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Assessment of self-efficacy in evidence-based activities for nurses in a newly opened hospital

MAGNET RECOGNIZED AMERICAN NURSES CREDENTIALING CENTER

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Background

Self-efficacy is defined as one's belief in one's ability to achieve a goal or an outcome. It is the scale between the "can-do" and "cannot-do" self-perception. The literature suggests that there may be a lack of confidence in some nurses in the use of evidence-based practice (EBP) and West Kendall Baptist Hospital, as a new hospital with many nurses who are early in their professional careers, may have some with this same attribute.

Project Goal

The aim of this study was to measure self-efficacy of nurses in the area of Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) during initial and ongoing assessment of patients.

Methods of Implementation

The study design was a cross-sectional survey using a valid and reliable 28-item questionnaire designed to measure the total level of self-efficacy the respondents have in undertaking the 5 steps of EBP along with 6 subscales. The tool we used to assess EBP self-efficacy had two parts: the first part made up of 28 items combined into 5 different factors aimed at determining how confident the respondents were with various aspects of EBP. The second part made up of 8 items grouped into a single factor aimed at determining how confident the various aspects of EBP would lead to specific outcomes. All items were rated in a ordinal scale varying from 0 to 10 and anchored with the terms "Not confident at all" on the 0 side and "Extremely confident" on the 10 side. The study population was direct patient care nurses in medical-surgical, intensive care, mother/baby, emergency department, and surgical services.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for the sample (n = 66)

Variable	% (n)	Comment
Females	91.9% (60)	
Age group **Less than 35**	48.5% (32)	
Years of nursing experience **Less than 2** **2-5** **6-10** **11-15** **More than 15**	3.0% (2) 30.3% (20) 28.8% (19) 19.7% (13) 18.2% (12)	
Highest nursing degree **Less than BSN** **BSN or higher**	16.9% (11) 83.1% (54)	1 missing value (1.5%)
Certification	42.4% (28)	
Training EBP	65.2% (43)	
Training research design	47.6% (30)	3 missing values (4.6%)
Training literature searches	58.7% (37)	3 missing values (4.6%)
Training use of computers	90.8% (59)	1 missing value (1.5%)

Table 2: Comparisons between those with and without EBP training (n = 66)

Subscale	No EBP training (mean±SD)	EBP training (mean±SD)	Test (Wilcoxon rank sum)	p-value
Problem identification	5.7±2.7	8.1±1.6	z = 3.768	<0.001
Finding evidence	5.6±2.6	8.2±1.8	z = 4.044	<0.001
Appraising evidence	5.0±2.5	7.3±2.0	z = 3.576	<0.001
Applying evidence	5.1±2.1	7.5±2.0	z = 4.049	<0.001
Evaluating practice	4.7±2.4	7.1±2.2	z = 3.749	<0.001
Total self-efficacy	5.2±2.3	7.7±1.8	z = 4.092	<0.001
Outcome expectation	5.3±2.5	7.9±2.1	z = 4.062	<0.001

1. Those with EBP or research training had a higher self-efficacy on all scales.

2. For all but one subscale of the survey, the median level of confidence increased as the education level increased. For total self-efficacy (p=.021) as well as for the subscales of problem identification (p=.044), finding evidence (p=0.17), appraising evidence (p=.042), applying evidence (p=.034), and outcome expectation (p=.039) those with higher education had higher self-efficacy.

Findings

66 surveys were returned with 6 (9%) men and 60 (91%) women. Year of experience and certification showed no significant differences in confidence. For all but one subscale of the survey, the median level of confidence increased as the education level increased. In addition, we grouped some of the categories for nursing education level into 1) Diploma or certificate, 2) BSN and 3) MSN or higher. For total self-efficacy (p=.021) and the subscales of problem identification (p=.044), finding evidence (p=0.17), appraising evidence (p=.042), applying evidence (p=.034), and outcome expectation (p=.039) those with higher education had higher self-efficacy.

Discussion

As expected, all subscales showed significantly higher median confidence in the groups with EBP training, literature search training and computer training compared to the groups without training. It is interesting to note that the common theme is the effect that education and training, specifically EBP/literature search/computer training, have on confidence related to evidence based practice activities. Age, experience, gender and certification do not appear to have the same impact.

Implications for Practice

Further studies could add to this body of knowledge. In the meantime, consideration, as part of an orientation to a practice setting, should be made to training and education about evidence based practice . This might best be served by defining EBP, understanding how to search the literature for it specific to a practice topic