67% respondents showed negative perception whereas 93.33% showed positive perception.

➢ *Section 3: Likert scale to assess the perception of respondents regarding current scenarios on COVID-19.*

The analysis of data showed that 44.2% agree and 26.7% strongly agree that COVID-19 affected their life; where as 20%, 5.0% and 4.2% remained neutral, disagree and strongly disagree respectively.

Majority of the respondents (45%) disagree with the statement that availing of public transport is safe. Majority (66.7%) of the respondents agree with the statement that vaccine will prevent the transmission of Covod-19. 63.3% respondents strongly agree that handwashing still need to be practiced. Majority (47.5%) of the participants strongly disagree with the statement that maintaining of social distance is not necessary.

43.3% of the respondents were anxious due to Covid-19. 35.8% of the respondents agree that attending offline classes are safe but 30% of the respondents are neutral and 30% of the respondents disagree with the statement.

30.8% of the respondents feels that attending clinical and community duty for practical classes even after Covid-19 vaccination is not safe. 48.3% of the respondents are neutral regarding visiting friends and family.

➢ *Section 4: Association between demographic variables & perception regarding current scenarios of COVID-19. (Table 3)*

Sl. No.	Demographic Variables	Correlation Chi-square test (Calculated Value)	Remarks
1	Age	2.11	S
2	Gender	4.29	NS
3	Year of studying	1.53	S
4	Monthly family income	0.571	S
5	Type of family	2.103	S
6	Place of residence	2.12	S
7	Hours spent on gathering information related to Covid-19	0.40	S
8	Source of information	13.49	NS
9	Are you vaccinated?	3.02	S

Table – 3: Association between perception regarding current scenario on Covid-19 and with their selected socio demographic variables.

Analysis of the study showed that, age, year of studying, monthly family income, type of family, place of residence, time spent on information gathering and vaccination status were significantly associated at 0.05 level of significance.

IV. CONCLUSIONS:

Current global pandemic situation demands substantial awareness about the clinical presentation, spread, preventive measures and management of Covid-19. We discovered that the students have positive perception regarding current scenarios on Covid-19. 66.7% of the nursing students agreed that vaccination may prevent the transmission of Covid-19. More than 35% of students believe that it is safe to attend clinical and community duty. 42.5% of the students agreed that it is safe to attend offline classes. However, 43.3% students felt anxious towards clinical practice.

V. SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS:

The present study reveals that, majority of the students agreed that there is still need of wearing mask, maintaining social distance, frequent practice of handwashing and need of restrictions. According to the students, availing of public transport is still not safe. Students are in dilemma whether to attend clinical & community duty or not as 43% of the students shows that they are still anxious due to Covid-19.

There is a spread of mental health issues in the wake of the spread of the Covid-19. It has become increasingly important to take the necessary precautions and measures timely. The students should be provided with metal health support, especially to the students who are anxious. The support should include accurate information and suitable coping strategies to both the staffs and students.

A program of attention and /or psychological training could be introduced, especially geared towards controlling and overcoming anxiety.

Intervention should be done on:
• Relaxation
• Yoga
• Problem solving techniques
• Biofeedback
• Psychotherapy
• Cognitive behavioural therapy

VI. FUTURE PLAN

• The nursing curriculum should emphasis more on the problem of Covid-19 in all direction.
• Primary prevention is one of the important components of community health nursing. Nurses have a major role in preventive aspect than in curative aspect.
• Similar studies in this area can be done, so that therapeutic interventions based on the study findings can be provided.
• Nurse administrators should encourage nurses to involve themselves in preventive programmes on Covid-19.

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