



Nursing Students Attitude Towards Self-Care Management

Williams Kwasi Peprah¹, Gifty Tano²
Fiskvik Boahemaa Antwi³, Simon Akwasi Osei⁴
^{1,2}Valley View University
^{3,4}Adventist University of the Philippines
williams.peprah@vvu.edu.gh

ABSTRACT

Self-care management has become a theoretical discussion among health professional and students. As a result of its importance, the International Council for Nurses has incorporated it in their standard of competence. Self-care encourages health and is a fundamental value of the scope and standards of practice. Nursing students are advised to have proper self-care. This study looked into the self-care management practices of nursing students at the Adventist University of the Philippines and how they align with the institutional outcomes. This quantitative study conveniently samples 47 nursing students as respondents. The study adopted the Circle of Human Potential ' questionnaire by Dossey and Keegan (2009), which assessed self-care management in the areas of physical, relationship, emotional, spiritual, mental, and choice. The application of SPSS 23 was used for the descriptive and T-Test analysis as demanded by the research questions. The results of the study revealed that there is a positive self-care management attitude among nursing students. The ranked of self-care management from highest to the least in the order of spiritual, mental, emotional, relational, choice, and physical assessments. It further revealed that there was no significant difference in self-care management when considering the gender of the students. The outcomes of the study were in accordance with the AUP institutional outcomes of spirituality, critical thinking, professional expertise, service, health and wellness, and positive attitude. The study recommends that nursing students keep up with their positive self-care management.

Keywords: Self-care Management, Nursing Students, Attitude

INTRODUCTION

Self-care practice should be professional anticipation underlying in the role of nurses (Richards, 2013). This is worth considering. The importance of self-care for nurses is evident in the standards of competence for general registered nurses of the International Council of Nurses (ICN) (Alexander and Runciman, 2003).

However, the standards do not align perfectly with ICN standards in individual countries. For example, in the UK, the importance of self-care for nurses is not evident in the Standards of

the Nursing and Midwifery Council for Registered (2010) Nurses framework. The standards for registered nurses in other countries such as New Zealand (Nursing Council of New Zealand, 2007), Canada (College of Nurses Ontario, 2014) and the Philippines are not evident in practice (Philippine Nurses Association, 2012). Korea has also identified the problem of neglecting nurses' self-care within practice standards (Shin and Eschiti, 2005).

The literature on the workforce shows how important self-care is for all nurses, but these discrepancies suggest that it is not consistently acknowledged (Mills, Wand & Fraser, 2015). This raises implications for the global development of standards for nursing practice or the overhaul of existing standards lacking in self-care content.

Student nurses stress is causing poor performance in academic, suboptimal professional identification of formation and student attrition, (Hensel & Laux, 2014). Learning healthy stress coping strategy is part of self-care development for nurses and student nurses. Self-care encourages health and is a fundamental value of the scope and standards of practice (Mariano, 2013).

The attitude of nursing students is to be favorable or unfavorable (Riley, Collins, & Collins, 2019). Some denote that it should be positive or negative. Attitude is essential for developing nursing education. It is also important to promote nursing strategies which will impact on their self-care, compassion fatigue, clinical performance, and work environment.

Nursing students' self-care management is rarely study studied. As most literature focus on clinical practices, student professional identity (Siappo, Nunez & Cabral, 2016). Also noting the universal problem of regulating and standard health self-care, this study has found a gap in knowledge to know the attitudinal change of the nursing student towards self-care. The crux of this study is to find out the attitudinal level of the nursing students towards their self-care management. The self-care practices will be measured on choices, spirit, and relationship, and physical, emotions, mental and personal. The research questions are:

1. What is the attitudinal level of the nurses' students towards self-care management?
2. Is there a significant difference in gender on self-care management by nursing students?

Self-care is an essential element of nursing practice (Ashcraft & Gatto, 2015), and Dorothea Orem first made its importance in nursing explicit in her theory of self-care. Orem explained that self-care is for human well-being, that is for both nurses and patients nurses (Younas, 2017). Nurses and nursing students, however, usually focus more on their patients' nursing care and often pay little or no attention to their personal self-care (Austen, 2015). Personal self-

care healthcare workers and nursing students cannot provide their patients with quality care without practice (Mills, Wand & Fraser, 2015).

Students in nursing experience many stressors during their academic life (Pulido-Martos, Augusto-Landa & Lopez-Zafra, 2012; Younas, 2016), affecting their ability to care for their patients and themselves (Clark, 2014). It has also been noticed that patients and their families perceive nurses and nursing students engaged in self-care positively. While nursing students and nurses neglect self-care, young and immature nursing students may lack the much-needed self-care and health promotion practices experience (Nevins & Sherman, 2016).

