94 - PERCEPTIONS OF NURSING PROFESSIONALS ABOUT THE CARE OF SUICIDAL PATIENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays suicide has becoming a serious problem of public health around the world. According to Karplan and Sadock (1997), suicide is not a random act or an act without purpose. On the contrary, it is the escape of a problem or crisis, intense suffering, associated to frustrated needs, feeling of hopelessness and abandonment, ambivalent conflicts between survival and an unbearable stress, a narrowing of the perceived options and a need to escape (KAPLAN; SADOCK, 1997).

The World Health Organization (WHO) affirms that, in 2000, approximately 1 million people died by suicide in the world. This represents one death in every 40 seconds (WHO, 2002). Comparing these epidemiological data with the national ones, Brazil is considered at world scale as a country with low incidence of suicides, in the 71st place. However, when compared certain cities and regions as well as some population groups (young people in big cities, Indians from the Midwest and North Regions of Brazil, and among farmers from Rio Grande do Sul), this profile is closed to the countries with medium or elevated frequency of suicide (WHO, 2003).

This way, having knowledge that the nursing professional is one of the first health professionals to admit the patient in the hospital emergencies, it is emergent their adequate qualification for nursing care in face to these patients who attempted suicide. This care should be done with ethics, psychological support, and continuous observation to patients and families, in order to prioritize communication with emphasis on the need for qualified hearing because in many times patients feel insecure, fragile, distressed, ashamed and frustrated.

Avancy, Pedrão and Costa Jr. (2005), in the realization of a field study, identified the disqualification of health professionals in relation to the detection of suicidal patients as well as the not accepting of suicidal patient as a person who needs help. The study specified nursing professionals, describing that they assume a prejudiced and discriminatory attitude in relation to the patient who attempted suicide. Faced with the evidence found by the authors mentioned above, the following question arises: what is the perception of nursing professionals about patients who attempted suicide?

Thus, in a utopian way, we consider that this study will subsidize scientifically the team of health professionals, especially nurses for the development of a welcoming and qualified assistance in order to future treatments are conducted with ethics and resolvability.

Based on this, the present study aims: to understand the perception of nursing professionals that work in the emergency and urgency in relation to the patient who attempted suicide.

METHODS

It is an exploratory-descriptive study, prospective, with quantitative approach, using secondary data of study: emergency care to patients with suicide attempt in the perception of nursing professionals from Alto Sertão micro-region. The population was composed by all nursing professionals who work in the sector. Fifteen nursing professionals disposed to participate of the study, 07 nurses and 08 technical nursing. The data were collected from November to December, 2010, by means of a questionnaire with objective questions (socio-demographic data) and subjective ones (perceptions). The socio-demographic data were analyzed from a database built by using the SPSS software, version 17.0, and it was presented the absolute frequency, only. The data about perception of nursing professionals in relation to the patient who attempted suicide were analyzed by means of Content Analyzes technique by Bardin (2004), comprehended as a set of methodological tools which are applied to diverse discourses. In the first stage, the pre-exploitation of material was done. In the second one, units of meaning were selected, making phrases clippings about each unit, which were selected because they express the perceptions of nursing professionals about the object of study. In the sequence, the categorization was done and, afterwards, the regrouping according to previously defined criteria. This structural process has two stages: inventory stage, which isolates elements, and classification stage, which separates elements. Therefore, it aims or imposes a certain organization to the messages. The first objective of categorization consists in provide, by condensation, a simplified representation of raw data. The criterion of organization used in this study was the semantic one (thematic categories) (BARDIN, 2004).

The ethic principles of the Code of Ethics of Nursing Professionals – Resolution 311/2007 of the Federal Council of Nursing, which are on Chapter IV (COFEN, 2007), as well as Resolution 196/96 of the National Health Council (BRASIL, 2002) were obeyed. The project was analyzed and approved by the Ethics Research Committee of the Integrated College of Patos, as Opinion nº 0823/2010.

RESULTS E DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 – Percentage distribution of the sample by sex, age and level of study.

