

# Empowering Nursing Students through Qualitative Descriptive Research on Nursing Students' Experience During Covid-19

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## ABSTRACT

Nursing students' pandemic perceptions are unclear. This Study examined how nursing students felt, thought, and acted during the COVID-19 pandemic. This qualitative research included 51 first-year nursing students from COVID-19-stricken university. As the pandemic dragged on, student nurses reported feeling fear and anxiety. They initially liked this situation due to the constraints during the pandemic process, but they became bored due to the monotony of extraordinary days and come to appreciate every moment before the pandemic. The students also argued the virus had united humanity and ended wars. Fights, and attempts to dominate. This study found that nursing students utilize unhealthy coping mechanisms such poor time management due to family obligations and excessive media use. Thus, nursing students must be equipped to handle unpleasant emotions and thoughts from the start.

**KEYWORDS:** Covid-19, nursing students, pandemic, ethics, stress, nursing educators

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In December 2019, Wuhan, China was the Centre of a COVID-19 PANDEMIC [1,2,3]. MARCH 11, 2020, saw the WHO declare a pandemic [4]. Our society, economy, and schools limit travel, social distance, and isolation. The spread of the disease, isolation measures, and the closure of all schools and institutions in the nation have a major influence on students' academic performance and mental health [3,7]. Students may struggle with fear of infection, caring for sick friends and family, adjusting to a new educational and grading system, and unfamiliarity with the new curriculum [8,9]. College students' emotional well-being has been studied worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic has made hospital clinical rotations difficult for nursing students [13]. The literature on mental health, COVID-19, anxiety, nursing, emotional responses and coping strategies, and preventative, traditional, and complementary medicine for COVID-19 is reviewed here [11,14,15]. One qualitative research examined student nurse tweets. Students tweeted about the COVID-19 pandemic, daily life, their social roles, friendships,

and politics [13]. Other studies have examined senior nursing students who entered the health care industry during the pandemic [13], their obstacles in starting their jobs [14], and their views on Covid-19[15].

## 2. Need and significance in Nursing

The importance of empowering people cannot be overstated. When people, like nursing students, have agency, they feel like they belong and are better able to contribute. Individuals are empowered when they gain insight into the connection between their choices and the consequences they experience. Meaning, competence, self-determination, and effect are the four pillars upon which empowerment rests as an intrinsic drive.

## 3. Objective

This study aims to improve the lives of first-year nursing students by shedding light on their mental state during the crucial covid-19 transition year. Counselling needs, rates of depression and anxiety among men and women, etc. can only be understood through extensive qualitative study.

#### 4. Literature Review

Few studies have examined nursing student empowerment, and most have focused on academic empowerment. Pearson et al studied student agency from a pedagogical viewpoint in a grounded theory research with six New Zealand second-year nursing students [10]. This study focused on classroom and faculty education and curriculum rather than clinical placement and nursing students' empowerment. According to Pearson et al, this research, educators should combine historical, social, cultural, and political knowledge into their courses [11]. Bradbury-Jones et al. examined whether nursing students felt empowered during clinical rotations using a critical event method [12]. Bradbury-Jones et al. found that mentors and preceptors boosted nursing students' feeling of agency [13]. However, Bradbury-Jones and Tranter stated, "A great deal of inconsistencies have been created by nurse researchers trying to advance the cause of Critical Incident Technique." This has created unnecessary uncertainty that serves as an obstacle to the development of nursing expertise [14]. Bradbury-Jones et al. conducted a longitudinal phenomenological study of 13 freshmen to investigate empowerment. This three-year research tracked empowerment and disempowerment [15]. Corbally et

al stated the researchers' phenomenological approach focused on students' experiences rather than theory [18].

#### 5. Materials and methods

##### 5.1. type of Research

This research is qualitative in nature. The study's results were reported using the COREQ (Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research) Checklist.

##### 5.2. Study Participants and Representative Sample

The study's participants are first year nursing students at a university where COVID-19 was widespread. We were particularly worried about first year students because they lack hospital widespread. We were particularly worried about first year students because they lack hospital experience and specific coursework. 51 participants were selected for the research. The total sample size was 51 since 7 students or their family were sick, 8 students didn't finish their diaries, and 6 students quit. Saturation sampling is used to establish the sample size for qualitative investigations by gathering data until a suitable size is attained. Saturation was reached with 51 students.

Table 1 shows each participant's characteristics.

**Table 1, Students' Demographic Details (n=51)**

Participants	Gender	Age	Participants	Gender	Age
P1	Male	19	P27	Female	20
P2	Female	20	P28	Female	20
P3	Female	20	P29	Female	20
P4	Female	20	P30	Female	20
P5	Female	20	P31	Female	18
P6	Female	19	P32	Female	18
P7	Female	19	P33	Female	18
P8	Female	21	P34	Male	18
P9	Female	20	P35	Male	18
P10	Female	20	P36	Male	18
P11	Female	20	P37	Male	18
P12	Male	20	P38	Female	18
P13	Male	20	P39	Female	18
P14	Male	19	P40	Female	18
P15	Female	19	P41	Female	18
P16	Female	19	P42	Male	18
P17	Female	19	P43	Female	18
P18	Female	19	P44	Female	18
P19	Female	19	P45	Male	18
P20	Female	19	P46	Female	19
P21	Male	19	P47	Female	19
P22	Male	19	P48	Female	19
P23	Female	19	P49	Male	18
P24	Female	20	P50	Female	18

