

# “A Descriptive Study to Assess the Awareness, Attitudes, And Practices of Staff Nurses Regarding Nabh Nursing Standards in An Accredited Hospital”

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** The National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) sets quality benchmarks to improve patient safety and nursing standards in India. Nurses, being the largest healthcare workforce, are central to accreditation compliance. Despite training and structured protocols, gaps remain between awareness, attitudes, and practices (AAP) of nurses in relation to NABH standards. This study aimed to assess AAP among staff nurses in an NABH-accredited tertiary hospital. **Methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional design was adopted at Sri Manakula Vinayagar Medical College and Hospital, Puducherry, a 1200-bedded NABH-accredited institution. A convenience sample of 100 staff nurses with at least six months of service was recruited. Data were collected using a structured tool comprising four sections: demographic details, a 10-item awareness questionnaire, a 10-item Likert attitude scale, and a 10-item practice checklist. Descriptive statistics summarized awareness, attitude, and practice levels, while chi-square tests assessed associations with demographic variables.

**Results:** Findings revealed that 42% of nurses had inadequate awareness, 31% had moderate awareness, and only 27% demonstrated adequate awareness of NABH nursing standards. Regarding attitudes, 38% of participants expressed unfavorable attitudes, 27% were neutral, and 35% favorable. In terms of practice, 39% reported poor compliance, 32% fair, and 29% good compliance with NABH standards. No significant associations were observed between demographic factors and awareness or attitude levels ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, gender showed a significant association with practice compliance ( $p < 0.05$ ), with female nurses reporting better adherence to protocols. **Discussion and Conclusion:** The study highlights considerable gaps in AAP among staff nurses despite working in an accredited hospital with digital health systems. Knowledge deficits, negative perceptions, and inconsistent practices pose challenges to sustaining quality standards. Strengthening periodic training, supportive supervision, and reinforcing a positive safety culture are crucial to bridging the knowledge-practice gap and ensuring sustainable NABH compliance.

**Keywords:** Awareness, Attitudes, NABH, Nursing Standard, Accredited Hospital.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Healthcare quality has become a major global priority in the 21st century, with healthcare systems increasingly emphasizing patient safety, regulatory compliance, and continuous quality improvement. Accreditation programs play an important role in improving healthcare standards by ensuring that institutions follow structured protocols and evidence-based practices.

In India, the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH), under the Quality Council of India (QCI), provides comprehensive standards that serve as benchmarks for excellence in healthcare delivery. NABH accreditation promotes safe, ethical, patient-centered, and efficient healthcare services across hospitals and healthcare institutions. Among all healthcare professionals, nurses represent the largest workforce and play a crucial role in implementing and sustaining accreditation standards. Nurses spend more time with patients than any other healthcare professionals and are directly responsible for ensuring quality bedside care and patient safety outcomes.

NABH accreditation is a voluntary process that involves systematic internal and external evaluation of healthcare organizations based on predefined quality standards. These standards are aligned with global best practices and support continuous monitoring and improvement in service delivery systems. NABH nursing standards focus on essential areas such as patient identification, infection prevention and control, medication

safety, documentation practices, risk assessment procedures, and continuity of care. Compliance with these standards helps improve patient outcomes and strengthens institutional accountability.

Nurses are also actively involved in clinical audits, incident reporting systems, and implementation of quality improvement initiatives within hospitals. Their participation contributes significantly to maintaining accreditation requirements and improving overall healthcare performance indicators. Despite the availability of structured guidelines, several studies have reported gaps between nurses' awareness and their actual implementation of accreditation standards in clinical practice. Limited training opportunities, increased workload, and inadequate supervision are some of the common barriers affecting compliance with quality standards.

The introduction of Electronic Health Records (EHRs) in NABH-accredited hospitals has further supported documentation accuracy, monitoring of clinical indicators, and reduction of medication errors. However, effective utilization of digital systems depends largely on nurses' knowledge, attitude, and practice toward accreditation requirements.