Variables	N	%
Sex		
Masculine	06	40
Feminine	09	60
Age group		
20 - 25 years	02	13
26 - 30 years	08	54
31 e 34 years	05	33
Level of Study		
Nurse/Specialist	04	27
Nurse	03	19
Technical Nursing	08	54
?	15	100

Source: direct, 2011.

In the analysis of table 1, it is observed the predominance of technical professionals (54%). Considering the qualification of nurses, there is an insignificant difference in relation to level of study, what evidences the need for permanent training by the service management. Barbiiere (2002) appoints the importance of implementation of support programs, training, and post-graduation is essential to professionals assume compromise with their own profession, generating the exaltation of experience, enabling advantages especially in the emergency nursing care provided to diverse types of patients with their respective casualness.

Professionals reaffirm that the bigger demand in the Health System with suicide attempts are teenagers and young adults (54%), coinciding with Kaplan (1997) who asserts that the incidence of suicide is more frequent in the age group between 15 and 24 years. The research also shows the predominance of the female sex (67%). The possible justifications are greater stress factors due to the loading activities imposed to women by the historic and cultural heritage and accentuated by current social exigencies for public women. Another study realized in Ribeirão Preto – SP in 2005 also evidences the prevalence of the female sex in suicide attempts, with 77.8% of cases (AVANCI; PEDRÃO; COSTA JUNIOR, 2005).

In relation to the methods mentioned by them, it is observed the diversity of causes to which these professionals face in assisting suicidal patients. The most frequent causes, according to reports, are the use of poisoning (40%), medicines or chemical agents (33%), followed with less frequency by hanging (13%), any blade (7%) and firearms (7%). In part, these results corroborate with the ones of a Study done by the Health Department of Rio de Janeiro from April 2001 to March 2002, which revealed that the main methods adopted were the ingestion of pesticides (52% of cases) and medicines (39%). Other cases in general corresponded to 12% (WERNECK, 2006).

After concluding the stages of content analysis, the following categories were listed: understanding about suicide, interaction between nursing professional and patient, and care process and its barriers. However, it should be highlighted that, in this study, all the mentioned categories were discussed because they detail the necessary requirements to the emergency care for the suicidal patient.

Category I – Understanding about suicide

This category found themes that talk about suicide as being: emotional imbalance (80%), provoke the own death (13.3%) and escape of a problem (6.7%). Such themes comprise questions as: act of weakness, inconsequence, action aroused; death provoked consciously or unconsciously; some difficult for solving or overcoming a problem. These difficulties can be exemplified in the speeches below:

"An emotional imbalance, a discharge of emotion and the lack of accompaniment in treatment". "Ending one's own life without thinking about the consequences". "A person who is with some difficult for solving or overcoming a problem deserves attention, lots of care and affection".

Then, the understanding referred by nursing professionals is partly pertinent to the scientific literature as Kaplan and Sadock (1997). This understanding also corroborates with Seminotti, Paranhos and Their (2006), that consider suicide as a self-destructive act, related to the impossibility of the individual in find different alternatives to his conflicts, finally opting for death. This way, it is learnt that these patients demonstrate knowledge about the problem, what may facilitate the necessary intervention in a coherent way that will produce an effective nursing care in face to the care needs.

Category II – Interaction between nursing professional and patient

This category presents the theme: discrimination in caring of patient who attempts suicide. All the nursing professionals were unanimous when affirmed that they did not have any kind of prejudice to the patient who attempted suicide. This assertion is based on the following speeches:

"No, because he is a patient who deserves attention and care as any other". "No, all the patients are assisted independent of their pathology". "No, at the moment of service, what the patient needs is a special assistance, which requires from the professional an attitude for the patient, the importance of life, you see". "No, all the patients should be treated equally".

All the speeches mentioned above demonstrates the conscience of these professionals in face to the problem, and they care of patients equally, independent of their pathologies, in tentative of guarantee a worthy assistance, proportioning satisfactory conditions of treatment to patients with psychological disorders, as the case of those who attempt suicide. The reports and expressions described by the professionals show that they donate for those who seek help and care. Nevertheless, it is not possible to affirm that they promote the therapeutic help defended by Furegato (1999). The research subjects express themselves as compromised to the patients under their care. However, it is known that, in addition to individual and collective commitment of team, it is sure that specialized qualification is necessary to establish a therapeutic alliance, which is able to facilitate the relationship with patients in order to help them to mature after this episode, as recommended by Avanci et al (2009).

