

**KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF PSYCHIATRIC NURSES REGARDING
PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS' RIGHTS IN AL-AMAL PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS,
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ABSTRACT

Background: Although attention to human rights in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has been improving over the past decade, the human rights situation of persons with mental disorders is still far from satisfactory. **Objectives:** The aim of this study is to evaluate the nurses' knowledge and attitudes regarding psychiatric patient rights in Al-Amal psychiatric hospital in Riyadh City. **Methods:** A Descriptive cross-sectional hospital based study carried out among 100 nurses working in Al-Amal psychiatric hospitals, data were collected by using self-administer questionnaire which is contain 25 questions, regarding patient rights in form of (Agree, disagree, I don't know). It was analyzed by using SPSS version 21, and it displayed in tables. **Results:** Total 110 Participants, 100 (91%) of them completed the questionnaire. Majority of them have bachelor degree, and diploma nurse, and 71% were male and they have average of seven years experiences. Ninety percent of nurses stated that they had read legislation related to patients' rights. 100% of participants their mean score 2.79 indicate that they have a good knowledge and attitudes about patients' rights. **Conclusion:** Violation of patients' rights and health professionals' ignorance of appropriate practice means that there is an urgent need to reconsider how to approach this issue. However, human rights abuses persist, are widespread, and go essentially unremarked and unchallenged.

KEYWORDS: Patient's rights; nurses; Legal responsibilities, psychiatric, hospital, and knowledge.**INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this study was to assess the nurse's knowledge and attitudes about what the rights of hospitalized psychiatric patients should be. Specifically, we chose to assess nurses knowledge about the most prominent and controversial aspects of patients' rights that have been identified in the literature, including patients' right to obtain information about their illness and treatment, confidentiality rights, the right not to be subjected to treatment by force, the right to refuse treatment, the right not to be subjected to physical restrictions, and the right not to be hospitalized involuntarily and right of informed consent. From the observation in psychiatric hospitals in KSA, many psychiatric patients are violated and restrained during their hospitalization. Furthermore most of those patients are left alone in the wards, since the code of ethics protect them. From the facts mentioned previously; assessment of psychiatric nurse's knowledge and attitudes is very important to verify patients; rights, laws protecting their rights, providing appropriate nursing care, and improvement of the policy in psychiatric institutions.

A dictionary defines the right as "that which is due to anyone by just claim." The most common power full concept of the practice of modern medicine is the recognition that patient has human rights. Respect for this rights can transform the nurse- patient relationship from one categorized by authoritarianism to a partnership and simultaneously improve the quality and medical care. The increasing sophistication of medical technology has tended to distance the care givers from the patient and to make the hospital alien and alienating environment. By demanding that patient be treated as unique human being, the recognition of patients' rights in health care can humanize both the hospital and encounter with physician and other health care professional.

Psychiatric patients' rights are similar to those of any other type of patient. Psychiatric patients may be seen in outpatient care, intensive outpatient programs, residential or inpatient hospital settings.^[1] There are some basic rights for mental health patients that are focused on preserving the autonomy, dignity, respect, safety and privacy of the patient.^[2]

People with mental disorders have the same human rights as everyone else. Because they are a particularly vulnerable group, countries have a responsibility to take action to protect them from discrimination.^[3]

Different aspects of the relationships between midwives or nurses and patients have been under scrutiny in a manner paralleling that of relationships between patients and physicians.^[2,3,4,5] New developments in medical technology can have a profound impact on patients' rights.^[2,5] Global developments impacting on social, economic, cultural, political and ethical affairs have also affected our understanding of what is meant by 'human rights'. However, the fundamental reason for the importance attached to patients' rights, and the corresponding increase in legislation, is that respecting patients' rights is an essential part of providing good health care.^[6,7,8]

Unfortunately the situation of persons with mental disorders in KSA is still far from satisfactory from a human rights perspective. Even basic mental health services are not available in many parts of the country. Many people with mental illness have no access to treatment. Primary health services do not have mental health as a priority and the skills of primary health clinicians are not sufficient to ensure detection and appropriate treatment of mental disorder. Some persons with mental illness are confined and restrained in the community^[9] in inhumane ways.

A person can be brought to hospital without his or her consent by anybody who feels uneasy about the person's behavior. There are no guardianship laws or arrangements and there is no requirement for legal review of the need for involuntary hospitalization and treatment. As in many developing countries, standards of care are poor and, failure to protect the basic human rights of people with mental illness is common.^[10]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is a descriptive Survey Approach (cross sectional) study was conducted in Al-Amal Psychiatric Hospital, Riyadh City. The sample were taken from trained nurses working in Al-Amal Psychiatric hospitals by random sampling technique, the samples were drawn by proportionate method, which was 100 participants in size.

