

Knowledge Of Nursing Students About The Human Papillomavirus Infection

RESUMO | Objetivo: objetivo identificar o conhecimento dos acadêmicos de enfermagem relacionados à temática do Papiloma Vírus Humano. Método: Trata-se de um estudo descritivo com abordagem quantitativa, desenvolvida em uma faculdade de cunho privado. Participaram da pesquisa ocorrida no período de setembro de 2022 um total de 156 acadêmicos de enfermagem. Resultados: O estudo demonstrou que 70,5% (110) dos alunos são mulheres, fato este que demonstra ser uma realidade na profissão. Diante dos questionamentos sobre Papiloma Vírus Humano, 94,9% (148) afirmaram que o Papiloma Vírus Humano é uma infecção sexualmente transmissível, ainda assim afirmaram em sua maioria que as mulheres são público alvo do vírus, como também, confirmam que é através do contato com lesões 42,3% (107) que o vírus é transmitido. Conclusão: Dessa forma, após avaliações dos dados obtidos foi possível notar que os acadêmicos ao se matricularem na faculdade já possuem conhecimentos empíricos e ao passarem pelas disciplinas na universidade esse conhecimento tornam-se científicos.

Descritores: Acadêmicos de Enfermagem; Enfermagem; Papiloma Vírus Humano.

ABSTRACT | Objective: To identify the knowledge of nursing students related to the Human Papilloma Virus theme. Method: This is a descriptive study with a quantitative approach, developed in a private college. A total of 156 nursing students participated in the research that occurred in the period of September 2022. Results: The study showed that 70.5% (110) of the students are women, a fact that demonstrates that this is a reality in the profession. When asked about Human Papilloma Virus, 94.9% (148) said that the Human Papilloma Virus is a sexually transmitted infection, yet they mostly said that women are the target of the virus, as well as confirm that it is through contact with lesions that 42.3% (107) that the virus is transmitted. Conclusion: Thus, after evaluating the data obtained, it was possible to notice that when the students enrolled in college they already have empirical knowledge, and by going through the disciplines at the university this knowledge becomes scientific.

Keywords: Nursing Students; Nursing; Human Papilloma Virus.

RESUMEN | Objetivo: Identificar los conocimientos de los estudiantes de enfermería relacionados con el tema Virus del Papiloma Humano. Método: Se trata de un estudio descriptivo con abordaje cuantitativo, desarrollado en una facultad privada. Participaram da pesquisa ocorrida no período de setembro de 2022 um total de 156 acadêmicos de enfermagem. Resultados: El estudio mostró que el 70,5% (110) de los estudiantes son mujeres, un hecho que demuestra ser una realidad en la profesión. Frente a las preguntas sobre el Virus del Papiloma Humano, 94,9% (148) dijeron que el Virus del Papiloma Humano es una infección de transmisión sexual, sin embargo, en su mayoría dijeron que las mujeres son el público objetivo del virus, así como confirmar que es a través del contacto con las lesiones 42,3% (107) que el virus se transmite. Conclusión: Así, después de evaluar los datos obtenidos, fue posible notar que los alumnos matriculados en la facultad ya poseen conocimientos empíricos y al pasar por las disciplinas en la universidad estos conocimientos se tornan científicos.

Palabras claves: Estudiantes de Enfermería; Enfermería; Virus del Papiloma Humano.

Ana Luiza Linhares Beserra Machado

Student – Federal University of Ceará
ORCID: 0000-0002-7585-9739.

Dilene Fontinele Catunda Melo

Professor at Princesa do Oeste College
ORCID: 0000-0001-9525-9389.

Matheus Gomes Andrade

Nurse – Princesa do Oeste College
ORCID: 0000-0002-2474-7542.

Francisca Nellie de Paula Melo

PhD – Professor at Princesa do Oeste College
ORCID: 0000-0002-4082-3429.

Francisco Arlysson da Silva Veríssimo

Professor at Princesa do Oeste College
ORCID: 0000-0001-8829-969X.

Rosângela Souza Cavalcante

Professor at Princesa do Oeste college
ORCID: 0000-0001-8267-5674.

