

ABSTRACT

NURSING STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES REGARDING PEDIATRIC PAIN

Hospitalized children often experience acute pain occurring as a result of injury, illness, or necessary medical and/or surgical procedures. This pain is often described as the most distressing part of the hospital stay. A nonexperimental descriptive survey design was conducted to investigate the knowledge and attitudes of baccalaureate nursing students regarding pediatric pain in an effort to examine the current effectiveness of nursing education with regard to pain management. Knowledge and attitudes were measured using the Pediatric Nurses' Knowledge and Attitudes Survey (PNKAS), a 42-item self-administered survey. The study sample consisted of students enrolled in their fifth semester of a six-semester nursing program at California State University, Fresno. Included in this population were eight registered nurses and one licensed vocational nurse. Inclusion required completion of both pediatric and pharmacology coursework. PNKAS scores for the students ranged from 46.5% to 100% with a sample mean of 69.435%.

Tracy Chin
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