



**UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENT'S SELF-EFFICACY TOWARDS
PALLIATIVE CARE: A RAPID NARRATIVE REVIEW**

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ABSTRACT

The increasing number of patients with life-threatening diseases will affect the high need for palliative care in health services. Self-efficacy towards palliative care among undergraduate students is vital for ensuring they have adequate readiness and ability to provide high-quality care. Objective : This review aims to identify the level of self-efficacy towards palliative care among undergraduate nursing students. Method : The method used in this literature review is a rapid narrative review compiled using PRISMA 2020 guidelines. The databases used were PubMed, Medline, Scopus and ScienceDirect. Articles used are research articles with published from 2020-2024. The criteria in this study were organized based on the PCC framework criteria. The main keywords were not limited to “undergraduate nursing student*”, “self-efficacy”, and “palliative care”. Results : Nine out of 167 studies were included. The findings discussed the level of self-efficacy and factors that influence self-efficacy towards palliative care in clinical learning among undergraduate nursing students. Conclusions : Low self-efficacy indicates undergraduate nursing students' unpreparedness to provide palliative care. Nursing students need self-efficacy towards palliative care to ensure adequate readiness and ability to provide high-quality palliative care. This review is essential to improve the quality of palliative care education and increase self-efficacy in undergraduate nursing students.

Keywords: palliative care; self-efficacy; undergraduate nursing students

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INTRODUCTION

The rising prevalence of terminal illnesses will necessitate an increased provision of palliative care services. It is estimated that 56.8 million individuals necessitate palliative care each year, with a substantial number residing in low- and middle-income nations (WHO, 2020). Southeast Asia reported about 17.1% of the number of patients requiring palliative care in the world with the highest disease rate being cancer (WHPCA, 2020). Palliative care focuses on enhancing the quality of life for patients and their families coping with serious diseases. It addresses patients' physical, psychosocial, and spiritual needs, and is delivered by an interdisciplinary team, with each member working in their respective specialties and areas of focus (Teoli et al., 2023; WHO, 2020). Palliative care teams are usually made up of doctors, nurses, social workers, religious experts, and other professionals, depending on the specific needs of the patients. Nurses are primarily responsible for providing palliative care, with a focus on comprehensive care. In addition, nurses are often recognize changes in health status that occur in patients (Hagan et al., 2018), so nurses play an important role in the quality of palliative care provided to patients (Kim et al., 2020). The knowledge and skills possessed by nurses are obtained since becoming nursing students. Nursing students as prospective nurses need effective palliative care education to ensure nurses are able to handle the need for quality palliative care in the future (Hagan et al., 2018). There are many factors that support quality palliative care, one of which is self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's capability to execute specific tasks (Bandura, 1997). It can influence various areas, including learning motivation and career choices (Kodden, 2020). High self-efficacy students tend to be more motivated to work harder, perform better and sustain focus on tasks for longer periods (Maharani & Purnama, 2023). Research suggests that self-efficacy positively affects academic achievement among students (Al-abyadh & Azeem, 2022; Maharani & Purnama, 2023).

Self-efficacy towards palliative care refers to one's perceived ability to offer palliative care services (Kim et al., 2020). High self-efficacy towards palliative care can improve the quality of care, reduce emotional stress among nurses and enhance the quality of life for patients and families (Kim et al., 2023; Lin et al., 2022). Increasing self-efficacy towards palliative care among undergraduate nursing students is crucial for ensuring they are adequately prepared and capable of delivering quality palliative care. However, there is limited literature on self-efficacy towards palliative care among nursing students. This rapid narrative review was conducted to identify the level of self-efficacy towards palliative care among undergraduate nursing students and to support educational institutions in enhancing self-efficacy, making certain that nursing students are well-prepared to deliver superior palliative care services.

METHOD

The method used in this literature review is rapid narrative review, conducted in accordance with PRISMA 2020 guidelines. This approach was chosen because it helps synthesize research on self-efficacy towards palliative care among undergraduate nursing students in a comprehensive manner. The research questions addressed in this review are : a) What is the level of self-efficacy towards palliative care provision among undergraduate nursing students? b) What are factors influencing self-efficacy in providing palliative care in clinical learning?. The search for articles in this literature review was conducted based on the predetermined inclusion criteria, including English-language articles, publications from the last 5 years (2020-2024) and research articles reporting the level of self-efficacy and factors influencing self-efficacy towards palliative care among undergraduate nursing students. The inclusion criteria for this review are based on the PCC framework, with a focus on nursing students' self-efficacy in the context of palliative care. The article search conducted using four databases: Pubmed, EBSCO, Scopus and ScienceDirect. During the article selection stage, the author followed the selection process outlined in the PRISMA 2020 diagram : (1) Removing duplicates; (2) Screening based on title and abstract, and (3) Screening by analyzing the relevance of the article content. The data extraction process performed by the author involved gathering key information, including the author, country, research design, and main findings that address the research questions.

