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Association Between Registered Nurses' Experiences of Continuing Professional Development and Their Sharing of Information Gained

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Purpose:

The purpose of the study was to determine the association between how registered nurses' experience continuous professional development (CPD) events, and their practice of sharing the information gained at these events.

In the current information era, knowledge becomes outdated quickly, and there is a constant explosion of new information (Clarke et al. 2013). The Advisory Committee on Interdisciplinary, Community-based Linkages (2012) states that health care professionals are overwhelmed by a proliferation of clinical information, with a concomitant gap between available evidence-based clinical information and actual practice. If they are to render quality health care services, health care professionals need to remain up-to-date with new developments and reinforce their knowledge and skills. Because nurses are officially licenced, they have a fiduciary duty to improve their professional knowledge and skills base continuously (Brace, Sheely, Corner & Martin, 2014). The goal of continuous professional development (CPD) is therefore to improve the quality of healthcare practice, providing opportunities for professional growth and maintaining up-to-date knowledge and skills (Van Vuuren & Nel, 2013).

However, a gap continues to exist between knowledge acquired and its application in practice (Carrington et al., 2016). To improve this situation, nurses should share the knowledge acquired at CPD events. According to Senge (1998 cited in Naim & Lenka, 2017), knowledge sharing occurs when an individual is willing to share and acquire knowledge from others, resulting in building competencies. Dalkir (2005) posits that knowledge sharing is essential for creating new knowledge and innovation. However, Gitonga and Muriuki (2014) argue that millions of dollars have been provided in the name of CPD, but the quality of these programs is questionable, as there has been no improvement in healthcare.

Registered nurses working at a selected public hospital in Mpumalanga province, South Africa get opportunities to attend different CPD events, such as workshops, in-service training sessions, conferences, and part-time or full-time studies. However, incidents of poor nursing care are escalating, as the local newspapers continually report on complaints raised by the community regarding the poor nursing care rendered in the selected public hospital. Not clear to the researcher if the registered nurses share the information they gained at the CPD events, and if they do, how they do it and with whom do they share the information. Hence, the need to determine the association between how registered nurses' experience continuous professional development (CPD) events, and their practice of sharing the information gained at these events. The researcher posed the following research questions: What are registered nurses' experiences of CPD? What are the practices followed by registered nurses when sharing the information acquired at CPD events?

Methods:

A cross-sectional, descriptive design was used to conduct the study in a 212-bed regional hospital in Mpumalanga province, South Africa. The study population comprised 144 registered nurses, who were working at the selected regional hospital in Mpumalanga Province. Of the 144 registered nurses, only 126 complied with the criterion of working for at least one year at the regional hospital. Due to the small

number of possible participants, total population sampling; a type of purposive sampling (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2015), was used for sampling. Of the 126 registered nurses, 75 consented to participate.

A self-developed structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire comprised of three sections: section A: demographic information; section B: staff development; and section C: sharing of information. To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire's quality, Cronbach's alpha was used (between .00 and +1.00). Face validity was used to verify that the instrument looked valid, or gave the appearance of measuring the content. Content-related validity evidence was used to examine the extent to which the method of measurement includes all the major elements relevant to the construct being measured. The questionnaire was pilot tested to see if it was appropriate and how much time it would take to administer. The two registered nurses used for the pilot testing were not included in the main study. Questionnaires (Annexure B) were rephrased in a more understandable manner where necessary before the main study.

Data collection commenced only after approval had been granted by the research ethics committee of the university. Permission to conduct the study was also obtained from the provincial and hospital authorities. Data was collected in November 2015 from both day and night staff. Of the 126 questionnaires distributed, 75 were returned. The researcher adhered to the ethical principles of beneficence, respect for human dignity and justice. The questionnaire was completed anonymously and in the participants' own time to avoid disrupting patient care. It took a maximum of 20-30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

With the assistance of a statistician, descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. The t-value was used to assess the experiences of registered nurses of CPD and the Chi-square to assess the level of association between registered nurses and sharing of information.

Results:

The results of the study confirmed that registered nurses do get opportunities to attend different CPD opportunities, such as workshops, in-service training, conferences, and congresses, part-time and full-time studies. They recognise the benefit of CPD, not only for themselves but also for their patients. The majority of the participants attending CPD opportunities are those who have less experience in the profession.

