Challenges Facing Involvement of Early-Career Nurses’ in Research in Nigeria: A Cross-Sectional Survey

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BACKGROUND

Nurses’ involvement in research is essential in the promotion of evidence-based practices, expansion of nursing science and improvement of patients’ care and outcomes. Despite this, it appears that nurses only occasionally participate in research. Therefore, identification of the circumstances that facilitate or impede engagement in research is needed. This study intended to analyse and investigate factors influencing early career nurses’ involvement in research in Nigeria as a step toward addressing these problems and to enhance early career nurses’ active participation in research.

METHODS

Data on early-career nurses who offer direct patient care and have one to eleven years of work experience were collected through a cross-sectional survey using a convenience sample technique. After ascertaining the validity of the instrument by expert review, a link to the online survey was sent to nurses across geopolitical zones in Nigeria via WhatsApp. The survey questions assessed demographic characteristics, level of involvement of early-career nurses in research and challenges inhibiting participation in research. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics.

RESULTS

Ninety-eight percent of the nurses among the 150 respondents said they had conducted research, but it was for a required final-year school project. Ever since, more than half of the respondents (55%) have not participated in any form of research. Only 29% of nurses have submitted research papers to any journals, and the majority (77%) of the nurses have no publications. Lack of research knowledge (77%), insufficient funding (98%), limited time (95%) and high publication fees (80%), as well as a low acceptability of the results of nurse-coordinated research (75%) are some of the identified challenges facing young nurses involvement in research. Despite the challenges, 73% of the respondents were interested in getting involved in research for a long-term career.

CONCLUSIONS

Early-career nurses’ participation in research is not without challenges. Further research capacity interventions and training are required to enable early-career nurses to develop clear understanding of research and necessary research skills which in turn will increase participation.