Category III – Care process and its barriers

This category was divided into three subcategories. The first one is about the following themes that, from the point of view of the present analysis, refer to the intrinsic aspects of patient like aggressiveness and the limitations of professionals. They are evidenced by the following expressions:

"The aggressive act of some patients". "Patient's resistance to receive treatment". "Most are not prepared to attend the procedure". "Conscientize patient about the valorization of life".

The expressions mentioned above evidence that most of the subjects experienced some kind of difficult to care about the patient who attempted suicide. Among them, there is the lack of ability in the attendance to patients with psychological disorders, especially in relation to communication, what difficult the decision-making and, as a consequence, the intervention process. Kohlrausch et al (2008) mention the facts cited above, asserting that they not only may complicate the nursing care, but also directly affect its quality in a way that reflects in the results of treatment. Besides these factors, Camelo and Angeram (2008) mention the lack of accessibility to beds for psychiatric hospitalizations, lack of adequate transport to removal of psychiatric

outbreaks, lack of security for health staff, among others that derail adequate assistance. Associated to these difficulties there are social, economic and cultural factors like the lack of family involvement to help in the treatment of users with suicidal behavior and the lack of financial resources of users to move to the place where the specialized care occurs (BOTEGA, 2008).

The second subcategory was about the behavior of the patient who attempted suicide. The professionals reveal the following expressions:

"In most cases the patient is sometimes tearful, sometimes aggressive". "Agitation or depression, irritability and sometimes remorsefulness". "Calm as nothing had occurred". "Ashamed by the procedure done by him only presents disturbs if he is a mental patient".

This kind of behavior interferes on care, proportioning unfavorable conditions to the realization of necessary interventions in the emergency care, being a challenge for health team. Nevertheless, these are frequent behaviors among most of groups with psychiatric diagnostics. The prevalent disorders among suicide victims include major depressive disorders and the dependence or abuse of alcohol and/or other psychoactive substances that lead people to attempt this act (LESAGE, 1994). For Turecki (1999), many evidence lines suggest that the common denominator among most of people who attempt suicide is the presence of impulsive and impulsive-aggressive behaviors. These common characteristics cited by literature justify the importance of a health team working in an interdisciplinary way and properly trained in the hospital emergency services.

The third subcategory is about the role of nursing in relation to the patient who attempted suicide. It is exposed according to the following speeches:

"Do your best, giving the Best of your knowledge to help the patient, care him in the Best way". "Be careful and pay attention, forward him to a psychological assistance". "It is extremely important because in almost cases we have a closer contact with the patient and we start to dialogue and advise him." "Immediately, gastric washing for the elimination of poison and venous access, send to the doctor in other suicide cases by firearms, weapons, among others".

These speeches reveal that all the nursing professionals are conscious about their obligations to the patient who attempts suicide, from the importance to see him integrally to the development of effective care. But reports about limitations are not evident, what is a worrying fact, once the professional should always behave like an apprentice, unfinished being capable of improving. The questioned subjects expressed as knowing of the vulnerability of patients, as well as the importance of the nursing care in the emergency department. Also, the absence of interpersonal relationships with patients through the professional relation of help indicated by Avanci et al (2009) was identified. However, this one is justified by the inexistence of a support network, what predisposes the ignorance about the personal, group and family risk situations, hampering the accomplishment of therapeutic indications.

CONCLUSIONS

In this study, it is evident the importance of the nursing care in the emergency care to the people who attempt the suicide act. Among the professionals, there is the predominance of women in the age group between 26 and 30 years. With regard to their qualification, it confirms the need for permanent training. The study did not evidence relates of prejudice or discrimination by the people who participated of the research. Nevertheless, some of these professionals expressed some kind of difficult to provide care.

In addition, the research shows that most of patients are teenagers and adults, women, who practice with greater frequency the ingestion of poison and medicines as methods for suicide. Most of professionals relates that most of patients treated are often aggressive, depressive, tearful and angry.

