

ABSTRACT

Introduction

The safety climate is “the summary of molar perceptions that employees share about their work environments” and it is associated with several factors. Hospital safety climate can be summarized in six factors namely management support for safety programs, absence of hindrances to safe work practices, availability of personal protective and engineering control equipment, minimal conflict and good communication among staff members, frequent feedback and training by supervisors and cleanliness and orderliness of the work site.

Objectives

The study objective was to evaluate the safety climate and its associated factors in Base Hospital Avissawella.

Methodology

A descriptive cross-sectional study was done from October 2017 to September 2018 among a sample of medical officers (n= 109) and nursing officers (n=193) selected from simple random sampling. A structured, pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire was used for data collection.

Results

Among the six safety climate dimensions personal protective and engineering control equipment availability (mean=3.94, SD=0.67) was perceived at the highest level. The lowest scored perceptual dimension was absence of job hindrances (mean=3.27, SD=0.83).

Among the respondents 219 (83.5%) had at least one exposure incident during the study period. There is no significant relationship between job category and workplace exposure incidents ($p=0.388$). Only 28.3% ($n=62$) had reported about their injuries.

Only 60.7% ($n=159$) were strictly compliant to safe work practices and the compliance of nursing officers was better than of medical officers ($p=0.000$). The safety climate had a negative association with workplace exposure incidents ($OR < 1.0$) and a positive association with compliance to safe work practices. ($OR > 1.0$)

Conclusion and Recommendations

The respondents had negative perceptions about some of the safety climate dimensions.

Workplace exposure incidents were common and the reporting behavior about injuries was poor among both categories of staff, but comparatively the nursing officers were better.

Majority were “Strict compliant” to the safe work practices and compliance was better among nursing officers. Safety climate was negatively associated with exposure incidents and positively with the compliance.

The hospital managers should pay more attention on safety of employees, provide adequate training opportunities on occupational safety and encouraged employees’ reporting behavior.

Key words: Safety climate, workplace exposure incidents, safe work practices