



**AWARENESS ABOUT PATIENT RIGHTS AVAILABLE TO PATIENTS ENTRANT IN
NEPALGUNJ MEDICAL COLLEGE OF NEPALGUNJ, BANKE**

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Abstract

The concept of patient rights, which governs the relationship between healthcare providers and patients, is gaining importance in healthcare practice. At Nepalgunj Medical College, a descriptive cross-sectional study was done to determine how well-informed patients were about their legal rights. For the face-to-face interviews, a self-created semi-structured questionnaire was employed, and 60 patients were chosen through the use of a purposeful selection technique. According to the survey, participants' levels of familiarity with patient rights varied. Between 22% and 43% had moderate knowledge, 43% had poor knowledge, and 35% had no information at all. The majority of people knew little to nothing about their rights while seeking medical care, demonstrating the necessity for ongoing public awareness campaigns.

Keywords: Awareness, Patient's right, Health-care.

Introduction

The patient right is due by the patient to the physician and the state and is described as the code of conduct between those who receive health services and the institutions that supply them. Patients' rights are a word that has just lately entered the literature and practise of the health sciences and have since grown in importance in contemporary medical practise. When they join the healthcare setting, they are considerably more informed of what to anticipate from the experts (Ramadan, Mohammed, Seedhom, & Ghazawy, 2018).

The idea of patient rights was created in accordance with the concept of the person and the universal recognition of the equality and essential dignity of all people in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Since then, a number of declarations and codes of conduct for professionals have worked to defend basic human rights and advance the compassionate care of all patients (Gurung & Ghimire, 2020). A patient's rights are a set of moral guidelines that control their interactions with medical personnel. Every patient has a right to information about their legal obligations and those of the healthcare professionals. An essential indicator of the caliber of a health care is the execution of patient rights, which are an extension of human rights (Muhammad, Jan, & Naz, 2021).



Patients have the right to knowledge, to make their own decisions about the course of their care and their doctors, to privacy, and to have their psychological and spiritual beliefs respected (Tabassum, Ashraf, & Thaver, 2019).

Patient rights are crucial building blocks for delivering quality healthcare and advancing moral medical practises. As a result, upholding patient rights is regarded as a crucial problem in attempts to enhance the quality of healthcare services and as the major foundation for establishing clinical service standards. When patients are informed of their rights, not only may this raise the patients' sense of dignity by allowing them to collaborate with physicians on decision-making, but it can also improve the standard of medical care, lower expenses, and shorten hospital stays. Therefore, it is crucial to evaluate how well patients are informed of their rights (Tabassum, Ashraf, & Thaver, 2019).

The World Health Organisation research team that studies patient rights supports the idea that each nation should create its own patient rights laws based on its goals and unique cultural and socioeconomic requirements. The Nepali constitution from 2015 and the public health service act from 2018 are the only two pieces of legislation that lay out clear guidelines for how to safeguard people and how to obtain the services they require. Despite progress made in Nepal with regard to patient rights and ethical issues in healthcare, a number of issues still exist, including certain healthcare personnel' unethical behaviour and patients' inadequate comprehension of the principles of patient rights (Gurung & Sapkota, 2019).

Unquestionably, every person has social and individual rights that are recognised as a general premise by all human civilizations. However, there are additional rights for the socially marginalised populations. One of the most economically, socially, and psychologically vulnerable social groupings is the healthcare industry. The area of interaction and medical interventions has grown so much in recent decades because to the astounding achievements in medical research, the introduction of new treatments, and advancements in medical technology approaches that it now faces a significant moral dilemma (Ducinskiene, Vladickiene, Kalediene, & Haapala, 2016).

Both patients and healthcare professionals must actively participate for a health system to be effective. Collaboration between patients, doctors, and other healthcare providers is necessary. For patient care to be of the highest calibre and be done correctly, there must be adequate and honest communication, respect for personal and professional values, and sensitivity to diversity (Davati, 2019).

Doctors, medical assistants, and nurses are always in intimate touch with the patient since nurses stay by their side to offer care. In order to receive high-quality care and recover more quickly, patients should be informed about their illnesses as well as their rights as people and any potential abuses that could take place while receiving treatment in a hospital.



