

Nursing Students' Opinions towards Nursing Diagnoses

Amoura Soliman Behairy^{1,2}, Helalia Shalabi Mohamed^{3,4,5}

¹ Medical-Surgical Nursing Department, College of Nursing, Menofia University, Shebin El-Kom, Egypt

² Currently in Nursing Department, Unaizah Collage of Medicine and Medical Sciences, Qassim University, Unaizah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

³ Lecturer of Community Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, Cairo University, Egypt.

⁴ Assistant professor of Community Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, King Saud University, KSA.

⁵ Assistant professor of Community Health Nursing, PAAET, College of Nursing, Kuwait.

Email: dra_soliman@yahoo.com

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Abstract: Background: Nursing diagnosis is a consistent language that offers the foundation to select nursing interventions. Which conveyed nursing a position as a distinctive health discipline in giving care to patient. **Aim:** The aim of this study was to determine nursing students' opinions towards nursing diagnoses.

Methodology: A descriptive / exploratory design was used to conduct the current study. A 14-items (two constructs measuring students' opinions about nursing diagnoses and the advantages of using nursing diagnoses) self-administered questionnaire was administered to a non-probability convenience sample of one hundred and sixty seven female nursing students. Informed written consent was obtained from all students who agreed to participate in the study.

Results: The majority of the participated nursing students agreed that nursing diagnoses are a priority subject in nursing and necessary to use in the hospital wards. Moreover, most of the students agreed on the nursing diagnoses' advantages as the development of practice standards in nursing care and improving the use of the nursing process.

Conclusion: Nursing students had a good insight about the importance and advantages of using nursing diagnoses in clinical practice. To increase students' knowledge and experience, more consistency in the value of nursing diagnoses needs to exist between educators and nursing students.

Key words: nursing diagnosis, nursing diagnosis advantages, nursing students, nursing process

INTRODUCTION

Conventionally, patient care was established on earlier skills of nurses and on medical diagnoses. Patient problems were transcribed in a free text language, where nurses have focused on recording the execution of physician's orders and ward routines^[1-3]. Today, as a result of the revolution of health science and technology, nursing as the largest health care profession, nursing practice necessitates unique data, information, and knowledge to cooperate with other health disciplines and to accomplish the goals that are appropriate with the progress in the health care field^[4]. To accomplish this, several authors agreed that, this change in nursing is through globally reorganization and use of nursing diagnosis as a professional language in the determination of standards for sharing and shaping information, decision making, nursing practice, and labeling expected patient outcomes^[5-7].

Today, worldwide, the nursing diagnoses is becoming an essential portion of an effective discipline in the field of nursing practice in many of the health institutions^[8]. Whereas, nurses make a clinical judgment about an individual, a family, or a community's responses toward actual or prospective health problems and life processes in order to decide which nursing interventions are adequate

and qualified to address these problems to achieve desirable expected health outcomes. Nurses are responsible for and in duty of using standardized classification of nursing diagnoses^[9].

Literature review reported a lot of work that has been done worldwide on the use of nursing diagnoses in hospital-based care^[10,11]. Utilization of nursing diagnoses in client care has been significantly contributed to quality nursing care and optimized resource management^[12]. In Finland, the Perioperative Nursing Diagnosis Set had been found to be sensitive in describing the rationales for perioperative care^[13]. While its use has also been found to be applicable among cardiac patients^[14,15].

Although the benefits of using a nursing diagnostic classification systems are known in many countries, nursing literature shows various barriers to use nursing diagnoses in clinical practice. These barriers include lack of motivation, failure of nurse as a diagnostician, lack of diagnostic education, lack of resources, and complexity of a patient's situation^[16]. In addition, time limitation, and resistance of older nurses or lack of ability or power to make changes, resistance from physicians and the classification not being usable or comprehensible for the nurse^[17]. Moreover, it is observed that many nurses had not been taught to use them,

deficiencies in accurately stating and documenting nursing diagnoses, and relating them to nursing interventions and outcomes^[18].

Notably, students who graduate before they have been able to work with nursing process and before they have been able to understand the concept of nursing diagnosis and its importance for effective nursing care system, they are expected to be resistant to its use when they are graduated^[4].

