

Nursing Students' Attitudes Towards Research at College of Nursing, Allama Iqbal Medical College, Jinnah Hospital Lahore
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Abstract

Background: Nursing research advocates for the highest quality of patient care by emphasizing evidence-based nursing practices. The attitude of students towards research serves as a driving force, inspiring them to actively participate in research endeavors, cultivate essential research skills, and implement research discoveries within clinical environments, ultimately enhancing positive patient outcomes.

Aim: This study aims to examine undergraduate nursing students' attitudes toward the research component to identify implications for enhancing teaching and learning practices.

Materials and Methods: From March to August 2023, a descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at the College of Nursing, Allama Iqbal Medical College, Jinnah Hospital Lahore, involving a convenient sample of n = 100 undergraduate students. Participants signed informed

consent and completed a self-administered questionnaire consisting of 25 items rated on a Likert scale. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 23.

Results: The majority of nursing students hold a positive attitude towards research, as evidenced by a mean score of 74.05% with a standard deviation of 6.580. A vast majority (91.2%) acknowledge the utility of research in their profession. Specifically, 86.88% of nursing students demonstrate a positive attitude towards research, while 72.75% recognize its significance in both professional and personal life. However, a notable proportion (41.2%) finds research challenging, viewing it as difficult, complicated, and stressful, with 55.3% expressing difficulty with statistical aspects.

Conclusion: While a significant portion of students recognize the value of research in nursing and maintain a positive attitude towards it, some find the research course stressful. Many students express negative feelings and anxiety about the research process. To improve student experiences, it's suggested to integrate research courses into pre-university curricula and involve statistical experts from research centers to teach effective learning strategies.

KEYWORDS: Nursing research, Evidence-based practice, Undergraduate nursing students, Attitudes toward research, Research skills, Patient outcomes, SPSS analysis.

Introduction:

Nurses are essential in providing direct patient care within healthcare. It's crucial for nurses to keep up with new research to improve their knowledge and the quality of patient care (Bindon 2017). Familiarity with nursing research not only increases a nursing student's confidence but also helps them deliver more effective care by aligning their practices with evidence-based research (Boswell and Cannon 2022). Nursing studies adopt a holistic approach, delving into not just the physiological aspects of human beings but also their experiences and challenges. Through a methodological and questioning approach, nursing research endeavors to offer rational, evidence-based solutions, leveraging available information and scientific insights (Saidova 2021).

The origins of nursing research trace back to the pioneering work of Florence Nightingale, who meticulously collected data on soldiers' morbidity and mortality rates during

the Crimean War. Her systematic approach laid the foundation for nursing research and its profound impact on the nursing profession globally (Moule, Aveyard et al. 2016). Through research, students learn to critically analyze patient conditions, enabling them to identify the most effective approaches to maintain optimal patient health (Abrami, Bernard et al. 2015). Furthermore, research findings not only enhance student learning but also contribute to holistic care delivery, aligning with evolving healthcare protocols (Al Furaikh, Al Omairi et al. 2017).

Research utilization holds immense importance for the future generation of nurses, equipping them with essential skills such as research conduct, critical reading, and independent decision-making (Grove, Burns et al. 2012). Nursing schools and educators prioritize fostering interest in nursing research to uphold evidence-based practice standards, thus ensuring better patient care outcomes (Halabi and Hamdan-Mansour 2012). Recognizing the paramount importance of evidence-based practices, the International Council of Nurses advocates for research education to enhance research capacity among nurses and nursing students, enabling them to critically evaluate research and contribute to evidence-based healthcare delivery (LoBiondo-Wood and Haber 2021). However, nursing students often encounter challenges in understanding quantitative research methodologies and statistical concepts, leading to low-quality learning experiences and apprehension towards research subjects (Grove and Gray 2018).

Nursing research courses integrated into undergraduate nursing curricula equip students with the requisite knowledge and skills for professional practice. These courses utilize diverse theoretical frameworks and methodologies, enabling learners to comprehend patients' health conditions and devise effective, evidence-based approaches to optimize patient outcomes (Hsiao-Ying, Yu-Wen et al. 2019). Biostatistics subjects within the curriculum equip students with mathematical tools to interpret clinical data and deliver patient-centered care (Arias, Peters et al. 2017). Supplementing research courses, nursing students are encouraged to critically engage with research literature, collect and report reliable data, attend conferences, utilize library resources, and prepare presentations (Osborne, Byrne et al. 2018). These activities foster a deeper understanding of research methodologies and enhance students' research skills (Hardway and Stroud 2014). Despite the invaluable role of nursing research, students often grapple with anxiety stemming from the complexities of the research process (Jones, Torres et al. 2013).

However, with proper guidance and stress-relief strategies tailored to individual needs, students can navigate the research journey successfully (Eslit 2023).

Given the imperative to cultivate a positive attitude towards clinical nursing research among Bachelor of Science nursing program students, it becomes essential to evaluate their attitudes comprehensively (Ünver, Semerci et al. 2018). This evaluation aims to inform the design of patient-centered teaching and learning strategies that foster favorable attitudes towards nursing research (McMillan, Kendall et al. 2013).