Therefore, there is the need for investment in public policies that meet the needs of the emergency and mental health services, aiming better working conditions to the mentioned professionals, as well as the users who need effective assistance.

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PERCEPTIONS OF NURSING PROFESSIONALS ABOUT THE CARE OF SUICIDAL PATIENTS

ABSTRACT

Suicide is a deliberate act, started and conducted by a person with knowledge or expectation of a fatal result. Objective: to understand the perception of nursing professionals that work in urgency and emergency in relation to the patient who attempts suicide. Methods: it is an exploratory-descriptive study, prospective, with quantitative approach, using secondary data of study: Emergency care to patients with suicide attempts in the perception of nursing professionals from Alto Sertão micro-region. The population was composed by all the nursing professionals that work in the department, and 15 nursing professionals participated of the study. The data were collected from November to December 2010, by means of a questionnaire with objective and subjective questions. They were analyzed from a built database using the SPSS software, version 17.0, and it presented the absolute frequency. The data about the perception of nursing professionals were analyzed by a set of techniques of content analysis, as Bardin (2004). The project was analyzed and approved by the Ethics Research Committee of the Integrated College of Patos, as in Opinion n. 0823/2010. Results and discussions: the sample is predominantly constituted by the female sex (60%), in the age group between 26 and 30 years. The bigger demand of the Health Service with suicide attempts are teenagers and young adults (54%), with more incidence of the female sex and in the age group between 15 and 24 years. The suicide attempts refer to a diversity of causes: poisoning (40%) and medicines or chemical agents (33%), followed by hanging (13%), weapon (7%) and firearm (7%). Conclusions: Need for investment in public policies which fulfill the privations in the emergency and mental health departments.

DESCRIPTORS: Emergency; Nursing; Suicide.

PERCEPTIONS DES PROFESSIONNELS D'INFIRMIER CONCERNANT LA FAÇON DE SOIGNER LE PATIENT SUICIDE

RÉSUMÉ

Le suicide se constitue en un acte déliberé, commencé et conclu par une personne ayant connaissance ou expectative d'un résultat fatal. Objectif: comprendre la perception des professionnels d'infirmier qui travaillent dans l'urgence et émergence par rapport au patient qui tente de se suicider. Méthodes: Il s'agit d'une étude exploratrice-descriptive, prospective, avec une approche qualitative en utilisant des données sécondaires de l'étude: accueil d'urgence au patient porteur de tentative de suicide dans la perception des professionnels d'infirmier du Haut Sertão. Le groupe fût composé par 15 professionnels d'infirmier qui travaillent dans le secteur, disponibles à participer de l'étude. Les données fûrent recueillies entre novembre et décembre 2010, à partir d'un questionnaire constitué de questions objectives et subjectives et analysées à partir d'une banque de données construite en employant “un paquet statistique SPSS”, version 17,0 ne présentant que la fréquence absolue. Les données relatives à la perception des professionnels d'infirmier par rapport au patient qui tente de se suicider fûrent analysées à partir d'un ensemble de techniques d'analyse de contenu, selon le modèle de Bardin(2004). Le projet fût analysé et approuvé par le Comité d'Éthique en Recherche des Facultés Intégrées de Patos, selon le décret 0823-2010. Résultats et Discussions: L'échantillon est surtout constitué par le genre féminin (60%) entre 26 et 30 ans. La grande demande est faite par des adolescents et jeunes (54%) surtout du genre féminin entre 15 et 24 ans. La diversité des causes: empoisonement (40%) et médicaments ou agents chimiques (33%), suivi par pendaison (13%), arme blanche (7%) et arme à feu (7%). Conclusions: Besoin d'investissement en politiques publiques qui couvrent les carences dans les services d 'émergence et santé mentale.

DESCRIPTEURA: émergence; infirmier; suicide.