In the Lumbini province's Siddharthanagar-1 Teaching Hospital, which is affiliated with the Universal College of Medical Sciences, a descriptive research was carried out in 2019 to determine the understanding of patients' rights among those who were hospitalised. According to the study's findings (Gurung & Sapkota, 2019), 59.7% of patients have a high degree of understanding of patient rights, whereas 40.2% have a low level of knowledge.

In 2019, a cross-sectional study was conducted at Manipal University Hospital in Manipal, Karnataka, India, an academically accredited hospital, to evaluate the understanding of inpatients on patients' rights. The study's findings revealed that 57% of respondents had no awareness of their rights, 23% had just a limited understanding, and 20% had full knowledge of patient rights (Krzych & Ratajczyk, 2019).

In order to evaluate the patients' understanding of the Patients' Rights Charter at the chosen hospitals in the Limpopo province, South Africa (SA), in 2022, a cross-sectional survey was conducted. According to the findings, 71% of patients were unaware of the patient right charter, and 29% had just briefly viewed it before (Thema & Sumbane, 2022).

All of the aforementioned data indicates that there is very little patient knowledge present in the patient. Many patients were unaware of the hospital's patient charter, their ailment, or their preferred mode of treatment. Therefore, access to information on patient rights goes beyond statistics and aids in directing the system to provide enough weight to this issue. Therefore, I was so motivated to conduct research on this subject.

Review of literature

In the Lumbini province's Siddharthanagar-1 Teaching Hospital, which is affiliated with the Universal College of Medical Sciences, a descriptive research was carried out in 2019 to determine the understanding of patients' rights among those who were hospitalised. 72 samples in total were chosen for the investigation using the convenience sampling approach. The information was gathered using a semi-structured interview schedule. According to the study's findings (S. Gurung & Sapkota, 2019), 59.7% of patients have a high degree of understanding of patient rights, whereas 40.2% have a low level of knowledge.

In 2019, a cross-sectional study was conducted at Manipal University Hospital in Manipal, Karnataka, India, an academically accredited hospital, to evaluate the understanding of inpatients on patients' rights. 350 hospitalised patients were the minimum number of participants needed for the study. Respondents were chosen using a straightforward random sampling approach. According to the study's findings, the majority of respondents (57%) were unaware of their rights, while 23% were just partially aware and 20% were fully aware (Krzych & Ratajczyk, 2019).

In order to evaluate the patients' understanding of the Patients' Rights Charter at the chosen hospitals in the Limpopo province, South Africa (SA), in 2022, a cross-sectional survey was conducted. 51 individuals were included in the study's sample, which was chosen at random from



among those hospitalised to various hospital wards. According to the findings, 71% of patients were unaware of the patient right charter, and 29% had just briefly viewed it before (Thema & Sumbane, 2022).

A cross-sectional descriptive analytic study was carried out in March and April 2017 among 263 patients at the Wadi-Medani Teaching Hospital in Sudan. The study's goal was to evaluate patients at Wad Medani Teaching Hospital in Gezira, Sudan's awareness and application of patient rights. According to the research, 34% of patients had strong understanding of their rights, 49% had moderate knowledge, and 17% had low knowledge (Younis, Hassan, and Dmyatti, 2017).

In 2018, a cross-sectional study was carried out in the inpatient wards of the Minia university hospital in the Egyptian city of Minia. The study's goals were to evaluate participants' knowledge of several patient rights topics using a mean knowledge score. During their hospital stay, 514 patients in all were questioned. The patients were chosen using the cluster sampling approach. In this study, patients had an overall score of 7.2 2.71 out of 514 (Ramadan D., 2018).

From February to May 2021 in Pakistan, a cross-sectional descriptive research was carried out in several wards of public sector tertiary care institutions in Peshawar. The study's goal was to gauge how well-informed hospitalised patients were regarding their legal rights. 200 patients made up the study's sample size, which was chosen using straightforward random selection. According to the study's findings, roughly 25% of patients only have a basic understanding of their rights, 35% have a reasonable understanding, and the remaining 40% have inadequate knowledge (Muhammad, Jan, & Naz, 2021).

In 2019, this descriptive cross-sectional comparative study was carried out at two hospitals in Lahore, one of which was a public hospital and the other a private hospital. The study's objective was to determine how many hospital patients were unaware of their rights. Patients' information was gathered through the use of a standardised questionnaire. 220 patients in total, 110 from each private and public institution, were chosen to participate in the research. According to the study's findings, 64% of patients were unaware of their rights, while the remaining 36% were (Tabassum, Ashraf, & Thaver, 2019).

