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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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## A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY TO ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE REGARDING EMERGENCY TRIAGE AMONG STUDENT NURSES IN SELECTED INSTITUTIONS, JALANDHAR

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### ABSTRACT

**Background of the study:** TRIAGE comes from French trier, meaning to sort. Patient acuity is quickly determined via triage. A triage system prioritizes essential patients by identifying and categorizing them. It classifies patients by kind and urgency to bring the right patient to the right place at the right time with the right care provider. Student nurses are future quality care providers, thus they play a unique role in hospital emergency triage and treatment. They should learn more about emergency triage so they can make precise judgments for early detection, successful referral, and patient prevention. To minimize emergency department morbidity and mortality, staff and student nurses should participate in in-service education, teaching, demonstration, and self-learning. **Methodology:** The study setting was conducted at MHR DAV Institute of Nursing and LalaLajpatRai Institute of Nursing Education, Jalandhar, Punjab. The study sample comprised of 100 student nurses from selected Nursing Institutions. Non probability purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data. Written consent was taken from the student nurses who were selected as sample. Self-structured knowledge questionnaire was used to evaluate the knowledge regarding emergency triage among student nurses. Information booklet was prepared and distributed among student nurses. **Results and conclusion:** The mean knowledge score regarding emergency triage among student nurses was 20.16 ( $\pm 3.62$ ) with mean percentage of 50.4%. Hence, it revealed that the student nurses were having average knowledge regarding emergency triage.

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## INTRODUCTION

Emergency is a term which describes a state. It is a term of managerial aspect which demands decision and carrying up in terms of special measures (Oxford Pocket Dictionary, 1992). An "emergency state" has to be imposed or declared by some authorized person, who at a certain moment will also lift it. Thus, it requires recognition of threshold values and implies rules of engagement and an exit strategy. It usually defines time and space, conceptually, it is associated with Response. In a broader view, triage can be classified as; primary, secondary and tertiary triage. Primary triage is the field triage which includes the early transportation from disaster scenario as "START" and "SAVE" method. Secondary triage is emergency department triage which includes the timely and appropriate interventions according to patient acuity by colour coding. Tertiary triage is specialist care triage which includes prioritizing patients for definitive care as operations, interventions etc. In a narrower view, triage can be classified as emergency triage and disaster triage. Emergency triage is the sorting-out or screening of patients and setting priorities for their treatment in emergency care settings. Disaster triage is prioritizing the patient care for urgent treatment while allotting resources during a disaster. One of the

most important aspects of emergency care is the recognition of life threatening illness or injury. Recognition of dangerous clinical signs and symptoms with initiation of interventions to reverse or prevent a crisis is essential before a diagnosis can be made, this process begins with the first patient contact. Identifying the patients promptly who require immediate treatment and determining the appropriate treatment area are essential nurse competencies in a busy emergency department. Student nurses are future quality care providers so they have a unique role for implementation of emergency triage and emergency care in the hospitals. They should enhance their knowledge regarding emergency triage so that they can make accurate triage decisions in the future for early identification, effective referral services and preventive aspects of patients. Active participation of the staff nurses and student nurses should be encouraged by providing in-service education, teaching, demonstration and self-learning in order to reduce the morbidity and mortality rate in the emergency department.

#### Need of the study

At the emergency department, triage is an important process by which we categorize and prioritize patients as effective triage will assist in crowd reduction and appropriate patient management. The

response time of physician to each patient depends on the individual patient category. The "First Come, First Treated" principle is not followed in massemergencies. The annual number of road traffic deaths has reached 1.35 million as per the Global status report on road safety 2018, launched by WHO in December 2018 and the injuries of the road traffic accidents are now the leading killer of people aged between 5-29 years. To describe and benchmark the overall acuity of an individual emergency departments' case mix, the ratings of triage acuity is a useful data. It is possible only when every patient, despite the mode of arrival or location of triage (i.e. at the bedside) is assigned a triage level and when the emergency department is using a valid and reliable triage system. Triage is commonly a nursing assessment which begins when the patient is presented to the emergency department. The pivotal factor in the initiation of emergency care is the decision made by a triage nurse. The major influence on the health outcomes of patients is the accuracy of triage decision so triage nurses require advance clinical decision making expertise. There is an increasing requirement in health care delivery system to demonstrate and improve the quality of services. Triage is a complex health care activity and the achievement of best practice is based upon the education. Student nurses are considered as the primary building blocks of the future of triage system so the adequate education of these future triage practioners is a basic requirement. Also the equity of access for patients and bench marking of hospitals to inform opportunities for improving performance can be done by a consistent approach to triage throughout hospitals.

