

# a study on the opinions of first and third year nursing students on family planning - an abstract

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The main purpose of the study was to examine whether information about family planning provided in the current nursing curriculum made any difference in the opinions towards birth control among the third year diploma students when compared with the first year nursing students. The associated purposes were (i) to determine whether nursing students have any recognizable opinion pattern (positive or negative) about birth control (ii) to suggest methods and techniques that are likely to maximize acquisition of favourable opinions towards nurses' participation in birth control programmes.

**Procedures :** The subjects of the study included three groups of students from six diploma nursing schools of Uttar Pradesh, comprised of 150 first year, 150 second year and 100 third year students. The second year students were included in the study in order to determine the relationship between the year of study and opinion change towards birth control.

A questionnaire containing 3 sections and 40 items was designed and developed by the researcher. The first and second sections included the five major scales used in the study (1) knowledge about contraceptives (2) knowledge about population explosion (3) cultural beliefs (4) religious beliefs and (5) intention to act. The opinion statements developed in the questionnaire (scales 2, 3, 4 and 5) were rated on the Likert Summated scale. The third section included four biographic variables (a) religious sects (b) age differences (c) urban-rural background and (d) marital status.

**Findings :** The findings were compared on the basis of the proportion of correct responses to items ; distribution of the level of the correct number of responses ; mean scores and test results on the major scales identified in the study. A cross tabulation of 4 biographic variables with the mean scores on the five scales was also computed to find any variation in the results other than the year of study.

The major findings were (1) that the second and third year students who received information about birth control through formal instruction showed a more favourable opinion about their intention to act in birth control programmes than the first year students who did not have formal instruction about birth control (2) that there was no significant difference in the knowledge and opinions of the intention of act in birth control programs between the second and third-year students (3) that as the knowledge about birth control increased through the year of study, a reorganization of belief structure was indicated and the

students in the second and third year of study showed a more favourable opinion toward birth control practice than the first year students. These identified changes among second and third year students were not as high as expected, considering the family planning content provided in the curriculum.

The cross tabulation of mean scores and F Ratio of 4 biographic variables with the mean scores on five scales did not show a consistent significant difference except for the variable urban-rural background. It was evident that students with urban background were better informed about birth control devices and population explosion and showed a more favorable opinion about their intention to act in birth control programmes. Both urban and rural groups improved their scores on all five scales as the year of study increased.

The implications of the study were related to knowledge acquisition, communication skills and instructional strategies.

Recommendations for further study were indicated.

## Facts About Smallpox

- ☐ Smallpox is a deadly, virus-caused infection that produces fever, skin rash, pocks and scabs. Those of its victims who survive are left with scars which last for life, and sometimes blindness.
- ☐ The infection spreads by means of secretions from the victim's nose and mouth and from the pocks and scabs.
- ☐ A smallpox patient falls ill between seven and seventeen days after receiving the virus and can transmit the illness to others for about a month after the appearance of the skin rash.
- ☐ No cure is known for smallpox, but it can be prevented by vaccination, which is a simple and virtually painless medical procedure.
- ☐ In 1967, when the World Health Organisation triggered an international campaign to eradicate the disease, smallpox was endemic to thirty countries and was reported in twelve more.
- ☐ At the start of the WHO smallpox eradication campaign, there were estimated to be more than two-and-a-half-million cases a year.
- ☐ One of the mightiest weapons in the war against smallpox is a vaccine that remains stable and potent, even in hot climates, because it is freeze-dried rather than in liquid form.
- ☐ As smallpox is being wiped out, tremendous resources of human ability, energy and money are being released to focus on other great health problems of mankind.

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