

Determination of students related factors that contribute to poor performance in professional Nursing examination among nursing students in Imo State

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Abstract

The study was conducted to find out the predictors of poor performance in professional nursing examination among nursing students in Imo State. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Four (4) research questions and four (4) hypotheses were formulated to direct the study. The population comprised of all the students in nursing institutions that have written the professional nursing examination in Imo State. The sample size consists of 322 determined using Taro Yamane formula and selected using random and proportionate sampling techniques. A self-developed structured questionnaire was used to obtain data which was analyzed and computed statistically using SPSS version 28. Research questions were answered using mean while hypotheses were tested using Multiple linear regression. The major findings are that Majority of the nursing students agree that student related factors such as poor utilisation of non-class hours, inability to pay attention during lectures etc contribute to the poor performance of students in the professional nursing examinations (mean=2.92); Institutional related factors such as overpopulation of students, lack of equipment and training facilities etc contribute to poor performance in professional nursing examinations (mean =3.27). Nursing school administrators and heads of nursing departments in tertiary institutions should ensure optimum student enrolment and provision of facilities.

Keywords: *students, poor performance, professional Nursing examination, nursing students*

Introduction

Education is one of the most important aspects of human resource development. Learners are main source of any educational set up. These days speedy change in education is a valuable strive of human being. It plays an important role to enhance human wealth and also help in personality building and performance that develop living standard of human being.¹

Academic performance of students in Nigeria has been of much concern to all and sundry. Poor academic performance is one of the greatest concerns of parents over their children in high institution. Oladebinu *et al.*², affirmed that the students' performance plays an important role in producing best quality graduates who will become great leaders and manpower for the country thus responsible for the country's economic and social development. They further added that academic achievement is one of the major factors considered by employers in hiring workers especially for the fresh graduates. Thus, students have to put the greatest effort in their study to obtain good grades and to prepare themselves for future opportunities in their career at the same time to fulfill the employer's demand.²

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Agu³ Emphasized that Nursing education consists of acquisition of a body of knowledge that is partly delivered in a classroom setting which forms the theoretical bases of nursing knowledge and an organized and supervised clinical training experiences that take place in the clinical settings where the nurse- patient relationship is experienced directly or indirectly.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted survey design.

Settings of the Study

The research study was conducted in Imo State.

Target Population

The target population of the study is 1097 nursing students from the schools and the Department of Nursing in Imo State (300 levels and 500 level respectively who have taken the professional nursing council examinations).

Sample and sample technique

The sample size for the study was statistically determined by Taro Yamane formula for a finite population. This yielded a sample size of 322 (with attrition rate included).

The calculation of the sample size is given as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}n &= \frac{N}{1 + N \alpha^2} \\&= \frac{1097}{1 + 1097(0.05)^2} \\&= \frac{1097}{1 + 1097(0.0025)} \\&= \frac{1097}{1 + 2.7425} \\&= \frac{1097}{3.7425} \\n &= 293\end{aligned}$$

Where: N is the population size, n is the sample size and α^2 is the alpha level of 0.05

10% attrition rate was added to the sample size. Therefore $293 + 29 = 322$

The sample size is thus given as 322 nursing students.

Sampling Technique

The technique employed for sampling the nursing students is proportionate random sampling technique. In each of the nursing institutions, the students were grouped accordingly (i.e. 300 level

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and 500 level who have taken May and November nursing council examinations). Proportionate sampling technique was used to calculate the proportion of students required from each school. From each group, simple random sampling by balloting was used to select the students for the study.

Inclusion criteria

The students who are in 300 level for colleges and schools of nursing and in 500 level for department of Nursing IMSU, who have just concluded the professional nursing examinations and were willing to participate in the study.

Exclusion criteria

Nursing students in other levels who have not taken the professional nursing examinations were exempted from the study.

Method of Data Collection

The respondents' consent was obtained after some explanation about the nature and purpose of the study, consequently the researcher administered 322 copies of the questionnaire. The research assistant was hired to help to administer the questionnaire.

