



## **EFFECTIVENESS OF A PLANNED TEACHING PROGRAMME ON KNOWLEDGE OF CARETAKERS REGARDING CARE OF ELDERLY**

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### **Abstract**

**Background:** Old age is the normal aspect of human development and is the final phase of life cycle. Family carers face practical problems related to caring techniques of elderly. As the geriatric population is increasing with increasing health demands, it is necessary for the caretaker to gain knowledge on care of elderly.

**Methods:** A quantitative approach using pre experimental one group pre test post test design was used in the study. Sixty caretakers of the elderly were selected by purposive sampling based on inclusion criteria. A structured interview schedule was used to elicit baseline variables and pre-test knowledge scores from the subjects. A planned teaching programme on care of elderly was given on one-to-one basis. Post-test was conducted on the fifth day after the intervention. The data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics

**Results:** *The mean post-test score (20.75±2.909) was significantly higher than the mean pre-test score (14.75±3.07) which was statistically significant at (p<0.001). The mean difference of knowledge scores had no significant association with baseline variables except for income which was significant (p<0.05).*

**Conclusion:** The study findings revealed that Planned Teaching Programme was effective in improving the knowledge of caretakers on elderly care.

**Key words:** Effectiveness, Planned Teaching Programme, elderly care, knowledge



## **INTRODUCTION**

Old age is a normal aspect of human development and is the final phase of the life cycle. It involves physiological, pathological, psychological and social changes that interact to influence behaviour and adaptation to environment.<sup>1</sup> According to WHO the number of people aged 65 years or older is projected to grow from estimated 524 million in 2010 to nearly 1.5 billion in 2050 with most of the increase in developing countries. At home, a family caregiver is the one who usually takes care of the aged person.<sup>2</sup> Providing health care is an activity that requires knowledge, competences and skills, and, within this context, the family caregiver needs to adapt and deal with the changes that occur in the life of the aged individual.<sup>3</sup> Family carers face practical problems related to caring technique, and lack of adequate knowledge to carry out the care giving responsibility.<sup>4</sup> Informal caregivers are coping with difficulties which could be relieved by education and assistance from professional health care workers.<sup>5</sup> A lack of competent caregiver support services and a lack of education about available resources may also influence care giving trends.<sup>6</sup>

By constant and continuous utilization of educational methods, it has become possible to remove the deep rooted attitudes, perceptions and misconceptions that were determined towards health of elderly. Strategies of different types have been evolved and implemented with a view to achieve awareness. One among them is a teaching programme.<sup>7</sup> As the ever salient feature of nursing profession is to do all in power, to take care of sick or well in promotion of health. Thus teaching and informing the caretakers in taking care of elderly is an utmost important task for nurses.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To compare the knowledge of caretakers regarding care of elderly before and after the intervention.
2. To determine the association between the mean difference in knowledge score of caretakers regarding care of elderly and selected baseline variables.



## Operational definitions

1. **Elderly:** In this study elderly is defined as those individuals who are aged 60 years and older.
2. **Planned Teaching Program:** In this study it refers to a teaching delivered to the caretakers regarding care of elderly which includes nutrition, elimination, immobility, prevention of falls, prevention of bedsores and sleep disorders using power point presentation on a one to one basis.
3. **Effectiveness:** In this study it refers to the knowledge gained by the care takers regarding the care of elderly, as determined by significant difference in pre and post knowledge scores obtained by a knowledge questionnaire.
4. **Knowledge:** In this study it refers to the awareness of the caretakers regarding care of elderly as measured by the scores obtained by a knowledge questionnaire.
5. **Caretakers:** In this study, it refers to the person responsible for care of elderly at the time of interview.
6. **Care of elderly:** In this study, it refers to the action taken by the caretakers to fulfill the special needs and requirements that are unique to elderly like hygiene, feeding, elimination, mobility needs etc.
7. **Baseline variables:** In this study it refers to caretaker details like age, gender, marital status, education, occupation and relationship with the patient.

**Delimitation:** This study was restricted to the caretakers of elderly who are admitted as inpatients in the selected hospital

## Assumptions

1. The caretakers may have some knowledge regarding the care of elderly.
2. Knowledge may differ from person to person.
3. The Planned Teaching Program may be helpful in improving the knowledge of caretakers.