Sri Manakula Vinayagar Medical College and Hospital, Puducherry, has been NABH-accredited since 2020 and has implemented Electronic Health Record systems for several years. This provides an appropriate setting to assess staff nurses' awareness, attitudes, and practices regarding NABH nursing standards. Assessment of these components is essential to identify knowledge gaps and practice challenges that may influence quality compliance. Understanding these factors will help nurse administrators and educators develop effective training programs and strengthen quality assurance strategies.

Therefore, the present study aims to assess the awareness, attitude, and practice regarding NABH nursing standards among staff nurses working in a tertiary care NABH-accredited hospital, with the goal of improving compliance and sustaining quality patient care services.

## **II. NEED FOR THE STUDY**

Nurses play a vital role in maintaining patient safety and implementing hospital quality standards under NABH accreditation. Since nurses are directly involved in documentation, medication administration, infection control, and patient assessment, their awareness, attitude, and practice toward NABH standards are essential for ensuring quality healthcare services.

However, previous studies have shown variations in nurses' knowledge and compliance with NABH nursing indicators such as pressure ulcer prevention, medication safety, and documentation practices. These gaps may affect patient outcomes and the hospital's accreditation status. Research also indicates that training programs can significantly improve nurses' compliance with quality standards, highlighting the importance of assessing their baseline awareness and practice levels. In addition, nurses' attitudes toward accreditation protocols influence their willingness to follow guidelines effectively. Factors such as workload, lack of supervision, and limited feedback may reduce adherence to quality standards. The introduction of Electronic Health Records (EHRs) has further emphasized the need for nurses to be competent in maintaining accurate documentation according to NABH requirements.

Since the study setting is an NABH-accredited hospital with established EHR systems, it is important to assess the awareness, attitude, and practice of staff nurses regarding NABH nursing standards. The findings of this study will help identify gaps in knowledge and practice, support the development of training programs, and strengthen quality assurance measures to sustain accreditation standards and improve patient care services.

### **Statement of the problem**

A Descriptive Study to Assess the Awareness, Attitudes, and Practices of Staff Nurses Regarding NABH Nursing Standards in an Accredited Hospital.

### **Objectives of the study**

- To assess the awareness of staff nurses regarding NABH nursing standards.
- To assess the attitudes of staff nurses towards NABH nursing standards.
- To assess the practices of staff nurses in implementing NABH nursing standards.
- To determine the association between awareness, attitude, and practice scores with selected demographic variables

## **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study adopted a quantitative research approach with a descriptive cross-sectional survey design to assess the awareness, attitude, and practice regarding NABH standards among staff nurses. The dependent variables were awareness, attitude, and practice toward NABH standards, while independent variables included selected demographic factors such as age, gender, educational qualification, and years of experience. Extraneous variables like workload, shift pattern, and institutional support were also considered. The study was conducted at Sri Manakula Vinayagar Medical College and Hospital (SMVMCH), Puducherry, a 1200-bedded

NABH-accredited tertiary care hospital. The population included all staff nurses working in various departments, and a sample of 100 staff nurses who met the inclusion criteria was selected using a convenience sampling technique.

**Description of the Tool**

**Section A:** Included baseline variables such as age, gender, educational qualification, department, years of experience, previous NABH hospital experience, and attendance in NABH training programs; these variables were not scored but used for association.

**Section B:** Included a 10-item awareness questionnaire on NABH nursing standards, with one mark for each correct answer (maximum score 10), interpreted as follows:

Score Range	Interpretation
0 – 3	Inadequate Awareness
4 – 7	Moderate Awareness
8 – 10	Adequate Awareness

**Section C:** Included a 10-item 5-point Likert attitude scale with scores ranging from 10 to 50, where higher scores indicated a more favourable attitude, interpreted as follows:

Score Range	Interpretation
10 – 25	Unfavorable Attitude
26 – 37	Neutral Attitude
38 – 50	Favorable Attitude

**Section D:** Included a 10-item practice checklist with response options yes (2), sometimes (1), and no (0), with a maximum score of 20, where higher scores indicated better practice regarding NABH standards, interpreted as follows:

