The Factors Influencing Nursing Intentions Toward COVID-19 Patients as Perceived by Nursing Students

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Abstracts

Nursing students are especially vulnerable to the coronavirus disease pandemic (COVID-19). The goal of this study is to thoroughly investigate nursing students' attitudes, knowledge, risk perceptions, COVID-19 prevention practices, and nursing intentions toward patients infected with the virus. 149 nursing students from two universities were given a questionnaire. Information was gathered about the respondents' general traits, nursing intentions toward COVID-19 patients, knowledge levels, attitudes, perceived risk, and preventive behaviors. SPSS software (version 26.0) was used to statistically analyze the gathered data. Stepwise multiple regression analyses, Pearson's correlation coefficient, one-way ANOVA, independent t-tests, and descriptive statistics were all used in this. Perceived risk was the most predictive factor ($\beta = -0.38$, $p < 0.001$), followed by attitudes ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.001$) and preventive behaviors ($\beta = 0.17$, $p = 0.017$), which accounted for 26% of the variance in nursing intentions, according to the analyses of the factors influencing nursing students' nursing intentions for COVID-19 patients. Nursing students' intentions toward COVID-19 patients can be increased by reducing the perceived risk of infectious diseases and fostering positive attitudes and preventive behaviors. Lastly, to improve the standard of nursing care given to patients with new infectious diseases, research on interventions and infection management education programs for nursing students are required.

Keywords: COVID-19, Nursing, Students, Patients.

1. Introduction

With little epidemiologic data and no clinically validated vaccine or treatment, coronavirus disease (COVID-19) became a significant worldwide concern in 2020 . In order to stop the spread, governments at the time took proactive measures like constructing medical facilities, sending medical personnel, and increasing treatment capacity, as demonstrated by the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Healthcare engagement has grown in significance at the national policy level, supporting surveillance and disease response initiatives (LiQ, 2020; Park, 2021).

An essential component of the medical teams that responded to COVID-19 were nurses. The successful management of new infectious diseases depends on their readiness to actively engage in the treatment of infected patients. A 2021 study found that COVID-19 killed over 1000 nurses across 50 countries. Several healthcare professionals were willing to stay with infected patients and provide them with care despite being aware of the risks to individual healthcare workers in the context of the pandemic (Hong , 2023).

Nurses' proactive and voluntary nursing behaviors are indicated by their nursing intentions. Improving nursing quality during a pandemic requires confirming nurses' readiness to independently provide specialized nursing care. Due to competing roles and responsibilities, nursing intentions are hampered by the lack of clear information on the specific mechanisms, routes of transmission, and symptoms of novel infectious diseases, particularly at the start of the pandemic. In fact, nurses who are regularly exposed to SARS-CoV-2 suffer from psychological distress, high levels of fatigue from long and demanding workdays, and a fear of infecting themselves and their families (Jackson, 2020).

Novel infectious diseases have the potential to overwhelm healthcare systems, cause multiple disruptions, spread quickly, and have a high level of contagion. Future nurses will have to treat patients with new infectious diseases, and those who have no intention of becoming nurses will make it harder for the healthcare system to respond, for instance, by leaving hospitals with a shortage of medical staff during outbreaks. In fact, nursing students in clinical practice have felt scared and anxious when giving nursing care since the COVID-19 pandemic. and these adverse consequences made them more likely to forego nursing care (Keles , 2021).

A theoretical framework for health education, the knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) model suggests changing health-related behaviors by gaining knowledge, forming beliefs, and developing behaviors. The information and knowledge nursing students possess can affect how they feel about COVID-19 and, eventually, how they prevent it. According to studies, healthcare students who were knowledgeable and had a positive outlook were more likely to take preventative measures during the COVID-19 pandemic (Almaghrabi, 2020).

Assess Nursing Students::

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors influencing nursing students' intentions to care for COVID-19 patients by evaluating their knowledge, attitudes, risk perceptions, preventive behaviors, and nursing intentions. 69.8 points was the average knowledge score for COVID-19 in this study. Compared to scores from earlier research that assessed COVID-19 knowledge using comparable tools and items, this score was lower. Nursing students' average score, according to earlier research, was 77.2 points. Students studying healthcare receive 85 points, while medical students receive 86.96 points. In this study, first- or second-year students with no prior clinical experience or knowledge made up over 40% of the participants. It could be hard for them to answer tough questions. Therefore, a questionnaire that takes participants' educational background into account should be developed for future research (Hua , 2020).