PERCEPCIÓN DE LOS PROFESIONALES DE ENFERMERÍA SOBRE EL CUIDADO DEL PACIENTE SUICIDA

RESUMEN

El suicidio es un acto deliberado, iniciado y llevado a cabo por una persona con pleno conocimiento o expectativa de un desenlace fatal. Objetivo: Conocer las percepciones de las enfermeras que trabajan en la atención de emergencia a la paciente que intenta suicidio. Métodos: Este es un estudio exploratorio, descriptivo, prospectivo, con el enfoque cualitativo, utilizando datos secundarios del estudio: La atención de emergencia a los pacientes con intentos de suicidio en la percepción de profesionales de enfermería del “Alto Sertão”. La población fue compuesta por todos los profesionales de enfermería que trabajan en el sector, estando dispuesto a participar del estudio 15 profesionales de enfermería. Los datos fueron recolectados entre noviembre y diciembre de 2010, utilizando un cuestionario con preguntas objetivas y subjetivas y se analizaron a partir de una base de datos construida utilizando el paquete estadístico SPSS, versión 17.0, llevando a cabo exclusivamente frecuencia absoluta. Los datos sobre la percepción de las enfermeras en relación con los pacientes que intentan suicidio, se analizaron con el conjunto de técnicas de análisis de contenido, de acuerdo con el modelo de Bardin (2004). El proyecto fue revisado y aprobado por la Ética en la Investigación de la Escuela Integrada de los patos tiendo el número 0823/2010. Resultados y Discusión: La muestra está compuesta por un predominio de mujeres (60%), con edades comprendidas entre 26 y 30 años. La demanda más frecuente al Departamento de Salud con intentos de suicidio son adolescentes y adultos jóvenes (54%), con mayor incidencia de mujeres con edades comprendidas entre 15 y 24, estos, referentes a una variedad de causas: envenenamiento (40%) y las drogas o productos químicos (33%), seguido por ahorcamiento (13%), arma (7%) y armas de fuego (7%). Conclusiones: La necesidad de invertir en políticas públicas que satisfagan las necesidades de los departamentos de emergencia y de salud mental.

DESCRIPTORES: Emergencia, enfermería, Suicidio.

PERCEPÇÕES DOS PROFISSIONAIS DE ENFERMAGEM ACERCA DO CUIDAR DO PACIENTE SUICIDA

RESUMO

O suicídio constitui-se em um ato deliberado, iniciado e levado a cabo por uma pessoa com pleno conhecimento ou expectativa de um resultado fatal. Objetivo: compreender a percepção dos profissionais de enfermagem que atuam na urgência e emergência em relação ao paciente que tenta suicídio. Métodos: trata-se de um estudo exploratório-descritivo, prospectivo, com abordagem qualitativa, utilizando dados secundários do estudo: Atendimento emergencial ao paciente com tentativa de Suicídio na percepção de profissionais de enfermagem do alto Sertão. A população foi composta por todos os profissionais de enfermagem que atuam no setor, dispondo-se a participar do estudo 15 profissionais da enfermagem. Os dados foram coletados no período de novembro e dezembro de 2010, através de um questionário contendo questões objetivas e subjetivas e analisados a partir de um banco de dados construído utilizando-se o pacote estatístico SPSS, versão 17.0, sendo apresentada apenas a frequência absoluta. Os dados relativos à percepção dos profissionais de enfermagem em relação ao paciente que tenta suicídio foram analisados por meio do conjunto de técnicas de análise de conteúdo, conforme Bardin (2004).O projeto foi analisado e aprovado pelo Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa da Faculdades Integradas de Patos, conforme Parecer nº 0823/2010. Resultados e Discussões: a amostra é predominantemente constituída pelo gênero feminino (60%), na faixa etária entre 26 e 30 anos. A demanda que mais chega ao Serviço de Saúde com tentativas de suicídio são adolescentes e adultos jovens (54%), com maior incidência do gênero feminino e na faixa etária entre 15 a 24; estes referindo uma diversidade de causas: envenenamento (40%) e medicamentos ou agentes químicos (33%), seguido por enforcamento (13%), arma branca (7%) e arma de fogo (7%). Conclusões: necessidade de investimento em políticas públicas que supram as carências nos serviços de emergência e saúde mental.

DESCRITORES: Emergência; Enfermagem; Suicídio.