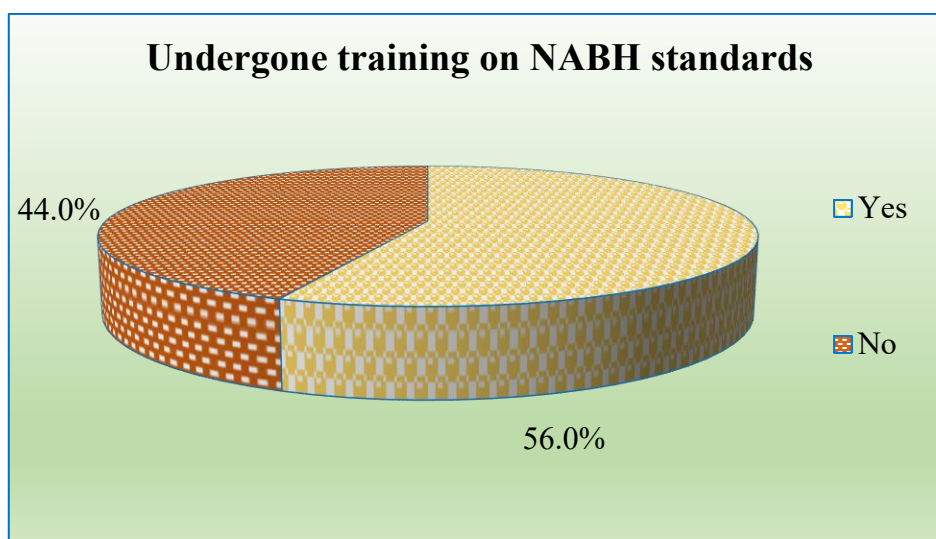
Score Range	Interpretation
0 – 6	Poor Practice Compliance
7 – 13	Fair Practice Compliance
14 – 20	Good Practice Compliance

**Procedure for Data Collection**

After obtaining ethical clearance from the Institutional Ethical Committee and permission from the Medical and Nursing Superintendents, the study was explained to staff nurses, and written informed consent was obtained. Based on inclusion criteria (minimum 6 months’ experience, working in inpatient or critical care areas, and willingness to participate), 100 staff nurses were selected using convenience sampling. Data were collected over 2 weeks during morning and evening shifts using a self-administered structured questionnaire with four sections: demographics, awareness, attitude, and practice. Participants completed the questionnaire in a quiet area within the hospital, taking 20–25 minutes on average. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness and compiled for analysis.

**IV. RESULTS**

Most nurses were below 35 years of age (56%) and 55% were female. Educational qualifications included M.Sc. Nursing (29%), P.B.B.Sc Nursing (25%), B.Sc Nursing (23%), and GNM (23%). Nurses were working in critical care (20%), casualty (20%), OPD (19%), general wards (15%), and OT (14%). About 24% had 5–10 years of total experience, and 27% had less than 5 years’ experience in the current hospital. Over half had prior experience in NABH-accredited hospitals (51%) and had attended NABH-related training (56%).



**Figure 1: Percentage wise distribution of the staff nurses according to the undergone training on NABH standards.**

The analysis of staff nurses’ awareness regarding NABH nursing standards shows 42% of nurses had inadequate awareness, 31% moderate, and 27% adequate awareness of NABH standards.

Level of Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate Awareness	42	42%
Moderate Awareness	31	31%
Adequate Awareness	27	27%

**Table 1: Frequency and percentage wise distribution of the level of awareness of staff nurse regarding NABH nursing standards**

The findings reveal that 38% of nurses exhibited an unfavourable attitude toward NABH nursing standards, 27% demonstrated a neutral attitude and 35% showed a favourable attitude.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Unfavourable Attitude	38	38%
Neutral Attitude	27	27%
Favourable Attitude	35	35%

**Table 2: Frequency and percentage wise distribution of the level of attitude of staff nurse regarding NABH nursing standards.**

The analysis of practice levels among staff nurses regarding NABH nursing standards shows that 39% demonstrated poor compliance, 32% fair, and 29% good compliance with NABH nursing standards

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Poor Practice Compliance	39	39%
Fair Practice Compliance	32	32%
Good Practice Compliance	29	29%

**Table 3: Frequency and percentage wise distribution of the level of practice of staff nurse regarding NABH nursing standards.**

No significant association was found between demographic factors and awareness or attitude. Gender was significantly associated with practice compliance ( $p < 0.05$ ), with female nurses showing better adherence, while other demographic factors showed no significant association with awareness, attitude, or practice.