According to Tachias, and Ferguson (2019) students in nursing understand the importance of self-care for personal physical, emotional well-being, psychological, and realized the importance of keeping their level of sleep, diet, and activity to improve physical and physiological health. Nursing students must avoid tobacco, illegal drug use, alcohol, and pay attention to their safety and concentrate on certain health screening practices in order to overcome their stressors.

Younas (2017) did a literature review of nursing students' self-care behaviors and practices in general and throughout the study's academic years. A total of 11 studies were scrutinized and critically evaluated to distinguish current trends in the self-care practices and behaviors of nursing students in nursing literature. In order to improve physiological and physical health, nursing students realized the importance of maintaining their level of diet, sleep, and activity. Nevertheless, they manage to neglect self-care practices that might improve their psychological and emotional health due to academic stress, workload, and inadequate knowledge of self-care strategies in this field. There are confined evidence to draw any conclusions about the use of complementary self-care therapies by students, the difference between nursing and non-nursing student self-care practices, the usefulness of various interventions to improve self-care practices by students, and the differences between student self-care practices and behaviors throughout academic years.

Siappo, Nunez, and Cabrail (2016) did a study to examine living a healthy lifestyle that value of self-care during their undergraduate course as part of the experiences of the nursing students. To understand and describe the experiences of self-care of nursing students during their professional training. The method of life story was used in 2013 to interview 22 students of nursing at a Peruvian university. Analysis of content generated the following categories of care conceptualization and self-care learning. It resulted that care was something new to examine, a self-care and well-being. Initially, basic human needs change when students are willing to

take care of others. The study's conclusion and implication were that health care teaching influences the healthy living. To encourage them to care for themselves, it is necessary to raise awareness of the professional nurses' humanistic training.

Tachias and Ferguson (2019) examined the constant, voluntary, and learned self-care actions carried out to preserve one's well-being by nursing students. Study problems include stress, academic dropout, burnout, secondary trauma, issues of concentration, lack of self-care education, and changes in mood. The study conducted a quantitative survey of 160 nursing students with 52 questions using Health-Promoting Lifestyle Profile II and self-reporting of health-promoting lifestyle habits. The study revealed that self-care is directly related to the nursing students' happiness and work ethic and reduced medical errors and increased patient satisfaction. There is seldom an interest in health care providers' self-care. The study concluded that nursing students do not relate to their health by what they are learning. Some of nursing students' strong characteristics work towards long-term goals and are aware of what is important in life. Students must know the things that make them happy. These may consist of self-care activities to overcome the stress, which consists of music, prayer, jogging, deep breathing, and friendship fostering (Osei, Antwi, Peprah, & Antwi, 2019).

Brown, and Bar (2019) qualitative study aimed at discovering the self-care experience of students in an online science master's course in nursing. Care groups were involved in the course; small groups were organized to provide support. The analysis of 37 students' reflective summaries revealed two main themes and five sub-themes. Two overarching themes highlighted "Finding Our Inner Self" and "A Lasting Journey and Not a Destination." Students appreciated a focus on self-care, and support from family, setting goals, friends, and caring groups. Many have mentioned that self-care is an ongoing work.

Paul (2019) investigated into nursing, lack of self-care is directly related to increased burnout, decreased job satisfaction, and decreased rates of new graduate retention. Practicing self-care as a nursing student can help new graduate nurses to establish a sound basis and self-care knowledge. How are the perceptions of nursing students about self-care affected by targeted health and wellness booths based on key ANA Healthy Nurse, Healthy Nation Grand Challenge areas? A professional development course for all nursing students in the cohort is included in the curriculum. Research is being conducted on that course. Self-care is one of the topics of research. The collection of data on this topic leads to the application for a Seeds of Wellness Grant from The Diversity in Nursing Association. Of those participants, an estimated 200 participants attended the event, 159 took the pre-quiz and 136 took the post-quiz, while some

participants chose to abstain from either quiz. The participants strongly agreed and agreed to “I am likely to engage in self-care activities due to this event”.