To develop a nursing diagnosis, the nurse must possess intellectual, interpersonal, and technical abilities. Because nursing diagnoses are based on the production of all data collected from individual patients to direct the nursing care process and stimulate nurses to acquire new information. Accordingly, nursing diagnosis is considered a difficult task for nursing students. Therefore, it is necessary for undergraduate students to have professional knowledge and skills to be able to implement the nursing processes and nursing diagnosis thoroughly. The educational process is important in the development of these skills^[19, 20].

To date, in Arab World, most nursing records in the hospitals, electronic or on paper, are free text records. However, various curricular programs in nursing education offer a standardized language using nursing classification systems for nursing diagnoses, interventions and outcomes. Major efforts are ongoing to increase the use of standardized nursing language. So research on this area is needed in both nursing education and practice. Therefore, this descriptive exploratory study was conducted to determine nursing students' opinions towards nursing diagnoses.

Significance of the study:

Nursing diagnoses aids to describe the core of nursing and give the profession its autonomy^[21]. Practicing nurses vary in experience with nursing diagnoses from just beginning to full practice integration. Within the nursing education curriculum, nursing diagnoses are taught as the basis for the activities of the planning step of the nursing process and integration into clinical practice is a necessity. Therefore, this study will interrogate undergraduate nursing students about their opinions towards nursing diagnoses to gain insight into their understanding of nursing diagnoses.

Aim of the study:

The aim of the current study was:

- To determine nursing students' opinions towards nursing diagnoses.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS

Design:

A descriptive / exploratory design was used in this study to achieve the previous stated aim.

Setting:

The study was conducted at nursing school department, Female Health Sciences College, Qassim University, Unaizah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The College awards a high diploma of nursing with a three years nursing education.

Participants:

A non-probability convenience sample of One-hundred eighty eight (188) nursing students enrolled in the fundamentals of nursing, basic adult health nursing and advanced adult health nursing courses for the academic year 2010-2011 were invited to participate in the study at the previous mentioned setting. At the end of the 15-week for the previous courses, 167 nursing students agreed to participate in the study with a response rate of 88.8%. 31 students enrolled in the second year, 83 students in third year and 53 students in the internship year for 6 months and under the supervision of the college. By including students from one school, the researcher assured education homogeneity in the sample. First year was not included because it is a preparatory year. The first year has no nursing courses.

Tools of data collection:

Data were collected using a modified version of the questionnaire on nursing students' opinions towards nursing diagnoses Yont, Khorshid, & Eser (2009)^[4]. The researchers modified the questionnaire after reviewing relevant literature and they considered that the second year students were taught nursing diagnoses for the first time. One statement concerning competencies of the nursing students to develop nursing diagnoses was omitted and the advantages of nursing diagnoses were literature-based statements. The final questionnaire consists of 14 – items (see Table 1 & table 3), which were self-administered rated on a Likert type scale of 1-3 (1 = do not agree, 2 = partially agree, 3 = agree). The questionnaire items included 5 statements concerning students' opinions about nursing diagnoses^[8] and 9 items concerning students' opinions about advantages of using of nursing diagnoses^[4, 12, 20-22]. All statements of the fourteen questions were scored in a positive way with higher scores reflecting good insight of nursing diagnoses.

Content validity of the instrument was assessed by five experts who examined the tool and approved it. The panel included three experts from medical-surgical nursing departments and two experts from nursing education department. Test retest method was used to determine the reliability of the tool, by applying this tool twice on 10 subjects who were excluded from the study. The reliability was 0.86.

Pilot Study:

Was carried out before beginning data collection on 17 students (who aren't included in the study) to evaluate the modified tools for clarity and feasibility and to estimate the time needed to collect data then necessary modifications were carried out accordingly. The findings of the pilot study revealed that all of the items of the tools were clear and feasible to achieve the aim of the current study.

Procedure:

- 1-Once official permission was granted from the administration of the educational setting, the researchers initiated data collection.
- 2-Data were collected during the academic year 2010-2011.
- 3-Students who agreed to participate in the study from any of the three grades included in this educational setting were our target.

4- Subjects needed 15 - 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Ethical Consideration:

An official written approval letter to carry out the study was obtained from the administration of the educational setting prior to data collection and after explaining the significance of the study and its purposes. Also, a written consent form was signed for participation in the study by all studied female students after explaining the purposes of the study. It was also clearly stated that students' participation is voluntary and confidential and that the responses would not

in any way impact their final grades of the concerned courses.