Methodology:

The research utilized a Descriptive Cross-Sectional Study Design to evaluate nursing students' attitudes towards research. Convenient non-probability sampling was chosen due to its practicality and the accessibility of participants at the College of Nursing, Jinnah Hospital Lahore. A total of 100 students were selected as the study population. All Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and Post-Registered Nurse (RN) students were included in the study. Data analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 23. Inferential data analysis, tables, and graphs were utilized for data interpretation. The research commenced in March 2023 and concluded in July 2023, spanning approximately three months.

Data collection involved distributing questionnaires to nursing students, structured around a four-point closed-ended Likert scale. Participants were provided with the questionnaire and instructed to respond honestly, ensuring confidentiality of their answers. They were given 15-20 minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it. The questionnaire, titled "Attitude of Nursing Students towards Research," consisted of five sections encompassing 25 questions. These sections focused on various aspects including the usefulness of research in the nursing profession, anxiety related to research, positive attitude towards research, relevance of research in life, and perceived difficulty of research.

Results:

The statistical analysis revealed a predominantly positive attitude towards research among participants, as indicated by a mean score of 74.05%. A significant majority (91.2%) acknowledged the usefulness of research in the nursing profession. Specifically, 86.8% of nursing students demonstrated a positive attitude towards research, while 55.3% recognized its importance in personal life. However, a notable proportion of students (41.2%) viewed research as challenging, complicated, and stressful. Additionally, 50.7% reported encountering difficulties with statistics.

Demographic:

The study population comprised all 100 students from the College of Nursing, AllamaIqbal Medical College, Jinnah Hospital Lahore (AIMC, JHL). Seventy-five percent of the students were enrolled in the four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program, while the remaining 25% were pursuing the two-year Post-Registered Nurse (RN) program. Notably, all participants were female, as no male respondents were available for inclusion. Demographic analysis revealed that the majority of students belonged to the younger age group and exhibited a positive attitude towards research.

Category	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency
Research Usefulness in Nursing Profession			
Strongly Agree	46.5	46.5	46.5
Agree	44.7	44.7	91.2
Strongly Disagree	4.43	4.43	95.63
Disagree	4.41	4.41	100
Anxiety Related to Research			
Strongly Agree	12.5	12.5	12.5
Agree	28.7	28.7	41.2
Strongly Disagree	19	19	60
Disagree	40	40	100
Positive Attitude Towards Research			
Strongly Agree	33	33	33
Agree	53.8	53.8	55.3
Strongly Disagree	5.6	5.6	71.55
Disagree	7.6	7.6	100
Relevance in Life			

Category	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency
Strongly Agree	14.5	14.5	14.5
Agree	40.8	40.8	55.3
Strongly Disagree	16.25	16.25	71.5
Disagree	28.5	28.5	100
Research Difficulty			
Strongly Agree	10.4	10.4	10.4
Agree	40	40	50.7
Strongly Disagree	14.3	14.3	65
Disagree	35	35	100

Table A: This combined table presents the frequencies, percentages, and cumulative frequencies for each category across all five research dimensions.

Discussion:

The findings of this study align with previous research, such as that of (Tingen, Burnett et al. 2009), which also aimed to gauge nursing students' comprehension of research and received positive feedback. It is evident that most nursing students recognize the significance of research in their field and express a desire to continue research endeavors even after entering their professional careers. Similarly, a study conducted at Lahore School of Nursing, University of Lahore, by (Mukherjee, Azamthulla et al. 2018), yielded similar results, indicating a predominantly positive attitude towards research among students. Many students expressed a willingness to engage in research activities during their education and clinical placements to explore new avenues for research.

However, despite this enthusiasm for research, nursing students often encounter challenges in learning research concepts and executing research projects, as noted in the study by (Brooke, Hvalič-Touzery et al. 2015). Despite these difficulties, maintaining a positive attitude

towards research among nursing students is crucial for effectively utilizing study findings in clinical practice. The information gleaned from systematic investigations must be applicable to improve clinical decision-making and elevate patient care standards.

Health research activities are integral to healthcare studies and play a vital role in fostering problem-solving skills, creative thinking, and logical reasoning among healthcare students, as highlighted by (Lasker and Weiss 2003). It is essential to cultivate a positive attitude among future healthcare practitioners towards evidence-based research to fulfill their primary care responsibilities.

By gauging learners' awareness of research, instructors can enhance discussions on the value of nursing research and its impact on nursing services across various healthcare settings. Encouraging student participation in scientific gatherings, discussions, and conferences can further stimulate interest in research and alleviate apprehensions surrounding the subject. This study's findings serve as a foundation for developing teaching and learning activities aimed at enhancing nursing students' perspectives, resilience, and commitment to scholarly research, ultimately leading to the discovery of novel nursing interventions that maximize patient clinical outcomes.

Conclusion:

The baccalaureate nursing graduates hold positive attitudes towards nursing research but express negativity towards biostatistics, finding its statistical components challenging and taxing. This sentiment may arise from the lack of prior exposure to research methodology during pre-university or high school education. The authors of a research paper by Samia S, Badriyah E, and Thilagavathy G, 2017 propose that introducing research courses at the pre-university level and engaging statistical experts from research centers to teach research concepts could be advantageous for future nursing students.

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