Lidiana Ximenes Servulo Moreira Lima

Professor at Princesa do Oeste college
ORCID: 0000-0001-9948-5084.

Amanda Luiza Marinho Feitosa

Attending Master's degree – F. University of Ceará
ORCID: 0000-0003-2182-7333.

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INTRODUCTION

The human papilloma virus (HPV) is a virus of the Papilloma-viridae family, with double-stranded circular DNA and a genome of 7,900 base pairs. The types are divided into low and high oncogenic risk, according to the potential to induce pre-neoplastic and neoplastic lesions¹.

Its relevance was consolidated when its association with cervical cancer was

discovered, which is currently considered to be the cause of virtually 100% of cases².

According to Pedrosa³, the virus is considered extremely contagious, and its transmission is through skin-to-skin contact or with the infected mucosa. Thus, the main means of infection is through sex, which includes oral-genital, genital-genital, or even manual-genital contact.

According to the survey by the National Cancer Institute (INCA), the number of new cases of cervical cancer in Brazil, in the 2020-2022 period, amounts to a total of 16,590 occurrences against 16,370 in the 2018-2019 biennium. The numbers reveal a lower incidence of the disease in recent years⁴.

Thus, having knowledge that the human papilloma virus is transmitted mainly through sexual contact, its carcinogenic

potential, the existence of vaccines and preventive measures in sexual intercourse and the pap smear test for the detection of lesions in lighter stages are important allies for the knowledge of young people.

Currently, the Ministry of Health vaccinates women up to 45 years of age and men up to 26 years of age diagnosed with cancer, immunosuppression, living with HIV/AIDS and transplant recipients⁵.

The attribution of the nurse, given the context of the population's illness, is related to the promotion, prevention, screening, treatment and support of qualified listening for those infected by the virus. In this perspective, the professional makes significant contributions from the perspective of disease control, by inserting practices aimed at surveillance and social participation into their daily work, which may be health education on vaccination and prevention of sexually transmitted infections⁶.

HPV and its clinical, social and prognostic reverberations constitute a topic of paramount importance in the academic environment of the health area, since it is at the university that the professionals responsible for transmitting information to the population are trained⁷.

Therefore, academics, mainly in nursing, must have knowledge about certain subjects in the area, such as, for example, vaccinations against human papilloma virus and the disease. This knowledge, acquired during graduation and disseminated, as training requires aptitude to work in the promotion, prevention and treatment of pathology⁸.

Among the strategies used to promote critical and reflective teaching, simulation in its different modalities has been the most used, followed by problem-based education with emphasis on Problem-Based Learning and clinical case studies⁹.

The magnitude of presenting to the scientific community how the knowledge and perceptions of future nursing professionals are, demonstrates the importance of prevention and education of the population, contributing to the reduction of infection and cervical cancer.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive research with a quantitative approach, in which data collection and analysis instruments seek to identify characteristics of a population, phenomenon or establish a relationship between variants. According to Nascimento¹⁰, the main objective of descriptive research is to describe the characteristics of a given population or phenomenon.

The study addresses the investigation through a validated and structured questionnaire with academics from the Bachelor of Nursing course from the first to the tenth semester of a private institution located in the city of Crateús Ceará. The research was submitted to the Ethics and Research Committee (CEP) of Santa Casa de Misericórdia de Sobral, through Plataforma Brasil, obtaining approval under Opinion N° 5.393.335. Just as it was authorized by the Private Faculty through a Term of Consent.

The research sought to list the knowledge acquired by students throughout their personal, school and academic life, in addition to disclosing the main difficulties faced in this regard, as well as knowing the academic profile of undergraduate nursing students.

RESULTS

It is evident that the nursing profession has historically been occupied mostly by women, this fact can be considered because the precursor of nursing was a woman, Florence Nightingale.

The sample characterization data of the students show that 88.5% (138 students) are aged between 18 and 30 years old, from 30 to 40 years old 17 students (10.9%) and over 40 years old 1 student (0.6%). Women represent 70.5% (110 students) and men 26.9% (42 students). In the self-declared color by the participants, the white race was selected by 62 students (39.7%), brown 35.9% (56 students), yellow 18 students (11.5%),

black 17 students (7.3%), Indigenous 2 students (1.3%) and 1 student did not answer (0.6%).