Goudarzian et al. (2019) study was to determine the effect of self-care training on nursing students' emotional intelligence. This quasi-experimental study was done in 2016 on Mazandaran Medical Sciences University nursing students. The subjects (60 students) collected using a random sampling method were divided into experimental and control groups, and then the students of the experimental group were taught self-care behaviors in 12 sessions using a checklist. The control group subjects have not been taught. Before and after the intervention, emotional intelligence was measured using the standard questionnaire of Bradberry and Greaves. In the experimental group, emotional intelligence scores of students showed positive and significant changes between before (75.33 ± 7.23) and after (125.70 ± 7.79) training ($P < 0.001$). A significant change in control (78.73 ± 6.54) and experimental groups (125.70 ± 7.79) after training ($P < 0.001$) is also shown in the test. It is recommended that special programs be organized to improve students' emotional intelligence that enhances the likelihood of their lifetime success.

METHODS

This study is a descriptive research design. The study conveniently sampled 47 nursing students from Adventist University of the Philippines (AUP) as the respondents in measuring their attitude toward self-care. The descriptive analysis is done by using SPSS 23 to find the mean and standard deviation. Question two, which looks at the significant difference of gender on self-care of the nursing students is analysis by using T' Test.

The null hypothesis of the study:

H0: There is no significant difference in gender in self-care management by nursing students.

All these Likert-scales are based on Vagias (2006) Likert-scale recommendations.

Table 1. **Scoring System Table for Attitude Towards Self-Care Management**

Numeric Scale	Numerical Likert Scale average weight	Scaled Response	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.3 – 4	Every Time	Positive
3	2.5 – 3.2	Almost Every Time	Positive
2	1.7 – 2.4	Almost Never	Negative
1	0.9 – 1.6	Never	Negative

The study fully adopted the research questionnaire developed by Circle of Human Potential ' questionnaire (Dossey & Keegan, 2009). The potential areas in the survey will be reported in the same order: physical, mental, emotional, relationships, choices, spirit.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the first research question which sought to know the attitudinal level of the nurses' students towards self-care management. The study resulted the nursing students in AUP have a positive attitude towards self-care management (M = 3.1515, SD = .23384) as shown in Table 2. In ranking the self-care management, the study revealed that the nursing students in AUP consider first their spiritual assessment (M=3.494, SD = .3905), mental assessment (M=3.334, SD =.3955), emotional assessment (M=3.319, SD =.3534), relationship assessment (M=3.106, SD = .3866), choice (M= 3.098, SD = .3785) and physical assessment (M= 2.735, SD= .3933). This result is in line with the institutional outcome of AUP where students are trained to develop their spirituality, critical thinking, professional expertise, service, health and wellness, and positive attitude. Given this outcome, the nursing students are aware of their self-care management.

Table 2. Self-Care Management (N = 47)

Sub Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Scaled Response	Verbal Interpretation
Spiritual Assessment	3.495	.3905	Every Time	Positive
Mental Assessment	3.334	.3955	Every Time	Positive
Emotional Assessment	3.319	.3534	Every Time	Positive
Relationship Assessment	3.106	.3866	Almost Every Time	Positive
Choice Assessment	3.098	.3785	Almost Every Time	Positive
Physical Assessment	2.735	.3933	Almost Every Time	Positive
Self-Care Management	3.1515	.23384	Almost Every Time	Positive

The following items were used to assess self-care management

Table 3. **Self-Care Management (N = 47)**

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Scaled Response	Verbal Interpretation
Know life is important	3.81	.495	Every Time	Positive
Know that some power greater than myself	3.68	.556	Every Time	Positive
Operate from the perspective that life has value, meaning, and direction	3.49	.655	Every Time	Positive
Feel a part of life and living frequently	3.47	.584	Every Time	Positive
Know at some level a connection with power	3.43	.542	Every Time	Positive
Recognize that different roles of my life are an expression of my true self	3.38	.610	Every Time	Positive
Know how to create a balance and feel a sense of connectedness	3.34	.731	Every Time	Positive
Spiritual Assessment	3.495	.3905	Every Time	Positive
Mental Assessment				
Enjoy developing new skills and talents	3.55	.544	Every Time	Positive
Am interested in and knowledgeable about many topics	3.40	.577	Every Time	Positive
Ask for suggestions and help when I need it	3.38	.644	Every Time	Positive
I am receptive to new ideas and life patterns	3.38	.573	Every Time	Positive
Use my imaginations in considering new choices or possibilities	3.36	.705	Every Time	Positive
Prioritize my work and set realistic goals	3.23	.598	Almost Every Time	Positive
Read a broad range of subjects	3.02	.707	Almost Every Time	Positive
Mental Assessment	3.33	.3955	Every Time	Positive
Emotional Assessment				
Listen to and respect the feeling of others	3.62	.610	Every Time	Positive
Listen to inner self-talk	3.47	.584	Every Time	Positive
Assess and recognize my own feelings	3.40	.825	Every Time	Positive
Can remember and acknowledge most events of my childhood including painful as well as happy	3.38	.573	Every Time	Positive