Additionally, lower-grade students' understanding of new infectious diseases may be enhanced by early education programs. Additionally, we suggest using the created questionnaire to carry out a comparative study aimed at senior students. When it came to specific questions, the

incubation period, the significance of hand washing, the management of infectious waste by patients, and the transmission of COVID-19 all had high correct response rates. Conversely, there were fewer correct answers to questions about specialized topics commonly seen in clinical practice, such as specimen collection procedures, specimen collection sites, and isolation release criteria. Due to their lack of specific training and experience, nursing students who had never provided care for COVID-19 patients might have answered these questions incorrectly more often (Park, 2021).

Nursing students:

Nursing students who have worked in infection control in healthcare facilities might think they can avoid COVID-19. Programs for teaching people about infection control may therefore improve their perceptions of new infectious diseases. According to recent studies, most college students who followed social distancing measures for an extended period of time experienced more stress in their daily lives, which may have increased their social anxiety and decreased their trust in government policies (Sun, 2020).

The Factors influencing nursing intentions for COVID-19 patients:

Showed that COVID-19 risk perception was the most important factor, followed by attitudes and preventive measures. Higher nursing intentions toward COVID-19 patients were linked to lower risk perception, more positive attitudes, and higher compliance with preventive behavior. These findings are consistent with earlier research on nursing students, which found that higher perceived risk resulted in lower nursing intentions and that greater knowledge and more positive attitudes were linked to higher compliance with preventive behaviors and higher nursing intentions (Hua, 2020).

2. Recommendations:

There are various restrictions on this study. First, it is difficult to generalize the findings of this study because it only asked nursing students from particular geographic areas about their nursing intentions toward COVID-19 patients. Therefore, it is important to carefully evaluate the findings' external validity in light of the larger population of nursing students. Although the focus of this study was nursing students' susceptibility to the COVID-19 pandemic, the findings' generalizability may be impacted by the unique traits of the students who were sampled at the two universities.

Future research could use a more demographically and geographically diverse sample of nursing students to improve the external validity of our findings. A more thorough understanding of nursing intentions toward COVID-19 patients in various contexts would also be developed by investigating the applicability of the factors found in various healthcare and educational settings. Second, to increase the explanatory power of the factors influencing nursing students' nursing intentions regarding COVID-19 patients, studies should include a variety of variables. Third, the survey instrument used in this study was developed from scratch and adapted to the study population. Vocabulary changes were part of this. Therefore, although an exploratory factor analysis was conducted, a confirmatory factor analysis was not. Fourth,

future research should develop and validate training programs that improve nursing intentions in clinical settings by reducing nursing students' risk perceptions of new infectious diseases, encouraging positive attitudes, and increasing preventive behavioral practices.

3. Conclusion:

In Conclusion, Particularly in light of newly emerging infectious diseases like COVID-19, this study offers a solid basis that offers crucial insights to enhance systematic infection control measures and enhance the standard of patient care. By showing that nursing students' attitudes, risk perceptions, and prevention practices are closely related to their intentions toward patients with COVID-19, this study made significant connections. The factors that have been identified necessitate a focused approach to nursing student education that emphasizes proper infection control procedures and the cautious application of protective equipment. Building a proactive and dedicated nursing workforce is increasingly dependent on reducing risk perceptions, encouraging positive attitudes, and encouraging adherence to preventive behaviors. Customized training programs must be developed in light of nursing students' critical role as frontline healthcare professionals once they graduate. In addition to teaching the required knowledge and abilities, these programs ought to foster a sense of voluntary involvement in nursing in clinical settings. In addition to filling in current knowledge gaps, these programs seek to raise the standard of care given by nurses in the face of new infectious disease threats.

Although we acknowledge the study's contributions, considering the abundance of papers from 2021 to 2023 that address related subjects, it is crucial to approach the study's findings with an awareness of their nuances. Making a significant contribution to the current body of knowledge requires carefully outlining the advantages and disadvantages of our findings in relation to previous studies. Building on these fundamental discoveries, future research should aim for a more thorough comprehension and validation of the relationships found between nursing students, their goals, and the complex dynamics of infectious disease care.

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