

CHAPTER 2

Review of Related Literature:

In order to provide a comprehensive, perspective on the research related to this study the literature was reviewed. This chapter includes:

- 2.1. HIV/AIDS content and curriculum for nursing students.
- 2.2. Knowledge and attitude of nurses towards HIV/AIDS.

2.1 HIV/AIDS Content and Curriculum.

The curriculum of nursing education program in Nepal is influenced by the national policy of Nepal government. Nepal government has adopted a national policy for attainment of health for all by the year 2000 through primary health care approach. As a result, the present curriculum of certificate level of nursing program is based on learner centered, approach community focused and only the basic nursing education program relevant to the health care needs of Nepal (11).

The certificate nursing curriculum was revised in 1987 and it is now based on the primary health care approach as promulgated by the World Health Organization. The major emphasis of the certificate level program is community health nursing, which is a component of each of the three

years of the curriculum.

Though the curriculum of certificate level of nursing program is based on the basic nursing education program relevant to the health care needs, the AIDS content was allotted only in 3rd year curriculum in which a minimal amount of time about two hours is allotted and in 2nd and 1st year only the introduction of the disease is introduced in the curriculum (11). The reason for this may be due to the fact that at the time of curriculum revision there was no HIV/AIDS problem detected in Nepal. In Nepal the first AIDS case was detected in 1988 only.

This limited AIDS related content covert superficially could do more harm than good. In order to combat myths and misconceptions, students must have an adequate knowledge and understanding of the disease. In addition, they must develop positive attitude towards people with HIV/AIDS that will enable them to intervene positively and professionally.

Now, Nepal is also facing the problem of increasing HIV/AIDS cases. Nursing students, as future care provider, must be prepared for the challenge to care for AIDS patients. So the nursing curriculum should contain current, complete and correct content about HIV/AIDS and the universal precautions concepts. So they can give competent and quality care.

Many study results indicated the high percentage of schools did not develop guidelines for dealing with AIDS related issues. However there was a lack of policy formation on AIDS by nursing schools (12).

Laster and Beard found that nearly all (94.3%) of the nursing students (n=177) wanted to know more about HIV/AIDS, while nearly half (49%) preferred not to care for AIDS patients (9).

In another similar study conducted by Wile, Heath and Acklin they found that fifty-four percent of the nursing students felt that nurses should be permitted to refuse care for a client with AIDS and 36% stated that they would definitely or probably refuse to care for HIV/AIDS patients. These researchers concluded that nursing school must provide current complete and correct instruction related to AIDS and the use of universal precaution (13).

Cassels and Redman said that it was important to examine curriculum plans and policies and opportunities for how students were assigned to care for patients with AIDS, as well as to understand how new graduates were developing knowledge and skills in caring for AIDS patients (14).

2.2 Knowledge and Attitude of Nurses Towards AIDS.

Numerous studies have been done on the knowledge and attitude of nurses and other health care professionals towards AIDS patients. One such study among nursing faculty, under-graduate and graduate nursing students and dental hygiene students, the nursing faculty and graduate students showed the most positive attitudes and behavioral intentions, while dental hygiene students were the least positive. Furthermore, after being exposed to HIV/AIDS education in the curriculum, the undergraduate students demonstrated a reduction in AIDS-related work stress in another test done one year later (15).

Similarly, nurses at the graduate level had more knowledge and positive attitude about AIDS than nurses with only entry-level preparation in another report (16).

In another study of Gignac and Oermann on the knowledge level and attitude about AIDS of 166 BSc nursing students and 19 faculty members, it was shown that knowledge scores increased as the students progressed through the program. While faculty members scored highest in knowledge, their attitude scores were similar to those of the students (17).

Lawrence and Lawrence compared the knowledge and attitude towards AIDS among nurses, baccalaureate nursing students, liberal arts students and non nursing groups. Registered nurses were found to have greater knowledge and more positive attitude towards AIDS than baccalaureate students. Nursing students did not differ significantly from liberal art students in their attitude towards AIDS. An important finding was that subjects with increased knowledge about AIDS had more positive attitude towards persons with AIDS (18).

In another study of Oerman and Gignac on the level of knowledge and attitude about AIDS among Canadian nursing students and faculty and the relationship among knowledge, attitudes and willingness to care for AIDS patients, students' knowledge about AIDS increased as they progressed through the nursing program, and the faculty group had the highest mean knowledge score. Attitude scores were relatively low in all groups including faculty. While students gained knowledge of AIDS in upper level of nursing program, attitude scores did not improve comparably. Faculty who had cared for AIDS patients had significantly higher attitude scores than those without this experience. Result of the study indicated that, although knowledge about AIDS in some areas could increase, educational strategies are needed for improving attitude

towards AIDS patients and creating a greater willingness to participate in their care (19).

Early studies of nurses, knowledge on AIDS and attitude towards persons with AIDS showed that knowledge was often inaccurate and inadequate and the attitude was sometimes negative. Fear of the disease and its transmissibility was the most overriding concern of nurses. This fear was demonstrated by nurses leaving their jobs, refusing to care for persons with AIDS, giving minimal care to these patients and isolating them inappropriately. Nurses were also observed using precautions and isolation techniques with patients with AIDS.

However, knowledge and attitude were interrelated in the care of persons with HIV infection. Anxiety, fear, discomfort, embarrassment, and negative social attitudes were expected to decrease with increased knowledge of the disease and its transmission and with experience working with AIDS patients. Laster and Beared conducted a study on baccalaureate nursing students on their attitudes towards AIDS to explore their knowledge, fear, beliefs and attitudes regarding AIDS. They found that students with a high fear score were less willing to care for AIDS patients, had higher knowledge scores and were more homophobic while 96.6% of the students felt that

AIDS patient are entitled to the same care as any other patient. 49% preferred not to care for AIDS patients. 36% thought nursing students should not be assigned to care for AIDS patients (9).



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