Recognize my intuition	3.32	.594	Every Time	Positive
Have a nonjudgmental attitude	3.17	.601	Almost Every Time	Positive
Include my feelings when making decisions	3.13	.647	Almost Every Time	Positive
Express my feelings in appropriate ways	3.06	.604	Almost Every Time	Positive
Emotional Assessment	3.32	.3534	Every Time	Positive
Choice Assessment				
Can accept circumstances beyond my control	3.26	.675	Almost Every Time	Positive
Follow through and work on decisions with clarity and action steps	3.23	.598	Almost Every Time	Positive
I am committed and discipline whenever I take a new project	3.15	.691	Almost Every Time	Positive
Recognize the shortcoming of people and events for what they are	3.11	.634	Almost Every Time	Positive
Manage my time to meet personal goals	3.09	.654	Almost Every Time	Positive
Am usually clear on decisions	3.04	.550	Almost Every Time	Positive
Take on no more new task than I can successfully handle	3.00	.692	Almost Every Time	Positive
Take risk	2.91	.654	Almost Every Time	Positive
Choice Assessment	3.098	.3785	Almost Every Time	Positive
Physical Assessment				
Assess my general health	3.09	.686	Almost Every Time	Positive
Play without guilt	3.09	.803	Almost Every Time	Positive
The energy level is effective for daily activity	2.96	.588	Almost Every Time	Positive
Practices relaxation daily	2.87	.769	Almost Every Time	Positive
Eat Nutritious food daily	2.85	.691	Almost Every Time	Positive
Practice safe sex	2.62	1.407	Almost Every Time	Positive
Have a regular physical and dental checkup	2.60	.742	Almost Every Time	Positive
Exercise 3 to 5 times a week for 20 minutes	2.60	.798	Almost Every Time	Positive
Do not Smoke	2.40	1.469	Almost Never	Negative

Drink moderately	1.88	1.160	Never	Negative
Physical Assessment	2.735	.3933	Almost Every	Positive
Self-Care Management	3.151	.23384	Almost Every	Positive
	5		Time	Positive

The positive self-care management results obtained by this study has been confirmed by previous studies done by Tachias, and Ferguson (2019), Brown, and Bar (2019) and Goudarzian et. al. (2019). Their studies noted that nursing students have a positive attitude towards self-care management. However, the results were contrary to the finding of Pulido-Martos, Augusto-Landa, and Lopez-Zafra, (2012) and Younas, (2016) who stated that nursing students neglect their self-care. AUP nursing students have affirmed their commitment to their self-care while studying.

Finally, the study investigated the significant difference of gender on self-care management. The outcome of this scrutiny was that there was no significant difference of gender on self-care management, as shown in tables 4 and 5. Based on the equal variance assumed the p-value = .460 is not statistically significant as the means between the nursing students males (3.1142, SD= .27573) not different from the female (M=3.1688, SD = .20977).

Descriptive of Gender of Self-Care Management

		Group Statistics			
	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Self-Care Management	Female	25	3.1688	.20977	.04195
	Male	19	3.1142	.27573	.06326

Table 5. T’Test of Gender of Self-Care Management

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper	
Self-Care Management	Equal variances assumed	.663	.420	.747	42	.460	.05459	.07313	-.09298	.20216

Equal variances not assumed	.719	32.589	.477	.05459	.07590	-.09991	.20909
--------------------------------------	------	--------	------	--------	--------	---------	--------

The implication is that both the males and females are aware and focus on their self-care while studying at AUP. Therefore, this study failed to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in gender of self-care management for nursing students at AUP.

DISCUSSION

Recommendation

The study recommends that nursing students keep up with their positive self-care management practices which are in line with the institutional outcomes of AUP.