The results also indicated an association between how the registered nurses experienced the CPD activities, and the way in which and with whom they shared the information gained. When the participants' experienced the CPD activity as too advanced, they shared the information by giving a verbal report to staff. When they experienced it as boring, they shared the information verbally with nursing management. However, when they experienced the CPD activity as good, they tend either to share the information verbally with their colleagues or not to share it with their colleagues.

There is a strong association between the availability of a policy on giving feedback by those who attend CPD and sharing the information gained. The results indicate that 84% of the participants share information with their colleagues in their unit attending CPD activities, while 82.67% give a verbal report at a staff meeting, and 49.33% discuss the information informally with their colleagues. Of the registered nurses who give feedback to nursing management, 34.67% prefer to give a verbal report and 25.33% to submit a written report. Only 5.33% of the registered nurses indicated that they do not share the information with colleagues after attending CPD activities.

Conclusion:

The conclusion drawn from the results is that there is a strong association between registered nurses' experiences of CPD and their practice of sharing information gained at CPD opportunities. Recommendations, based on the results of the study were made for the registered nurses and nursing managers.

Title:

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Keywords:

Continuing professional development, Registered nurses and Sharing information gained

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Abstract Summary:

A quantitative descriptive study was conducted to determine the association between registered nurses' experiences of continuing professional development and their sharing of information gained. Data was collected with a questionnaire and descriptive statistics was used to analyse data. Found a strong association between experiences of CPD and sharing of information.

Content Outline:

I. Introduction

- A. Knowledge becomes outdated quickly
- B. Health care professionals need to remain up-to-date with new developments
- C. Nurses have a fiduciary duty to improve their professional knowledge and skills base continuously
- D. A gap continues to exist between knowledge acquired and its application in practice
- E. To improve this situation, nurses should share the knowledge acquired at CPD events

II. Body

A. Main Point#1 Problem statement

- a. Supporting point#1 Registered nurses get opportunities to attend CPD events
 - a. Workshops, seminars, conferences
- b. Supporting point#2# Incidents of poor nursing care escalating
 - a. Local community paper reports on complaints raised by the community about poor nursing care
- c. Supporting point#3 Practice of sharing information gained at CPD events
 - a. Not clear if they share the information
 - b. If they share the information, how do they do it?
 - c. If they share the information, with whom do they share it?

B. Main Point#2 Methodology

- 1. Supporting point#1 Research design
 - a. Quantitative, descriptive
 - b. Cross-sectional
- 2. Supporting point#2 Setting
 - a. Public, regional hospital
 - b. Mpumalanga Province, South Africa
- 3. Supporting point#3 Population and sampling
 - a. 144 permanently employed registered nurses working in the hospital
 - b. Total population sampling
 - c. 126 complied with inclusion criterion
- 4. Supporting point#4 Data collection
 - a. Self-developed questionnaire

b. Sections of questionnaire: demographic information; staff development; and sharing of information

5. Supporting point#5 Data analysis

- a. Descriptive statistics; t-test and Chi square

C. Main point#3 Ethical considerations

- 1. Supporting point#1 Research ethics committee approval
- 2. Supporting point#2 Permission to conduct research from relevant authorities
 - a. Mpumalanga Province
 - b. Regional hospital
- 3. Supporting point#3 Ethical principles adhered to
 - a. Beneficence
 - b. Respect for autonomy
 - c. Justice

D. Main point#4 Results

1. Supporting point#1 Demographic information

- a. Gender
- b. Age
- c. Qualification
- d. Position in hospital
- e. Level of experience

2. Supporting point#2 Registered nurses do get opportunities to attend different CPD events

3. Supporting point#3 Recognise the benefits of CPD

4. Supporting point#4 Those who attend CPD events are those who are less experienced

5. Supporting point#5 Association between how the registered nurses experienced the CPD activities, and the way in which and with whom they shared the information gained.

6. Supporting point#6 Strong association between the availability of a policy on giving feedback by those who attend CPD and sharing the information gained

7. Supporting point#7 Strong association between registered nurses' experiences of CPD and their practice of sharing information gained at CPD opportunities.

III. Conclusion

A. Many opportunities for CPD

B. Encourage nurse managers to identify training needs of the registered nurses

C. Allow registered nurses to attend CPD events

D. Ensure registered nurses understand the importance of sharing knowledge gained at CPD events

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