**Research problem:** A Descriptive study to assess the knowledge regarding emergency triage among student nurses in selected institutions, Jalandhar, Punjab.

#### Objectives

1. To assess the knowledge regarding emergency triage among student nurses.
2. To find out the association of knowledge regarding emergency triage with their selected socio demographic variables.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Investigator discussed the review of literature under following headings:

1. Section I: Literature related to prevalence of emergency department visits.
2. Section II: Literature related to knowledge regarding emergency triage.

## METHODOLOGY

**Research Approach:** Quantitative research approach was considered to be appropriate with an aim to assess the knowledge regarding emergency triage among student nurses.

**Research Design:** For the present study non experimental descriptive research design was used.

**Research Setting:** The study was conducted in Mahatma Hans Raj D. A.V Institute of Nursing and LalaLajpatRai Institute of Nursing Education, Jalandhar, Punjab.

**Sample and Sampling technique:** For conducting the present study, 100 student nurses in M.H.R D.A.V Institute of nursing and LalaLajpatRai Institute of Nursing Education, Jalandhar, Punjab were taken as sample. Non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to collect the sample.

**Data collection procedure:** Final data was collected in the month of February 2021 and March 2021 after getting administrative approval. Written permission was taken from the higher authority i.e. Principals of selected Nursing Institutions, Jalandhar. Purpose of the study was

explained to the sample and was assured about anonymity and confidentiality of the information provided by them and written consent was taken to participate in the study. Then 100 student nurses were selected by using non probability purposive sampling technique. Self-structured knowledge questionnaire was used to evaluate the knowledge regarding emergency triage among student nurses.

**Ethical consideration:** Ethical clearance was taken for the study from the institutional ethical committee. Permission from the college authority was taken. Informed and written consent was obtained from each participant. The anonymity and confidentiality of each participant were assured.

## RESULTS

### Section I: Description of socio-demographic variables

Most of the student nurses 79(79%) were in age group of 21-22 years, majority of the student nurses 97(97%) were females, 58(58%) student nurses were residents of urban area, 57(57%) student nurses were not having previous experience of participating in emergency triage, 81(81%) student nurses received information regarding emergency triage, 30 (38.04%) student nurses received information from curriculum and 81(81%) student nurses were not having any family member working in hospital.

**Objective I:** To assess the knowledge regarding emergency triage among student nurses. Mean knowledge score regarding emergency triage among student nurses was 20.16 ( $\pm 3.62$ ) with mean percentage of 50.4%. More than half of the student nurses 54(54%) were having average knowledge regarding emergency triage.

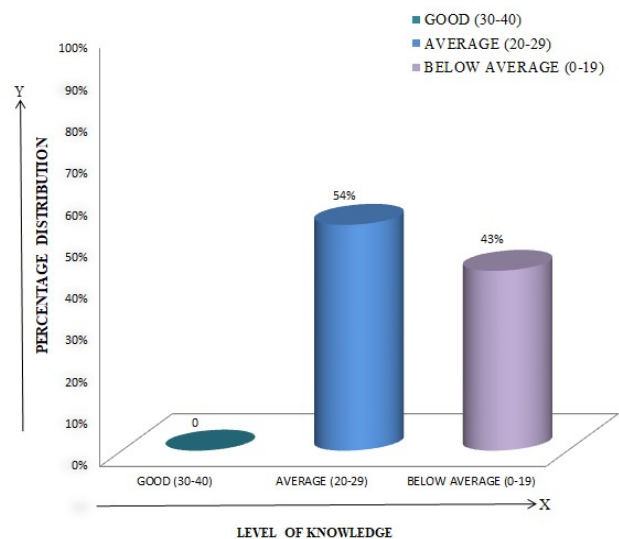


Figure 1. Percentage distribution of level of knowledge regarding emergency triage among student nurses