Questionnaire was used to collect information regarding socio demographic variables and level of knowledge of patient's rights among nurses. To measure the level of attitude, the semantic differential scale based upon a seven-point rating scale was used.

The initial draft of the information booklet was given to 8 nursing experts who were involved in direct patient care. The experts were requested to validate the information booklet. The suggestions of experts and the

guide were incorporated and the information booklet was modified and finalized.

Data Collection

100 samples that fulfilled the inclusive criteria were selected by random Sampling technique (proportionate method). The nurses were divided into certified nurse, Diploma nurses, and B.Sc nurses. The samples were drawn by proportionate method (by using SPSS for windows version 17). On selection of the study subject, a brief introduction about the self was given to the subjects followed by detailed explanations regarding the purpose of the study and expectations from the nurses during the data collection were informed. The Informed consent was obtained in written form and the confidentiality of the responses was assured.

Research questions

- Are Al-Amal's psychiatric nurses having a good knowledge about psychiatric patient's rights?
- Are Al-Amal's psychiatric nurses experience a positive attitudes about psychiatric patient's rights?

RESULTS

Study was conducted by Alton and Eros in Indonesia among first year and final year students at a school of nursing and midwifery. Almost all of these students stated that access to health care should be a right for all individuals^[11]. In the present study, 89% of the participants working in hospitals claimed that they already read of the legal basis of patients' rights in KSA. These findings indicate a high percentage of awareness of patients' rights among nurses in study area. But paradoxically this was not reflected by this study in their attitude and knowledge which this may raise doubt about the fact that they have read about the subject. But this not acceptable by the WHO recommendations, suggests continuing courses program regarding patient's rights should help in improving patient's care and it's mandatory to upgrades nurses because the majority of participants in present study their educational level considered as low grading (diploma nurse) .

A similar study was conducted in Turkey and interestingly they found that there is 50% to 59% of study population has a moderate (fair) knowledge about psychiatric patients' rights,^[12] whereas in our study their mean score 2.79 indicate that they have a good knowledge about psychiatric patients' rights. (Table 2).

Of the 110 nurses who were given questionnaires, 100 completed the forms correctly, answered nearly all the questions and returned the forms. Their answers were computerized and analyzed using SPSS version 21, a descriptive statistic was done for the following: nurses' gender, level of education, reading legislation about patient's rights, and years of experiences. And study showed these results

As shown below the majority of participants, were male (71%) and 29% were female. The participants had an average of seven years of service in the health profession range from 6 to 10 years. Amazingly 60% of them have a Bachelor degree and the remaining 35% diploma of them

they need to upgrade themselves to ensure the quality care that they provided to their patients. Apparently 90% of them they had reading about the patient's rights laws and legislation before or during their entire practices (Table 1).

Table 1: Demographic data of the participants in Al-Amal psychiatric hospital – Riyadh.

Particulars	N-100	(%)
Gender		
Male	71	71%
Female	29	29%
Level of Education		
Certificate	0	-
Diploma in Nursing	35	35%
Bachelor in Nursing	60	60%
Post- graduate	5	5%
Years of Experience		
1-5 years	33	33%
6-10 years	57	57%
10 years and above	10	10%
Reading legislation and laws about patient's right		
Yes	89	89%
No	11	11%

Legend; *f- frequency*

%- percentage

N- population

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The participants had an average of seven years of service in the health profession range from 6 to 10 years.

Table 2: Responses.

No.	Item	Mean	De
1	Does the patient have a right to get an explanation about his/her problem and condition?	2.81	SA
2	Does the patient have a right to receive an explanation about different ways and methods of treatment?	2.87	SA
3	Does the patient have a right to receive an explanation about medications received?	2.88	SA
4	Does the patient need an explanation about his/her chances for healing and recovery?	2.78	SA
5	Does the patient have a right to know the prescribed plan by his/her doctor?	2.89	SA
6	Does the therapist have a right to disclose patient's information to legal authorities without the patient's consent?	2.79	SA
7	Does the therapist have a right to disclose patient's information to patient's employee without the patient's consent?	2.67	SA
8	Does the therapist have a right to disclose patient's information to road traffic authority without the patient's consent?	2.7	SA
9	Does the therapist have a right to disclose patient's information to his/her mate without the patient's consent?	2.69	SA
10	Can the therapist share patient's information with confidence with other medical staff members?	2.8	SA
11	Should staff members report any intentions to harm patients to their line manager?	2.74	SA
12	Can the therapist give medications by force to patients?	2.81	SA
13	Is it acceptable to use physical restraint methods for psychiatric patients?	2.83	SA
14	Does the patient have a right to choose the type of medications during his/her hospitalization?	2.71	SA
15	Does the patient have a right to decide about continuity of psychotherapy?	2.79	SA
16	Is it allowed for medical staff to use strapping or straitjackets to treat hospitalized patients?	2.8	SA
17	Does the patient have the right to refuse participation in certain ward activities?	2.79	SA
18	Does the patient have a right to be served even neglects him/herself physically?	2.81	SA