Data Analysis:

Data was coded for entry and analyzed using SPSS statistical software package version 18.0. Data was presented using descriptive statistics in the form of number and percentage (NO & %), means and standard deviations. Data was described by summary tables and analyzed by using chi-square (χ^2) test. The difference was significant at P-value <0.05.

RESULTS

Table 1. Nursing students' opinions about nursing diagnoses (n = 167).

Statements	Agree		Partially agree		Don't agree	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Nursing diagnoses are a priority subject in nursing.	128	76.6	22	13.2	17	10.2
It is necessary to use nursing diagnoses on the hospital wards.	124	74.2	31	18.6	12	7.2
It is necessary to document nursing diagnoses on the hospital wards	113	67.6	48	28.8	6	3.6
It is possible to use nursing diagnoses in hospitals at Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)	123	73.6	21	12.6	23	13.8
If a course about nursing diagnoses was offered, I would like to Participate	102	61.1	35	20.9	30	18

Table 1 displays that, the majority of the nursing students (76.6 %,74.2 %,73.6 %) agreed with the statements that nursing diagnoses were a priority in nursing, the necessity of using nursing diagnosis on the hospital wards and could be used in the hospitals of KSA respectively. Chi-square test showed significance relationship between 3rd and 2nd year students in relation to their opinions about nursing diagnoses

($\chi^2 = 37.129$, $P < .000$). Also, significance relationship was found between 3rd year and internship students in relation to their opinions about nursing diagnoses ($\chi^2 = 47.024$, $P < .000$) while there was no statistical significance relationship between 2nd year and internship students in relation to their opinions about nursing diagnoses ($\chi^2 = .767$, $p < .999$).

Table 2. Mean score of total nursing students' opinions about nursing diagnoses among classes

Year	No	%
2 nd year		
- Agree	29	93.5
- Partially agree	2	6.5
- Don't agree	0	0.00
Total = 31	Mean (SD) = 10.87 (3.16)	
3 rd year		
- Agree	74	89.2
- Partially agree	8	9.6
- Don't agree	1	1.2
Total = 83	Mean (SD) = 11.94 (2.8)	
Internship year		
- Agree	39	73.6
- Partially agree	14	26.4
- Don't agree	0	0.00
Total = 53	Mean (SD) = 11.23 (3.21)	

Table 2 shows that most of the students of the classes (2nd, 3rd and internship) agreed on the statements about nursing

diagnoses with average (10.87, 3.16), (11.94, 2.8) and (11.23, 3.21) respectively.

Table 3. Students' opinions about the advantages of using nursing diagnoses in clinical practice (n = 167).

Statements	Agree		Partially agree		Don't agree	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
- It provides for the development of practice standards in nursing care	129	77.2	34	20.4	4	2.4
It provides for patient-centered care and holistic care	105	62.9	53	31.7	9	5.4
- It improves the use of the nursing process	121	72.4	45	27	1	.6
It helps nurses make statements.	141	68.3	52	31.1	1	.6
-They define the area and scope of nursing practice.	97	58	59	35.4	18	10.8
They help to define the essence of nursing.	107	64.1	44	26.3	16	9.6
It give direction to care.	112	67.1	44	26.3	11	6.6
It give nurse identity through uniqueness of her nursing intervention.	104	62.3	54	32.3	9	5.4
- It help in organizing and evaluating care	102	61.1	52	31.1	13	7.8

Table 3 shows that the majority of the students (77.2 %, 72.4 %) agreed with the statements, that nursing diagnosis provides the development of practice standards in nursing care and improves the use of the nursing process respectively. About two thirds of the studied sample (68.3 %, 67.1 %, 64.1 %, 62.9 %, and 62.3%) agreed with statements that, it helps nurses make statements, nursing diagnosis give direction to care, it helps to define the essence of nursing practice, it provides for patient-centered care and holistic care and it give nurse identity through

uniqueness of her nursing intervention respectively. Chi-square test showed significance relationship between 3rd and 2nd year students in relation to advantages of using nursing diagnoses ($\chi^2 = 23.329$, $p < .010$). Also, significance relationship was found between 3rd year and internship students in relation to advantages of using nursing diagnoses ($\chi^2 = 26.799$, $p < .003$) while there was no statistical significance relation between 2nd year and internship students in relation to advantages of using nursing diagnoses ($\chi^2 = 1.480$, $p < .999$).