## Materials and Methods

**Research design-** A pre experimental one group pre-test post-test design was used in the study

**Setting of the study:** The study was conducted in St. John's Medical College hospital, Bangalore, which is a Tertiary care hospital with total bed strength of 1200. The study was conducted among the caretakers of inpatient elderly people in all the wards.



**Population:** The population comprised of the caretakers of all elderly above 60 years of age who were treated as in-patients. It included spouse, siblings, children, grand children, in-laws, trained caretakers who take care of elderly patients.

**Sampling technique:** Purposive Sampling Technique was used to select the subjects.

**Sample size:** Based on the review of literature, the sample size of 21 was adequate to conduct the study with 80% power. The sample of the present study was 60 caretakers of elderly who are admitted in St. John's Medical College Hospital Bangalore during the data collection period.

#### **Inclusion criteria**

- Care takers of elderly above 60 years of age.
- Care takers of elderly who are expected to have hospital stay of more than 4 days.

#### **Exclusion criteria**

- Caretakers of elderly people who are critically ill.

#### **Instruments used**

**Section A :** Proforma for collection of baseline variables

**Section B :** A Structured Interview schedule to assess the knowledge of caretakers regarding care of elderly.

**Section C:** Planned Teaching Programme.

#### **Data collection method**

A formal permission was obtained from hospital administration to conduct the study. Sixty subjects were identified by purposive sampling based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants and a written informed consent was obtained. A structured interview schedule was administered to obtain baseline data and the pre-test knowledge of subjects. On completion of the pre-test, researcher conducted a planned teaching programme (duration of 30 minutes) to subjects on care of elderly on the same day in a one-to-one basis using power point presentation. On an average of 3-4 subjects participated daily. Post test knowledge of subjects was conducted on the 5<sup>th</sup> day after the intervention. An



opinionnaire was used to obtain the opinions of subjects regarding the planned teaching programme on care of elderly.

**RESULTS**

**1. Findings related to baseline variables:** Majority of the caretakers 41.7% were of the age group of 20-40 years, more than half of them 55% were females and married 76.7%. Majority of the caretakers were graduates 23.3% and 33.33% of them were semiskilled workers. Among working caretakers 40% of them had a monthly income of Rs. 1000-5000. Among elderly people majority of them 48.3% were independent in their ADL status.

**2. Findings related to knowledge:**

n=60

	Maximum score	Range	Mean	SD	Mean difference	Paired t test value	P value
Pre test	25	9-23	14.75	3.07	6.00	16.193	<0.001*
Post test	25	8-24	20.75	2.90			

The obtained P value is highly significant (P<0.001). This indicates that there is an improvement in the knowledge scores after the Planned Teaching Programme. The knowledge of the caretakers on specific content area was also statistically significant (p<0.001).

**3. Findings related to the association of mean difference in knowledge scores with baseline variables**

The study revealed that there was no statistically significant association identified between knowledge and selected baseline variables like age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, relationship with elderly, duration of elderly care, previous information about care of elderly, ADL status of elderly and duration of post-test. The study showed a statistically significant association between the mean difference in knowledge score and income of caretakers at 0.05 level of significance.



## **DISCUSSION**

### **Findings related to distribution of baseline variables**

In the present study, majority (41.7%) of the elderly caretakers were in the age group of 20-40years. With regard to gender, most of the caretakers were females (55%) and (76.7%) of the subjects were married. Regarding educational status, 33.3% of them, had an education of graduation and above. The result showed (36.7%) of the subjects were unemployed. Majority (40%) of the subjects had monthly income between Rs.5000-10,000. Majority of the subjects (35%) in the present study were the children/ grand children of the elderly people. Regarding previous information received on care of elderly, majority (86.7%) of the subjects had no previous information about the care of elderly. And 61.7% of the subjects had less than one year experience of elderly care. Majority of the elderly people (42%) were independent in their ADL status. Among majority of the subjects (65%) the post test was conducted on the fifth day of pre-test.

