

Perception of Nursing Undergraduates on Usefulness of Nursing Research in Sri Lanka

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Background: Nurses are required to provide evidence-based care. Hence, the general perception of nursing students on the usefulness of research for nursing practice should be evaluated. It would provide more useful information on changing mindset of nurses to enhance the evidence-based nursing practice in future.

Objective: To understand the nursing student's perception on usefulness of nursing research and associated factors for the perception

Methods: An exploratory descriptive qualitative study was done with 28 final year nursing students with five focus group discussions selected from four government universities in Sri Lanka through the zoom platform till saturation point was achieved. They were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) was done.

Results: Five major themes were identified. They were "Mandatory component to complete undergraduate degree, enhance professional development, Personal satisfaction, Obstacles and Importance of introducing awareness". Since the research project is highly affected to the GPA and without the research project, the degree cannot be completed. Under the theme of enhance professional development, students indicated their opinions on the subject of practical skills as a nurse, nursing education and nursing management such as providing quality patient care, updating nursing procedures and service quality management. Moreover, they emphasized that conducting and publishing research added a qualification, satisfaction and reputation to their carrier. Also, they emphasized problems they encounter when conducting the research projects, publishing and utilizing their findings such as funding, lack of awareness and support from clinical setting for data collection, lack of awareness among the students regarding research methods, publication and promotion opportunities.

Conclusions: Ideas for the enhancement of nursing profession in Sri Lanka such as clinical practices, nursing education and the administration of the nursing field were emerged. Negative aspects to hold the nursing research in the country and suggestions to reduce the barriers for continuing the research study ahead. This information is useful for the enhancement of evidence-based practice for nursing profession in Sri Lanka to take more initiatives in future.

Keywords: *Nursing undergraduates, Perception, Research*