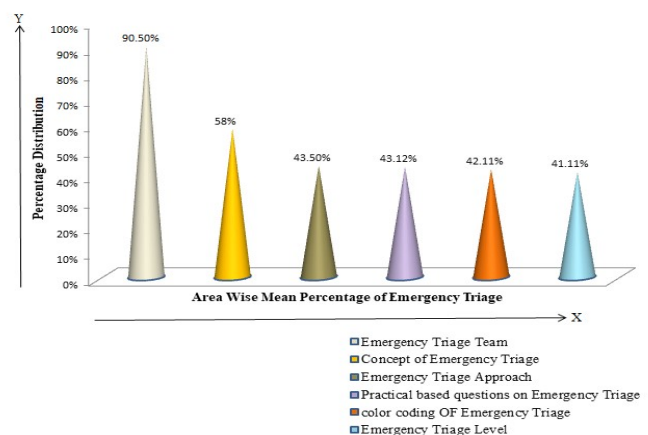


Figure 2. Area wise mean Percentage distribution of knowledge regarding emergency triage among student nurses

Figure 2 indicates about area wise mean knowledge and mean percentage regarding emergency triage among student nurses. It shows that mean knowledge scores regarding concept of Emergency Triage among student nurses was 8.12(58.00%), Emergency Triage team was 1.81(90.50%), Emergency Triage level was 1.25(41.67%), Emergency Triage approach was 1.74(43.50%), color coding of emergency triage was 3.79(42.11%) and practical based questions on emergency triage was 3.45(43.12%).

**Objective-II:** To find out the association of knowledge regarding emergency triage with their selected socio demographic variables. Association of knowledge score regarding emergency triage with their selected socio demographic variables such as age (12.83) and source of information received regarding emergency triage (10.28) was statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  level. Hence, it revealed that socio demographic variables such as age and source of information received regarding emergency triage had influence the knowledge of student nurses regarding emergency triage. Whereas association of knowledge score regarding emergency triage among student nurses with their socio-demographic variables such as gender, residence, previous experience of participating in emergency triage, received any information regarding emergency triage and any family member working in the hospital had calculated chi square value less than the table value which was found to be statistically non-significant at  $p < 0.05$  level.

## DISCUSSION

**Analysis of the 1st objective of the study** i.e to assess the knowledge regarding emergency triage among student nurses shows that the mean knowledge was 20.16 ( $\pm 3.62$ ) with mean percentage of 50.4%. As per level of knowledge more than half of the student nurses i.e. 54 (54%) were having average knowledge regarding emergency triage. These findings are consistent with a study conducted by Moirangthem D. (2019) in a selected hospital of Sikkim that maximum number of nurses was having average knowledge regarding emergency triage. Result revealed that 63% of the nurses were having average knowledge regarding emergency triage. These findings are consistent with a study conducted by Varghese E. (2012) in selected colleges at Bangalore that most of the student nurses were having an average knowledge regarding emergency triage. Results revealed that 46% were having average knowledge, 49% were having below average knowledge and 5% had good knowledge.

**Analysis of the 2<sup>nd</sup> objective of the study** i.e. to find out the association of knowledge regarding emergency triage among student nurses with their selected socio demographic variables shows that the association of knowledge score regarding emergency triage with their selected socio demographic variables such as age (12.83) and source of information received regarding emergency triage (10.28) was statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  level.

These findings are consistent with a study conducted by Varghese E. (2012) in selected colleges at Bangalore. The Chi square test was used to find the association between knowledge and selected demographic variables. The demographic variables such as age, years of study in nursing, previous participation experience were found to be insignificant.

## CONCLUSION

It was concluded from the findings of study that the student nurses had an average knowledge regarding emergency triage as measured by self-structured knowledge questionnaire and information booklet regarding emergency triage may increase the knowledge of student nurses.

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