As for the representation of the semester attended by the students who participated in the research, 17 students (10.9%) from the 1st semester, 32 students (20.5%) from the 2nd semester, 13 students (8.3%) from the 3rd semester, 16 students (10.3%) from the 4th semester, 11 (7.1%) students from the 5th semester, 19 students (12.2%) from the 6th semester, 8 students (5.1%) from the 7th semester, 21 (13.5%) students from the 8th semester, 11 students (7.1%) from the 9th semester and 8 students (5.1%) from the 10th semester. Showing that the majority who participated are from the 2nd semester of nursing and occupying the smallest participations from the 7th and 10th semester of nursing. It can be seen, therefore, that the classes are larger in the first semesters than in the last semester of college.

Related to the discipline of Women's Health, at the faculty in question, it is present in the curricular matrix of the 6th and 7th semesters, currently being divided as Women's Health I and Women's Health II.

Considering the mentioned periods, the means that obtained knowledge about human papillomaviruses were investigated. More common statements are available in other questionnaires already applied. The purpose of this stage is to identify which are the places where students have access to health information and still identify whether classes have participation in this information.

At first, it was investigated whether the academic considered that he had knowledge about the subject, thus, 133 students (85.3%) considered that yes, they had knowledge and 13 students (8.3%) did not know how to answer. 3% reported that they acquired knowledge about the human papilloma virus through the internet.

About the infection, 5 people (3.2%) indicated that the human papilloma virus is not considered a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI), as well as 1 person (0.6%) indicated that he did not

know how to respond.

Regarding the forms of transmission of the HPV virus, 5 different options were available for the student to indicate which one is considered as a form of transmission of the human papilloma virus, and more than one could be chosen. Of these, 107 students (42.3%) indicated that it can be transmitted through contact with lesions.

When questioned about transmission of the virus through pregnancy, 68 people (46.3%) answered that yes, transmission is possible. Even more, 50 people (31.2%) said they did not know whether such transmission could occur. It should be noted that transmission can occur through childbirth, and transmission during pregnancy has not yet been proven.

Regarding the knowledge of academics about vaccination for the protection of some specific genotypes of the human papilloma virus, 148 students, that is, more than 92%, stated that they knew about the existence of vaccines for adolescents and 5 students, totaling less than 6%, stated that they did not know about the existence of vaccines. 49 students (31.4%) said that coverage happens with 3 doses, and 64 (41%) said it was 2 doses and only 9 students (5.8%) said 1 dose of the vaccine.

In addition, when asked about screening tests, 62.2% of respondents reported that the Papanicolaou test should be performed every 3 years and is available free of charge through the Unified Health System. In addition, when asked "Are they risk factors for human papillomavirus infection: risk behavior such as multiple partners and early sexual life?", 3.8% said no and 5.8% did not know how to answer, while 141 (90.4%) answered the question correctly, indicating yes.

Alternating the context of the question, it was asked "The ways of preventing HPV are: The use of condoms during sexual intercourse, not having multiple partners, periodic examinations (women) and vaccination according to the vaccination schedule?" there are a total of 144 (92.2%) who answered yes, getting it right, and only

4.5% said no.

The next questions are related to demonstrating the more specific knowledge that professionals working in the health area, especially in nursing, must know in order to be able to provide care, aiming at promoting, protecting and teaching the population, especially young people.

In this sense, 108 students (69.2%) stated that the human papillomavirus virus is the necessary cause of cervical cancer and is related to a variable percentage of other neoplasms in people, and 34 students stated that they did not know if the statement is correct. 125 participants (80.1%) confirmed that the professional nurse has the competence to perform the Papanicolaou exam and the federal nursing council supports their practice.

Of the interviewees, 128 (82.1%) confirmed that the exam is carried out in the nursing consultation following the PNAISM and 101 (64.7%) stated that professionals with only a bachelor's degree and qualifications can perform the exam. If the following question to the participants "Can and should the nurse carry out health education practices inside and outside the offices for patients and the community in order to reduce contamination rates by STIs?" The result was that 135 participants (86.5%) answered yes and 2 (1.3%) said no.