19	Does the patient have a right to be hospitalized even against his/her willing after a serious suicide attempt?	2.82	SA
20	Does the patient have a right to determine his/her discharge plan from the hospital?	2.8	SA
21	Does the patients have a right to be prevented from going home on leave if it is believed their mental condition is not appropriate?	2.83	SA
22	Should patients stick to ward's rules such as time of awakening, eating, proper behavior, and rules about in and out of hospital?	2.81	SA
23	Are there circumstances under which the patient has a right to be prevented from having visitors?	2.83	SA
24	Does the patient have a right to participate in his/her treatment plan?	2.83	SA
25	Does the patient have a right to signing the informed consent before any interventions?	2.75	SA
	Grand Mean	2.79	SA

Legend: *DE- Descriptive Equivalent

SA- Strongly Agree A- Agree IDK- I don't Know

Table 3: Guides for Interpretation.

Relative Value	Statistical Range	Theme DR
3	2.34 – 3.00	Strongly Agree
2	1.67 – 2.33	Agree
1	1 – 1.66	I don't Know

DISCUSSION

Nearly all of the participants in the present study were aware that every individual has the right to access all forms of information and explanation regarding their problems and (Agree and their mean score 2.81), ways and method of treatment (Agree and their mean score 2.81) medications received (Agree and their mean score 2.88), and their chances of healing and recovery (Agree and their mean score 2.78) (Table 2). Altun and Ersoy reported that 72% of the nurses in their study stated that patients have the right to know the truth about their condition, and nearly all of them stated that patients have the right to participate in decisions affecting their care.^[13] This is in accordance with the findings of the present study.

Informed consent now a day is a common practice before any procedure and treatment administration it should be mentioned that the practice of signing and consent form has been recently introduced in hospitals and this explained the high response rate, in the present study, 2.75 in mean score of the participants answered the questions related to obtaining informed consent correctly. This rate was maintained at the public hospitals, similar to the finding of another study carried out among physicians.^[5]

Access to health services is the basic human right In Indonesia, as in many other countries, access to mental health services is far from adequate for most of the population. A study by Heriani et al showed the long duration of untreated psychosis and a complex pathway to treatment of person with schizophrenia as a product of lack of access to mental health service due to the lack of mental health programs in primary health centers and the lack of other community based services. Other examples of violation of the rights of people with mental illness include insufficient and poor quality treatment and care

in mental hospitals, the use of unmodified ECT, isolation and sometimes restraint of patients in hospital beds, the routine locking of hospital wards at night.^[14] In this study 2.83 mean score with high response from participants they had been using physical restraint methods for patients think that it is the right method to treat the patients especially violent one, which is consider a form of violation toward patient according to the WHO recommendations.

Disclosing patient information by the therapist or health care provider to authority, patients' mate, and employee without the patient consent was another form of patient violation. Regarding these question only apparently 2.65 mean score of participants answered correctly and this percent considered low regarding this right and this negative indicator for the violating the patient's right in the future. The investigator refer that to their age and level of education, (Table 2), Study in Lahore (Pakistan) , showed that informed consent and confidentiality were better practiced in private hospital compared with public one, also it present a poor knowledge about mental illness and negative attitude toward people with mental illness which is widespread in general public,^[15] In this study the researcher found that participants answered correctly regarding informed consent as a right of patient and this is a high percent, but regarding patient confidentiality almost few of them were aware about this issue.

Regarding hospital leave and discharge, almost of participants thought that a patients have a right to participate in wards activities, stick to wards rules like eating times, awaking time, and appropriate behavior, prevented from having a visitors in case of unstable condition, right to be served, and right to determine his discharge plan with staff members. Regarding reporting of any intention to harm patients to their direct manger,

2.74 mean score of them answered that this is the most important patient's right with agree response.

Regarding patient right to treatment and participation in treatment plan: 2.89 mean score of them said the patient have a right to know his prescribed plan by doctor, and only 2.83 was scored in the patient right to participate in his treatment plan. Another score was observed regarding the knowledge of the type of medications; nurses thought that patient shouldn't have this right because of their mental illness and the risk of destroying the medications.

According to the literature the rights of hospitalized psychiatric patients is considered as a very important issue, interestingly this study gave finding which support these statement, more training and workshops needed to explain and keep the psychiatric patient right and respect him as a human being. Also upgrading and continuously evaluation of psychiatric nurse is a mandatory things to increase their level of knowledge, more legislations and laws were needed to practice and improved these rights.