<b>P25</b>	Female	20	<b>P51</b>	Female	18
<b>P26</b>	Female	20			

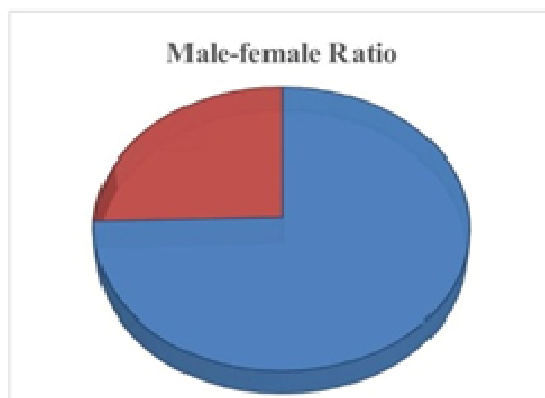


Figure 1. Male-Female Ratio of the population

### 5.3. Collection of Data

The study’s participants were instructed to keep a diary on the coronavirus epidemic and email it to the authors. Participants must explain their diary-keeping methods in qualitative diary research. Journal regulations have been given to students. The participants were asked to write diary at the end of the day by mentioning their feelings throughout the period.

### 6. Result and Discussions

Students in the study tend to be between the ages of 18 and 20, on average. Themes gleaned from nursing students’ diaries during the first month of social limitations due to the COVID-19 epidemic are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Themes discovered in nursing students’ diaries during the first month of social limitations brought on by the COVID-19 epidemic**

Themes	Sub-Theme
Nursing students’ emotions during the COVID-19 pandemic	Fear and anxiety
Nursing Students’ views on pandemic	Why COVID-19 matters, and what it taught us, is something worth living for. The perspectives of future nurses on their profession in the midst of a pandemic
Nursing students’ coping strategies during the pandemic	Nursing students’ proven methods for dealing with stress. Nursing students’ inefficient coping mechanisms.

Pandemic news coverage caused students to experience anxiety, dread, and panic, particularly during the outbreak, lack of understanding about the virus, anxieties about spreading it, and apprehension about the future contributed to stress. Nursing students experienced anxiety and depression, while college students anxiety and depression. Social media news consumption increased anxiety and unhappiness.

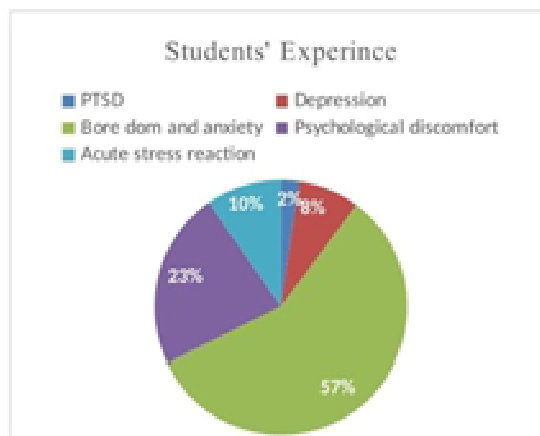


Figure 2. Pictorial presentation of students’ experience

Nursing students are aware of COVID-19 transmission and are taking virus prevention seriously. They have changed behavior to conform to public health recommendations and reduced regular activities. Policies preventing students from seeing loved ones caused anxiety, sorrow, and worry. Quarantine and social isolation harm nursing students' mental health. Prioritizing university mental health care is crucial due to the pandemic. Students stayed home in accordance with the restrictions, but as the process dragged on, their daily routines became the same, and they became bored, not enjoying life, and losing the meaning of life due to the unprecedented days everyone is experiencing. Some pupils felt despondent and dissatisfied. According to Arestovich et al (2020), university students struggled with online learning, felt inadequate, bored, apprehensive, and dissatisfied about their future careers and studies [13]. 26.63% of research participants experienced clinically significant psychological pain, and 11.1% had a likely acute stress reaction [10]. Because of the under-20 curfew, 66.2% of nursing students who stayed home felt bored [8]. The kids' stress scores were moderate, although higher than before, according to Okuyan et al. [2020], nursing students have significant health anxiety during the pandemic, are negatively influenced by remaining home, are overwhelmed and apprehensive, are fearful of infection and death, and are anxious and overwhelmed about the future [14]. Our findings match earlier research. A pictorial presentation of students' experiences has been displayed in Figure 2.

## 7. Conclusion

During the pandemic, nursing students were reported to have had negative emotions and thoughts such as dread, worry, despair, dissatisfaction, boredom, not enjoying life, tension, and so on. During the epidemic, nursing students employed both healthy and unhealthy coping mechanisms. Students in the nursing profession who have experienced problems in coping may be at risk for physical and mental illness. As such preparing nursing students from an early age to deal with difficult feelings and ideas is important for the growth of both individuals and the field. It is hoped that the information gleaned from nursing students' diaries during the COVID-19 epidemic would serve as a roadmap for future generations of nurses. These journals will serve as invaluable resources for future pandemics, assisting nursing students in both their personal and professional development. Educators in the nursing field may help their students grow in areas such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, social media prudence, time

management, and the ability to deal constructively with stress.

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