ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND- Ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP) is the most common nosocomial infectious complication among patients on mechanical ventilation in intensive care units. On an average 10% of patients are said to have pneumonia- VAP in majority of cases. It is defined as a pneumonia which occurs in people who are intubated and on mechanical ventilation that was not present at the time of admission to hospital or that occurs 48 hours after, through an endotracheal or tracheotomy. There are various strategies or guidelines that are developed to prevent VAP.

OBJECTIVE: To evaluate the effectiveness of ventilator associated pneumonia prevention protocol in ICU’s by assessing the knowledge and practices of the nurses.

METHODS AND MATERIALS- A quasi experimental study with one group pre- test post-test design study was conducted on 150 adult intensive care nurses. The data was obtained using a self-administered questionnaire and standardised observational checklist to elicit responses on their knowledge, practices and self-reported practices in prevention of VAP. The consent was taken prior to administering the questionnaire and the data after coding was analysed using SPSS version 17 for descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS: Out of 150 staff nurses, 108 (72%) were females, 73 (51.3%) had diploma and 74(49.3%) were in the age group of 25-29 years. Majority of ICU nurses, 36% had more than 5 years of experience (61.2%), 29.3% were from General ICU and 57% had no ICU training. Among the nurses, 57.33% scored between 51-75% indicating good knowledge in the pre-test scores, while only 46.66% had excellent practice scores. A highly significant difference was found between the overall pre-test and post-test knowledge mean scores, observed practices and self-reported practices indicating that the VAP prevention protocol was effective. The association between pre-test knowledge and demographic variables (age, years of experience, ICU training, type of ICU) was found to be statistically significant. There was a statistically significant association between the observed practices and demographic variables like gender, age, years of experience, ICU training and type of ICU. Similarly, the association between self-reported practice with age, years of experience, ICU training, type of ICU was found to be statistically significant.

CONCLUSION: The study reveals that majority of nurses working in the Intensive Care Units had inadequate knowledge and practice related to VAP prevention guidelines. The VAP prevention protocol implementation was effective in improving the knowledge and practices of nurses in ICU.

Key words: knowledge, practice, self-reported practices, Intensive care unit, Ventilator associated pneumonia, protocol.