As observed in the literature examining nurses' knowledge regarding the psychiatric patients' rights; the situation is different and varies by country. The value of psychiatric patients' rights cannot be overemphasized, while there are many studies published investigating the issue of knowledge, practice coverage, since it is locally needed to further investigation of nurses' knowledge.

There has been much debate about the benefits and risks of various interventions and the extent to which psychiatric patients have the capacity to evaluate these interventions and thus maintain the right to be active in choosing and planning their treatment.^[16]

Study on midwives and nurses awareness of patients' rights was conducted in Turkey: (2007- 2008) on 500 midwives and nurses. It concluded that; violation of patients' rights and health professionals' ignorance of appropriate knowledge and practice means that there is an urgent need to reconsider how to approach this issue (knowledge about patients' rights. 50% to 59% of study population have a moderate knowledge about psychiatric patients' rights and 77% of them have a mild knowledge regarding treated a patient in safe environment. It included that the continuing education programmers at both graduate and postgraduate midwifery and nursing schools, and also demands more research.^[17]

Study in Israel (2006) regarding attitudes of staff and patients regarding psychiatric patient rights are compared. Patients were less likely than staff to express the view that involuntary hospitalization, the use of force or physical restrictions, or the compromise of confidentiality is justified. This study was present that; 85% of nurses have a partial knowledge regarding confidentiality and security in treatment for the patients.^[18]

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) Code of Ethics for nurses was first adopted in 1953 and has been revised several times. According to the ICN Code, nurses have four fundamental responsibilities: 'to promote health, to prevent illness, to restore health and to alleviate suffering'.^[19]

The World Health Organization published a detailed document ('A Declaration on the Promotion of Patients' Rights in Europe') stating the principles and strategies of patients' rights in Amsterdam (28–29 March 1994). Finland (1992), The Netherlands, Israel, Lithuania (1996), Denmark (1998), Norway (2000) and France (2002). All drawn up legislation covering patients' rights were documented very detailed body written by: World Medical Association, 1991; Declaration on the Promotion of Patient's Rights in Europe, 1994; Francois et al, 2003; Patients' Rights Laws in Europe, 2004; and (The ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses, 2006).^[20]

Declaration of Helsinki (1964), World Medical Association – 1953 Interprets Nuremberg Principles for research that involves patients who are receiving medical care. Some risks justified by "potential therapeutic or diagnostic value for the patient". Article II.6 In case of legal incompetence, informed consent should be obtained from legal guardian permission Article 1.11 review of research by an independent review committee.

A cross sectional study was conducted in general medical out patients of two hospital of Lahore (Pakistan) during the period: March to May(2008) – one hospital from the public sector while the other from the private sector, study focused on the principles of informed consent, confidentiality and privacy. It concluded that informed consent and confidentiality were better practiced in private compared to the public and the poor knowledge about mental illness and negative attitudes toward people with mental illness is widespread in the general public.^[21]

A survey by Dharmono et al showed that people with mental illness experienced aggressive and violent behavior even by hospital staff. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.^[22]

Access to health services is the basic human right. In Indonesia, as in many other countries, access to mental health services is far from adequate for most of the population. A study by Heriani et al showed the long duration of untreated psychosis and a complex pathway to treatment of person with schizophrenia as a product of lack of access to mental health service due to the lack of mental health programs in primary health centers and the lack of other community based services. Other examples of violation of the rights of people with mental illness include insufficient and poor quality treatment and care

in mental hospitals, the use of unmodified ECT, isolation and sometimes restraint of patients in hospital beds, the routine locking of hospital wards at 5 pm.^[20-22]

CONCLUSION

This hospital based cross sectional study, it was conducted in Al-Amal psychiatric hospitals in 2016 - 2017 to assess the psychiatric nurse's knowledge and attitudes regarding the patient's rights, it involved 100 nurses chosen, most of them their education level were Bachelor and diploma nurse, In this study most answers of the respondents in regards to their knowledge and attitudes were satisfactory mean score and considered as a good attitudes and knowledge regarding psychiatric patient's rights. Significant differences were observed in nurse's answers regarding disclosing information to the authority without patient's consent compared with their experiences and qualification. Violation of patients' rights and health professionals' ignorance of appropriate practice means that there is an urgent need to reconsider how to approach this issue. However, human rights abuses persist, are widespread, and go essentially unremarked and unchallenged. Upgrading the nurses staff worked in the study area was recommended in the study. Finally, the researcher conclude that the nurses in Al-Amal psychiatric hospital have a good knowledge and attitudes regarding patient's rights and this is answered the research questions asked above.

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