Table 4. Mean score of the total nursing students' opinions about advantages of using nursing diagnoses in clinical practice among classes.

Year	No	%
2 ^d year		
- Agree	22	71
- Partially agree	9	29
- Don't agree	0	0.00
Total = 31	Mean (SD) = 12.65 (3.85)	
3 rd year		
- Agree	72	86.7
- Partially agree	11	13.3
- Don't agree	0	0.00
Total = 83	Mean (SD) = 12.11 (2.83)	
Internship year		
- Agree	40	75.5
- Partially agree	13	24.5
- Don't agree	0	0.00
Total = 53	Mean (SD) = 12.38 (3.64)	

Table 4 displays that most of the students of the three classes (2nd, 3rd, intern) agreed with the statements of the advantages of using nursing diagnoses in clinical practice with average (12.65, 3.85), (12.11, 2.85) and (12.38, 3.64) respectively.

DISCUSSION

Nursing diagnosis is recognized globally as one of the nursing standardized languages that could contribute to the health and promote the development of nursing [22]. Nursing diagnoses are a fundamental portion of the nursing process and are crucial to the practice of nursing [23]. Therefore, the current study was conducted to assess nursing students' opinions towards nursing diagnoses in clinical practice. According to the present study, the majority of the participated nursing students agreed that nursing diagnosis is a priority subject in nursing, and necessary to use in the hospital wards. This finding is consistent with study done by Yont, et al., [4], who found that the majority of nursing students agreed that nursing diagnoses are a priority subject in the nursing profession, and needed to be used on the hospital wards.

Chi-square analysis was conducted to determine if there was a difference between classes regarding students' opinions about nursing diagnoses, the current results showed a statistically significant difference between classes. Whereas, between 3rd and 2nd year students was ($\chi^2 = 37.129$, $P < .000$) and between 3rd year and internship students was ($\chi^2 = 47.024$, $P < .000$). Also, most of the students of the classes (2nd, 3rd and internship) agreed on the statements about nursing diagnoses with average (10.87, 3.16), (11.94, 2.8) and (11.23, 3.21) respectively. This finding may be because of second year students having just begun to learn about

nursing diagnoses in their classes and having had less experience in the clinical area.

Regarding the advantages of using nursing diagnosis in clinical practice, the results of the current study conclude that the majority of the students agreed on the nursing diagnoses' benefits as provides the development of practice standards in nursing care and improves the use of the nursing process. This finding might be explained by that nursing students are well prepared and taught in their nursing education curriculum that nursing diagnoses are an important part of patient caring. The current results showed a significance difference between third and second year students in relation to their opinions about usefulness of using nursing diagnoses in clinical practice ($\chi^2 = 37.129$, $p < .000$) as well as between third year and internship students ($\chi^2 = 47.024$, $p < .000$). These findings might be interpreted by the fact that continuing education improves attitude of the nursing students toward nursing diagnoses and this result is consistent with study by Collins, [24], who conclude that Continuing education can improve attitudes toward and accuracy of nursing diagnosis.

Interestingly, the results of the current study revealed that there was no statistical significance relationship between second year and internship students in relation to their opinions about advantages of using nursing diagnoses in clinical practice ($\chi^2 = .767$, $p < .999$). This is might be interpreted by the fact that the second year students were first contact with nursing diagnoses and had less experience in clinical practice. Internship students always see that writing care plans and making nursing diagnoses for patients as an academic exercise during study period and once the students start to graduate, the importance of nursing diagnoses and care planning is often lost in practice area. In addition, there was a lack of motivation among graduated

nursing students in the utilization of nursing diagnoses. These findings were consistent with Juntilla, et al.,^[13], on the use of nursing diagnoses in perioperative documentation; they found deficiencies in the clinical usability of nursing diagnoses.

CONCLUSION

The majority of the participating nursing students had sound vision about nursing diagnoses and awareness of the advantages of using it in the clinical practice. The findings of the current study will stimulate the nursing students to participate at local, regional, or national level in the utilization of nursing diagnoses.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- Replication of the current study using a larger sample size and multiple settings.
- Investigating other issues that might contribute to explore the barriers of implementing nursing diagnoses among graduated nurses in different departments.
- Developing a standardized tool to test and validate the knowledge, utilization and consequences of nursing diagnoses in clinical practice.
- Inclusion of qualitative research methodology may expand the understanding of the studied subject.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest statement.

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