At order to assess and evaluate the general patient rights awareness among patients and nurses at training hospitals in the province of Qom in 2020, a cross-sectional comparison research was conducted. 200 hospitalised patients and 50 nurses in all were questioned on patient rights. According to the study's findings, 58.3% of patients had strong understanding of patient rights, 39.1% had intermediate knowledge, and 2.56% had weak knowledge (Heidari, Ahmadpour, & Boughlou, 2020).

In order to determine the extent of patients' knowledge of their rights and the source of their information, a cross-sectional survey was conducted in 2021 among patients at the National



Guard Hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. A total of 358 patients were included in the study. The patients were chosen using straightforward random sampling techniques. According to the study's findings, 65.3% of patients were oblivious of patients' rights, while 72.2% of patients were only marginally aware of them (Al-Rebdi, Rabbani, & Alqahtani, 2021).

In the Taif area of Saudi Arabia, a cross-sectional survey was conducted in 2019 among clients of the five armed forces hospitals' outpatient clinics. The study comprised 383 patients in all, who were chosen using practical sampling. According to the study's findings, 77% of patients were unaware of their rights, while 23% were aware to some extent (Saleh Faidah, 2019).

According to the literature review mentioned above, relatively few patients are aware of their legal rights. Many patients were unaware of their hospital rights, their ailment, or the type of care they were receiving. Therefore, the assessment of patient rights knowledge goes beyond simply looking at data to also assist direct the system in providing enough attention to this issue. As a result, the researcher is motivated to carry out this investigation.

Research Methodology

The process of scientifically and methodically gathering data in order to take the appropriate action is known as research methodology. This chapter outlines all the steps taken from the office to the field to collect the essential data, and it also explains those steps to the readers. Research method is a broad term that encompasses the fundamental steps in doing research, whereas research design is the act of acquiring current data from the topic in order to get new knowledge. To determine the level of patient awareness among those accepted to Nepalgunj Medical College, a descriptive cross-sectional research based on a quantitative methodology was performed. The study was carried out at the Nepalgunj Medical College in Banke, the Lumbini province. One of the 77 districts of Nepal is Lumbini Province, which includes Banke district.

The district, which has Nepalgunjas as its administrative centre, has a total area of 2,337 km². In the Banke district, there are three major cities: Kohalpur, Nepalgunj, and Khajuraho. A sub-metropolitan municipality in Nepal's Banke district is called Nepalgunj. With a population of 1,46,871, Nepalgunj is located 153 kilometres from Ghorahi, 16 kilometres from Kohalpur, and 35 kilometres from Gulariya. Patients who had been accepted to Nepalgunj Medical College at Nepalgunj, Banke, made up the population. The study included 60 patients as its sample size.

A self-developed, semi-structured questionnaire was employed as the study instrument. Non-probability purposive sampling was used. The interview form was initially written in English before being translated into Nepali. Data collection through face-to-face interviews was conducted using a questionnaire that was translated into Nepali. There are two sections to the questionnaire:

Part I: Questions related to socio-demographic.

Part II: Self-developed semi-structured questionnaire related to patient's right among patients.



Data Analysis and Interpretation

To gauge patient understanding of patients' rights, information was gathered from 60 patients of Nepalgunj Medical College in Nepalgunj, Banke. Statistical software was used to clean, input, and analyse all of the gathered data. Descriptive statistics were employed for the analyses. Tables were used to report all the data in terms of frequency and percentage. On the basis of the study's goal, all the collected data were analysed. The information was arranged and displayed under the following headings:

Section I: Description of socio-demographic characteristics of patient's rights among patients.

Section II: Distributions of knowledge regarding patient's rights among patients.

Section III: Association between the levels of knowledge regarding patient's rights among patients with their socio-demographic variables.

Section I

Socio-demographic characteristics of patient's rights among patients.

The section includes information regarding Age, Gender, Educational status, Occupation status, and Source of information.

Table 1

Frequency and percentage distribution of patients according to their age

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
20-30 years	12	20
31-40 years	25	41.6
41-50 years	14	23.3
>51 years	9	15

Table 1 depicts that majority of the patients (41.60%) belonged to 31 to 40 years, one fourth of the patients (23.3%) belonged to 41 to 50 years age group, less than one fourth of the patients (20%) belonged to 20 to 30 years age group and few of patients (15%) belonged to age group more than 50 years.