Method of Data Analysis

Data were collected and tallied before computing. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics for the demographic section and statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS version 28) for other sections. Parametric statistics like: mean was used to answer research questions while the hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression. The Basis for decision making is the use of P-value. Where the given p-value is more than 0.05, the hypothesis is not rejected but where it is 0.05 or less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Ethical Consideration

During this study, the researcher acknowledged all ethical principles which govern the conduct of a research. The researcher observed the following ethical considerations:

- A letter of identification was collected from the Department of Nursing Science Imo State University Orlu, consequently, a letter was written to the HODs and Provosts of different nursing institutions for permission to carry on the study.
- The researcher assured the respondents that there would be confidentiality in dealing with their responses.
- The anonymity of the respondents was ensured and none of their names was mentioned during the course of this project.
- The respondent had the right to withdraw from the project at any time the desired to.
- Prevention of physical and psychological harms to the respondents was ensured by the researcher.

Results

Table 1: Demographic data of respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (years)	18-22	127	39.44
	23-27	162	50.31

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	28-32	33	10.25
	33 and above	0	0
Gender	Male	105	32.61
	Female	217	67.39
Marital status	Single	213	66.14
	Married	77	29.91
	Divorced/separated	32	3.95

Data on table 1 show the demographic characteristics of the respondents. It is shown that 127 (39.44%) of the students are aged 18-22 years; 162 (50.31%) are aged 23-27 years; 33 (10.25%) are aged 28-32 years while none of the respondents indicated ages of 33 and above. 105 (32.61%) of the respondents are males while 217 (67.39%) are females.

Data on marital status of the respondents show that 213 (66.14%) of the students are single; 77 (29.91%) are married while 32 (3.95%) are divorced or separated.

Table 2: Student related factors that contribute to poor performance in professional Nursing examination among nursing students in Imo State

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Poor utilization of non-class hours	113	128	32	49	2.95	Agree
2	Inability to pay attention during lectures	93	148	49	32	2.93	Agree
3	Poor attendance to classes	153	92	55	22	3.16	Agree
4	Poor reading / study habit	128	113	65	16	3.09	Agree
5	Relying on malpractices	144	65	32	81	2.84	Agree
6	Wrong choice of career	87	22	109	104	2.28	Disagree
7	Unpreparedness to face new challenges	132	109	32	49	3.00	Agree
8	Peer group influence	109	103	49	61	2.80	Agree
9	Lack of interest	126	132	64	0	3.19	Agree
10	Indiscipline on the part of students	65	160	97	0	2.90	Agree
11	Students low interest in learning	97	144	65	16	3.00	Agree
	Cumulative mean					2.92	

Data on table 2 show the mean responses of nursing students on the student related factors contributing to poor performance in the professional nursing examinations. Item 6 has a mean mark of 2.28 which implies that majority of the students do not agree that wrong choice of career is a student related factor contributing to poor performance in the nursing examinations. All other items in the questionnaire have their mean responses above 2.50 which is the cut off mean. The cluster mean for the items is given as 2.92 which is also greater than the cut off mean of 2.50. This implies that majority of the nursing students agree that student related factors such as poor utilisation of non-class hours, inability to pay attention during lectures, poor attendance to classes,

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poor reading/study habits, relying on malpractice etc. contribute to the poor performance of students in the professional nursing examinations.

Discussion

Findings from research question one (objective one) revealed that majority of the nursing students agree that student related factors such as poor utilisation of non-class hours, inability to pay attention during lectures, poor attendance to classes, poor reading/study habits, relying on malpractice etc. contribute to the poor performance of students in the professional nursing examinations. The cumulative mean responses of the nursing students on student related factors are given as 3.27. This finding coincides with the findings of Linu *et al.*⁴, who conducted a study on factors affecting learning among Undergraduate Nursing Students and identified personal student learning challenges as the major factors contributing to poor performance among undergraduate nursing students. Also supporting the findings above are that of Yolande⁵ on academic factors affecting learning at a nursing college in the Western Cape. The study revealed inability of the students to cope with workload as a major student related factor contributing to poor performance in a nursing college in Western Cape.

The corresponding hypothesis reveals that gender, marital status and age does not significantly predict students' responses on student related factors contributing to poor performance ($p>0.05$) in among nursing students in Imo State. This by implication means that the mean responses of the nursing students were similar across age groups, gender and marital status. This is also in line with the findings of Yolanda who reported no significant relationship in the performance of nursing students at Western Cape and their gender and age.⁵

Conclusion

The professional nursing examinations is the hallmark of examinations for nursing students. It is the examination that determines the fate of most nursing students as nurse or otherwise. It is because of the indispensability of this examination that much concern has been given to it by both nurse educators and nursing students. Despite the obvious importance of this nursing examination, a finite number of nursing students perform poorly in the examinations, hence the reason for this study.

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