The findings are supported by a study conducted at Mangalore on effectiveness of PTP on knowledge regarding Alzheimer's disease among the family members of elderly with the highest percentage of caretakers 52% between 31-40years. Regarding gender 100% of the subjects were females. With respect to marital status, 82% of the subjects were married. Regarding educational status, majority of the subjects (56%) had primary education. Occupational, status revealed that majority of the subjects 50% were homemakers and considering income, most of the subjects 68% were from income group of less than Rs.5000 per month. Among the subjects participated majority of them 82% had previous information about the disease condition.<sup>8</sup>

### **Findings related to effectiveness of Planned Teaching Programme**

The mean post-test score ( $20.75 \pm 2.90$ ) was found significantly higher than mean pre-test score ( $14.75 \pm 3.07$ ) with a mean difference of 6.00 which is statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). It can be inferred that the Planned Teaching Programme was effective in improving knowledge of caretakers on elderly care. Also, on comparison of pre-test and post-test knowledge scores according to content area, it was found that there was a statistically significant improvement in post-test knowledge scores in all content areas regarding care of elderly at  $p = 0.001$ . These findings are consistent with the findings of another quantitative



study done in Kanyakumari district, Tamil Nadu. The findings showed that the mean pre-test knowledge score of caregivers of elderly was 38.96 and mean post-test knowledge score of caretakers 68.38 and the overall knowledge gained by the caregivers was 29.42% ( $t=12.62$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). The study concluded that there was a marked improvement found in overall knowledge of the caregivers of the elderly after the educational intervention.<sup>10</sup> In the light of these findings, it is evident that Planned Teaching Programme is an effective method to improve knowledge of caretakers regarding care of elderly.

### **Findings related to association of mean difference in knowledge scores with baseline variables**

In the present study there is no statistically significant association between mean difference in knowledge scores with selected baseline variables such as age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, relationship with elderly, duration of elderly care and the previous information about the care of elderly. This infers that the knowledge of the caretakers was not dependent on the age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, income, relationship with elderly, duration of elderly care and the previous information. The study showed a significant association of knowledge with the income of caretakers at 0.05 level of significance.

A study done in Karnataka showed that there was no significant association of pre-test knowledge with age, education, marital status, occupation, religion, relationship with elderly and previous information. It also showed a significant association of pre-test knowledge with monthly income and the type of family at 0.05 level of significance.<sup>11</sup>

### **Findings related to evaluation of the Planned Teaching Programme by the opinionnaire**

An opinionnaire was administered to the subjects at the end of post-test. The subjects were asked to give their opinions and suggestions about the planned teaching programme by an open ended question. All subjects opined that the planned teaching programme on care of elderly was very useful and were contended with information provided through the powerpoint. Among the subjects, trained caretakers expressed that the Planned Teaching Programme helped them to gain confidence in giving care for the elderly bedridden patients and thereby preventing the complications in bedridden elderly. Majority of the subjects suggested providing the Planned Teaching Programme along with the elderly people. Also



regarding the content area, the subjects suggested to tune their knowledge on specific ailments such as dementia, epilepsy, stroke, cancer etc. During the time of data collection, some subjects requested to get a copy of the power point slides to show it to their relatives who are elderly.

In a study conducted in Indonesia on assessing the improvement of family caregivers knowledge, skills and attitudes in caring for older people following the implementation of a Family Carers Training Programme in the community, majority of the caretakers expressed that they were willing to care for their older relatives but did not clearly understand the aging process and how to care for the elderly. And some of them expressed that they could not recognise the changing needs of older people or the signs and symptoms of degeneration and also because of limited formal support available to assist family caregivers, they found difficulty in caring them. The family caregivers felt that the training program was useful.<sup>12</sup>

From the above discussion it is very clear that the present study ascertained the effectiveness of Planned Teaching Programme in improving the knowledge of caretakers regarding care of elderly.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Planned Teaching Programme on care of elderly was effective in improving the knowledge among caretakers of elderly. The Planned Teaching Programme was simple and useful to the multi-lingual population that comes to our facility daily. Indeed it was beneficial to make the teaching programme available for both formal and informal caretakers who are taking care of elderly people.

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