Table 2

Frequency and percentage distribution of patients according to their gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	29	48.3
Female	31	51.6

Table 2 depicts that majority of the patients (51.6%) were female and less than half (48.3%) were male.

Table 3

Frequency and percentage distribution of patients according to their education

Educational status	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	7	11.6
Primary education	14	23.3
Secondary education	15	15
Higher secondary education	14	23.3
Bachelor and above	10	16.6

Table 3 illustrates that majority of the patients (23.3%) had completed primary and higher secondary education, less than one fourth of the patients (16.6%) and (15%) had completed secondary education and bachelor and above respectively and last but not the least few (11.6%) were illiterate.

Table 4

Frequency and percentage distribution of patients based on their occupation

Occupation status	Frequency	Percentage
Agriculture	11	18.3
Job/service	35	58.3
Business	14	23.3

Table 4 illustrate that majority of patients (58.3%) were engaged in job/service, one fourth of the patients (23.3%) were engaged in some business and less than one fourth (18.3%) were engaged in agriculture as their occupation.



Table 5

Frequency and percentage distribution of patients according to their source of information towards patient right

Source of information	Frequency	Percentage
Hospital	12	20
Mass media	33	55
Family	2	3.3
Peer group	13	21.6

Table 5 demonstrates that majority of patients (55%) get information from mass media, one fourth of the patients (21.6%) and (20%) get information from peer group and hospital respectively and few patients (3.3%) get information regarding patients right from family members.

Section II

Distributions of level of knowledge regarding patient's rights among patients

This section includes distribution of the findings related to level of knowledge regarding patient's rights among patients.

Table 6

Frequency and percentage distribution of patients according to their level of knowledge

Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
Good knowledge	13	21.67
Average knowledge	26	43.33
Poor knowledge	21	35

Table 6 shows that one third (35%) had poor knowledge and one fourth (21.6%) had good knowledge and majority (43%) had average knowledge.

Section III

Association between knowledge regarding patient's rights among patients with their selected socio-demographic variables

H₁: There will be an association between knowledge regarding patient's rights among patients with their selected socio- demographic variables.



Table 7

Association of socio-demographic characteristics of patients according to their knowledge score regarding patient's rights

Personal variables	Level of Knowledge			Chi Square	DF	P-value
	Good	Average	Poor			
Age						
20-30 years	2	8	5	2.134	4	0.710
31-40 years	9	8	12			
41-50 years	2	2	1			
>51 years	1	6	3			
Gender						
Male	7	11	12	9.71	4	0.145
Female	5	9	1			
Education status						
illiterate	5	2	9	5.379	2	0.06
Primary education	1	6	9			
Secondary education	5	10	0			
Higher secondary education	4	6	7			
Bachelor level and above	2	1	2			
Occupational status						
Agriculture	2	3	3	4.594	4	0.331
Job/service	0	1	0			
Business	6	6	10			
Source of information						
Hospital	0	1	0	2.522	4	0.641
Mass Media	12	14	19			
Family	0	0	2			
Peer group	0	1	1			

Table 7 depicts that none of the variables had an association with the level of knowledge regarding patient right were p-value are more than 0.05. Hence, hypothesis (H_1) is rejected and null hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

The result of the study present study discussed with other related studies and organized



under following sections. The present study shows that Majority of the patients (41.60%) belonged to 31 to 40 years, one fourth of the patients (23.3%) belonged to 41 to 50 years age group, less than one fourth of the patients (20%) belonged to 20 to 30 years age group and few of patients (15%) belonged to age group more than 50 years. Regarding gender of patient's majority of the patients (51.6%) were female and less than half (48.3%) were male. Majority of the patients (23.3%) had completed primary and higher secondary education, less than one fourth of the patients (16.6%) and (15%) had completed secondary education and bachelor and above respectively and last but not the least few (11.6%) were illiterate.

Similarly, Majority of patients (58.3%) were engaged in job/service, one fourth of the patients (23.3%) were engaged in some business and less than one fourth (18.3%) were engaged in agriculture as their occupation. Regarding source of information majority of patients (55%) get information from mass media, one fourth of the patients (21.6%) and (20%) get information from peer group and hospital respectively and few patients (3.3%) get information regarding patients right from family members.