REFERENCES

- Alexander, M. F., & Runciman, P. J. (2003). ICN framework of competencies for the generalist nurse: Report of the development process and consultation. *International Council of Nurses*.
- Ashcraft, P.F., & Gatto, S. L. (2015). Care-of-self in undergraduate nursing students: A pilot study. *Nursing Education Perspective*, 36(4):255-6. <https://doi.org/10.5480/13-1241>. 2.
- Austen, M. (2015). *Self-care in Nursing: A Call to Action*. Retrieved from: <https://www.arnbc.ca/blog/self-care-in-nursing-a-call-to-action-by-marenausten-bsn-student>.
- Brown, C. J., & Bar, B. (2019). Student Experience of Self-Care in an Online Master of Science in Nursing Course. *Nursing education perspectives*, 40(3), 168-170.
- Clark, C. S. (2014). Stress, psychoneuroimmunology, and self-care: What every nurse needs to know. *Journal for Nursing Care*, 3(2):146. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2167-1168.1000146>.
- Dossey, B. M., & Keegan, L. (2009). *Holistic nursing: A handbook for practice* (5th ed.). Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett.
- Goudarzian, A. H., Nesami, M. B., Sedghi, P., Gholami, M., Faraji, M., & Hatkehlouei, M. B. (2019). The Effect of Self-Care Education on Emotional Intelligence of Iranian Nursing Students: A Quasi-experimental Study. *Journal of religion and health*, 58(2), 589-598.
- Hensel, d., & Laux, M. (2014). Longitudinal study of stress, self-care, and professional identity among nursing students. *Nurse Educator*, 39(5), 227–231. Doi:

- Mariano, C. (2013). Holistic nursing: scope and standards of practice. In b. Dossey & l. Keegan (eds.), *Holistic Nursing: A Handbook For Practice* (pp.59-84). Burlington, ma: Jones & Bartlett.
- Mills, J., Wand, T., Fraser. J.A. (2015). On self-compassion and self-care in nursing: Selfish or essential for compassionate care? *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 52, 791–793
- Nevins, C. M., & Sherman, J. (2016). Self-care practices of baccalaureate nursing students. *Journal for Holistic Nursing*, 34(2):185-92.
- Nursing & Midwifery Council, (2010). *Standards for competence for Registered Nurses*. Retrieved from: <http://www.nmc-uk.org/Documents/Standards/Standards%20for%20competence.pdf>.
- Nursing Council of New Zealand, (2007). *Competencies for Registered Nurses*. Retrieved from:<http://www.nursingcouncil.org.nz/content/download/263/1205/file/Competencies%20for%20registered%20nurses.pdf/>.
- Osei, S.A., Antwi, F.B., Peparah, W.K., & Antwi, E. (2019). *The influence of adaptive coping behavior on stress of nursing students*. A paper presented at the 1st International Research Forum. On Fire: Excellence in Research, Adventist University of the Philippines, Putting Kahoy, Silang, Cavite, and April 25, 2019.
- Paul, J. J. (2019). *Your Health-Don't Leave it to Luck: Analyzing Nursing Students' Perceptions of Self-Care*. Retrieved from: https://sigma.nursingrepository.org/bitstream/handle/10755/16515/Paul_PST149_93314.pdf?sequence=1.
- Philippine Nurses Association, (2012). *National Nursing Core Competency Standards*. Retrieved from: <http://www.pna-ph.org/downloads/2012%20Core%20-Competency%20Standards.pdf>.
- Pulido-Martos M., Augusto-Landa J.M., & Lopez-Zafra E (2012). Sources of stress in nursing students: A systematic review of quantitative studies. *International Nursing Review*, 59(1):15-25. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1466-7657.2011.00939.x>.
- Riley, J. M., Collins, D., & Collins, J. (2019). Nursing students' commitment and the mediating effect of stress. *Nurse education today*, 76, 172-177.
- Shin, S.R., Eschiti, V.S. (2005). East meets west: a search for holism in Korean nursing practice. *Journal for Holistic Nursing*. 23 (3), 356–362, [http:// dx.doi.org/10.1177/0898010105277653](http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0898010105277653).
- Siappo, C. L. G., Nunez, Y. R. & Cabrail. (2016). Nursing students' experiences in self-care during training process in a private university in Chimbote, Peru. *Escola Anna Nery* 20(1).

- Tachias, L. M., & Ferguson, R. W. (2019). *Analyzing Self-Care Initiative of Nursing Students*. Retrieved from: https://sigma.nursingrepository.org/bitstream/handle/10755/16942/Tachias_96337_PST261.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.
- Vagias, Wade, M. (2006). Likert-type scale response anchors. Clemson International Institute for Tourism & Research Development, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management. Clemson University
- Younas, A. (2016). Levels of stress and coping strategies used by nursing students in Asian countries: An integrated literature review. *Journal for Middle East North Africa Science*, 2(4):50-7.
- Younas, A. A. (2017). Foundational analysis of dorothea orem's self-care theory and evaluation of its significance for nursing practice and research. *Creative Nursing*, 23(1):13-23.
- Younas, A. (2017). Self-care behaviors and practices of nursing students: Review of literature. *Journal of Health Sciences*, 7(3):137-145. Nusantara.