## V. DISCUSSION

### **Objective 1:** To Assess the Awareness of Staff Nurses Regarding NABH Nursing Standards

In the present study, 42% of staff nurses demonstrated inadequate awareness of NABH nursing standards, 31% had moderate awareness, and only 27% showed adequate awareness. These finding highlights that nearly three-fourths of the workforce lacked sufficient knowledge about NABH guidelines.

### **Objective 2:** To Assess the Attitudes of Staff Nurses Toward NABH Nursing Standards

In the current study, 38% of nurses exhibited unfavorable attitudes toward NABH standards, 27% remained neutral, and only 35% had favorable attitudes. This indicates that although one-third of nurses appreciated the value of accreditation, negative perceptions such as increased workload, time-consuming documentation, and stress from audits influenced others.

### **Objective 3:** To Assess the Practices of Staff Nurses Regarding NABH Nursing Standards

The present study revealed that 39% of nurses demonstrated poor practice compliance, 32% showed fair compliance, and only 29% demonstrated good practice compliance. Practices such as fall risk assessments, incident reporting, and consistent use of electronic health records were particularly weak areas.

### **Objective 4:** To Determine the Association Between Awareness, Attitude, and Practice Scores with Demographic Variables

In this study, no statistically significant association was found between demographic variables and awareness or attitude scores. However, gender showed a significant association with practice compliance, where female nurses demonstrated better adherence to NABH protocols compared to males.

## VI. CONCLUSION

From the results of the study, it was concluded that adequate awareness, favourable attitude, and good practice compliance regarding NABH nursing standards were lacking among staff nurses. The findings indicate that nurses with better knowledge and positive perceptions are more likely to adhere to accreditation protocols. Female nurses showed higher practice compliance compared to males. Overall, the study concludes that strengthening training, supportive supervision, and continuous monitoring are essential to enhance awareness, attitude, and practice of staff nurses toward NABH nursing standards in accredited hospitals.

### **Nursing Implications**

The implication from study findings has been discussed in relation to nursing service, nursing education, nursing administration and nursing research.

#### **Nursing service:**

- Nurses can play a pivotal role in sustaining NABH standards by adhering to protocols on documentation, infection control, and patient safety.
- Regular bedside audits and self-assessment tools may enhance compliance.
- Continuous reinforcement through reminders and supervision can help close the practice gap.

#### **Nursing education:**

- Nursing curricula at UG and PG levels should include NABH standards and quality assurance modules.
- Nursing students may be exposed to accreditation-related practices during clinical postings to bridge the gap between theory and practice.
- Faculty can incorporate simulation and case-based learning to demonstrate compliance with accreditation protocols.

#### **Nursing administration:**

- Nurse administrators should plan and organize periodic **Continuing Nursing Education (CNE)** programs on NABH standards.
- Institutional policies should reward compliance and recognize nurses actively contributing to quality improvement.
- Adequate staffing and reduced workload can help nurses devote time for proper documentation and adherence.

#### **Nursing research:**

- More research on nurse-related barriers and facilitators to NABH compliance is needed.
- Comparative studies can be carried out across multiple hospitals to identify best practices.
- Mixed-method and interventional studies could provide insights into improving compliance behaviours.

### Recommendations:

Based on the findings, the following recommendations have been made for further studies.

- A large-scale multicentric study to compare awareness, attitudes, and practices of nurses in accredited vs. non-accredited hospitals.
- Interventional studies to evaluate the effectiveness of structured training on NABH compliance.
- A longitudinal study to examine changes in awareness and practices over time with repeated training and audits.
- A qualitative study to explore nurses' perceptions of barriers and facilitators to NABH compliance.

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