Finding of the present study is similar with the study conducted by Ramadan et. al. (2018) to identify the knowledge regarding different aspects of the patient's rights in Minia University Hospital, Egypt. Finding of the study showed that about 50% of patients belong to 31 to 40 years of age and 20% belong to age group more than 50 years. Regarding gender of patient, 55% were female and 45% were male.

The finding of the study shows that, 66.6% of patients told that patient's right is the have privacy and confidentiality during examination, procedures and whole treatment. Half of the patients i.e. 50% told that patient's right is to help patients in treatment. Regarding who are included in patient's right, 66.6% patients told that patients, family members and health workers are included in patient's right. Cent percent of patients told that patient's right include receive privacy, kind and respectful care. Regarding informed consent, 73.3% of patient told that it's an agreement or permission for care, treatment or service.

About 90% patients told that its patient's right to make decision to change treatment and hospital based on their need. Majority of patients i.e. 83.3% told that local and understandable language should be used to give information about patient condition to patient and their families. About 86.6% of patient told that patient's information should be given to them and their families before treatment and any procedure. Regarding reporting site for violation of patient's right, 76.6% told that its hospital and local administration.

A similar result is shown by a study conducted by Al-Rebdi, Rabbani, and Alqahtani in 2021, to identify the level of awareness of patients right and to identify their source of information among patients at the National Guard Hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and the finding of the study showed that 70% of patients told that patient's right is the have privacy and confidentiality during examination, procedures and whole treatment and 60% told that patients right is to help patients



in treatment.

Cent percent of patient told that patients can ask for compassionate health care service by showing respect, care and attention from health care professionals during treatment. Cent percent of patient told that patient should receive health care through hygienic and peaceful environment. About 75% of patients told that they should receive health service without discrimination from health worker based on their age, gender, and economic status. About 68% of patient told that they should ask their information in verbal and written form. Majority of patients i.e. 60% told that patient have a right to access medical records regarding their treatment and procedure.

Half of the patients i.e. 55% told that in case of violating patient right health worker or hospital administration can had a jail up to 6 month and penalty of 3,00,000. About 80% of patients told that they have a right to ask care giver for clarification of the caregiver's instructions regarding their care and support. Majority of patients i.e. 60% told that they have right to receive a copy of report at the time of discharge. About 48.3% of patient told that, when we talk about patient right it includes people who have been formally admitted to a hospital. About 55% of patients told that, right to access means patients can view and get copies of their records, whenever they want.

A study conducted by Tabassum, Ashraf, and Thaver in 2019, with an objective to assess the lack of awareness of patient's rights among patients visiting hospitals in Lahore, Pakistan. The finding of the study showed that about 71% of patient told that they should ask their information in verbal and written form and about 63% of patients told that patient have a right to access medical records regarding their treatment and procedure.

About 70% of patients told that patient right violation meaning failing to provide proper nursing services. About 90% of patients told that right to safety means be careful in safe environment and feel safe. About 85% told that right to information means access to all kind of information about treatment. About 50% of patients told that along with patient rights, patient have a responsibility to ask for more information if they don't understand something. In the times of pandemic, awareness about the rights of patients are very important (Asif, Pasha, Shafiq, & Craine, 2022).

The finding of the study showed that 22% had good knowledge, 43.3% had average knowledge and 35% of patients had poor knowledge. A study done by Muhammad et al., in 2021 with objectives to assess the knowledge of hospitalized patients about their rights showed that 39% of patients had poor knowledge, 22% had good knowledge and 39% of patients had average knowledge regarding patients' right.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the study. This study shows that level of knowledge regarding patient right was 21.6% had good knowledge, 43.3% had average knowledge and 35% of patients had poor knowledge. Chi-square test was used to test the



association between knowledge and their selected demographic variables (age, gender, educational status, occupation, and source of information). None of the demographic variables were significantly associated. The level of knowledge about patients' right is average among patients. Thus, the study concluded that there is a need of education and awareness programs among patients as well as among health workers, to help them learn and maintain the basic norms of patient's right.

Based on the research conducted, it is recommended that there is need to create enough knowledge towards patient's right. This awareness campaign can be launched through print media, electronic media, and social media as well. New generation is more available on internet and social media (Shahid, Asif, & Pasha, 2022). A similar study can be conducted on other hospital settings as meet. Further comparative research study can be done to assess the knowledge towards patients' right among patients. Further studies can be conducted which cover the wide and further depth knowledge of patients right.

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