Finally, 97 students (62.2%) confirm that cervical cancer is a preventable disease, which can be eradicated if the HPV virus is controlled. Of course, for this to be consolidated, the population must be informed about all the mechanisms available in the SUS, such as preventive examinations, vaccines, and condoms.

DISCUSSION

Using the questionnaire, learning potential of nursing students was perceived and analyzing the data obtained and comparing them with other studies, it was possible to observe variables among the data. Considering working professionals and

academics from other institutions.

It is evident in advertisements, experiences, and generations that the nursing profession is mostly occupied by women. Since the nursing sector has always contributed to the feminization of health. However, from the 20th century onwards, it is possible to notice a growth of men in the profession, because according to a survey by COFEN (Conselho Federal de Enfermagem), carried out with nurses registered in the country, it shows that more than 55 thousand men (13.4%) and 86.2% are women¹¹.

Comparing the question of race among college students with the research carried out by COFEN with nurses, it is shown that the majority declare themselves as white, with 57.9% more than 240 thousand nurses¹¹.

In a survey carried out at the University of the Interior of the State of São Paulo with nursing students, 82.4% of first-year students stated that they had knowledge about HPV and 95.5% of final-year students also stated the same⁸.

Taking into account the research carried out on the same subject with nursing students, it can be said that students have more knowledge than the general population. Demonstrating that this knowledge can be obtained from the beginning of graduation.

According to Carvalho¹², the main form of transmission of HPV is sexual activity, and it can occur in any form. Being still considered a sexually transmitted infection more common among society¹³. Confirming that most students were right to say yes.

It is true that this fact is still present in the population due to the lack of coverage of male and female condoms, the non-use of the same and the low demand by adolescents for the vaccine.

Currently in Brazil, the vaccine schedule is two doses with an interval of 6 to 12 months, and it is not possible to apply it to people over 14 years old. In relation to the risks of contamination, this interval

is insignificant, moreover, research shows that covering a dose is already significant for prevention¹⁴. Noting that a minority of academics were right in stating that the coverage is 3 doses.

In a survey carried out with nursing students at a public college in the interior of São Paulo, they found that 71.4% of first-year students knew that the vaccine prevents cervical cancer and 11% said they did not⁸.

In agreement with Silv¹⁵, it is recognized that the multiplicity of partners, called risky sexual behavior and the precocity of the onset of sexual life is a risk factor for the infection of the virus. Even more, if you take into account the vaccination strategy in the country against the virus, thus making the risks more evident. It is clear that throughout the research that the human papilloma virus can be transmitted through sexual secretions, in this way, the use of the barrier method only in the act of penetration facilitates the contagion, in this way, the use must be right at the beginning of the act.

Considering the Regional Nursing Council 15 on the practice of carrying out the exam, this practice is exclusive to the nurse, since the exam procedure requires technical and scientific competence to identify cell modifications and decision-making to improve a pathological or symptomatologic condition that the patient will present. Currently, through this exam, it is possible to identify cervical cancer, lesions, infections such as Gardnerella Vaginalis, Trichomoniasis, Candidiasis, as well as to perceive sexually transmitted infections Syphilis, Gonorrhea, Condylomatosis, Chlamydia and Chancroid. Confirming that the academics were right when they stated that the nurse can perform the practice.

CONCLUSION

From the results found in the research, it is concluded that upon reaching graduation, students have some knowledge about the subject, but with entry into the institution, knowledge becomes more ground-

ded in scientific literature. What is already expected, taking into account that it is an important topic for the entire population.

In this way, the socio-demographic profile of the students was identified through the research, the place where the academics have access to information, the specific knowledge about the nursing performance against the HPV virus, the scientific knowledge of the subject, the importance and execution Pap smear and HPV vaccination.

At the same time, it was noted the importance of an institution in the students' learning process and how nursing plays an educator role in society. The potentialities identified about the knowledge of academics related to the Human Papilloma Virus is growth as a professional, in addition, because most questions are answered correctly, demonstrating scientific knowledge. It is observed that the students are able to act before the population with health education, nursing consultation and the preventive examination procedure. 🐦

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