RESULT

The article search resulted in 9 research articles, which were screened based on the title, abstract, and relevance of the full article content. The flow of article identification is illustrated in the PRISMA 2020 flowchart.

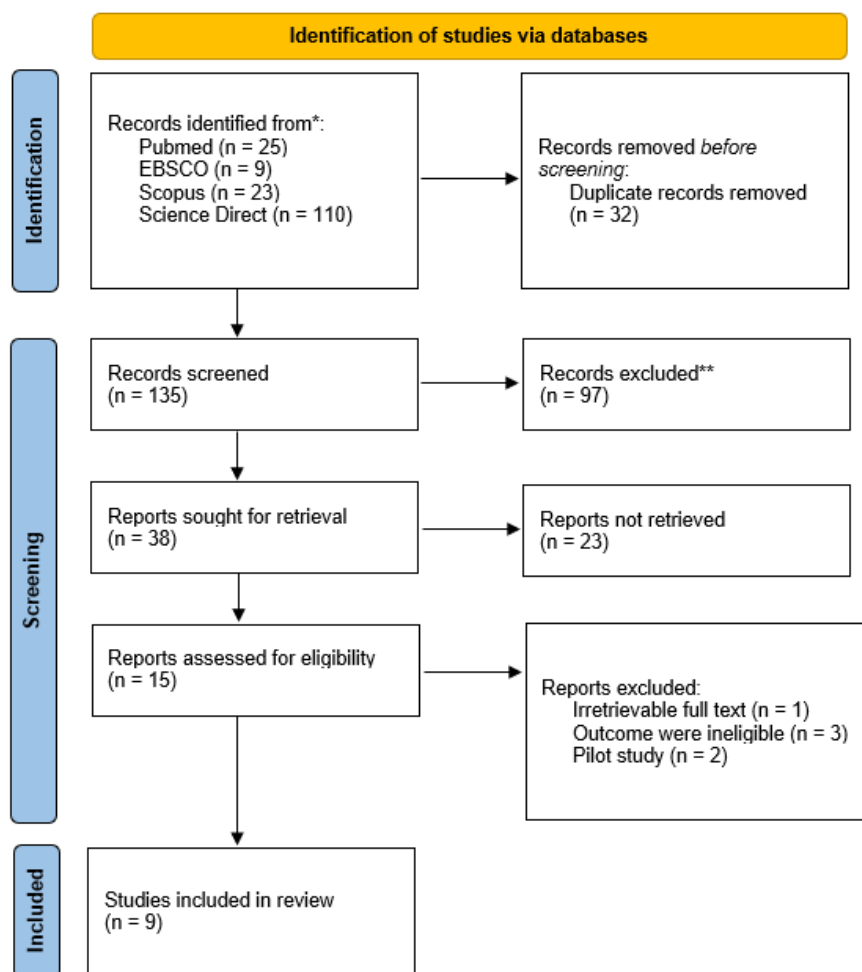


Figure 1. PRISMA Flowchart for Literature Search

Studies Characteristics

The majority of studies included were conducted in high-income nations, such as China (Zhou et al., 2020), Saudi Arabia (Alrasheedi et al., 2021), Spain (Escribano et al., 2021; Esteban-Burgos et al., 2024), Hong Kong (Chang et al., 2022), the United States (Clark & Lippe, 2022; Conley, 2023), South Korea (Jeon et al., 2024), and Iran (Salmani et al., 2024). Of the 9 articles selected, 3 are cross-sectional studies, 2 are quasi-experimental studies, 2 are mixed-method studies, 1 is a randomized controlled trial, and 1 is a semi-experimental study. Based on the analysis of the nine articles, this rapid narrative review describes the level of self-efficacy toward palliative care and learning methods than can enhance self-efficacy towards palliative care among undergraduate nursing students.

Table. 1
Data Extraction of the Self-Efficacy Towards Palliative Care Among Undergraduate Nursing Students (n=9)

Author (Year)/ Country	Aims	Type of Research	Sample	Main Findings
Zhou, Li & Zhang (2020) China	To evaluate nursing students' knowledge base, attitudes, and self-efficacy in providing palliative care,	Descriptive, cross-sectional & correlational study	187	The average self-efficacy score was 1.96, indicating that the undergraduate nursing students had a low level of self-efficacy towards palliative care.

Author (Year)/ Country	Aims	Type of Research	Sample	Main Findings
	and to investigate the links between these variables.			
Alrasheed i, Schultz & Harvey (2021) Saudi Arabia	To investigate the relationship between individual characteristics, work-related aspects, knowledge of palliative care, attitudes towards end-of-life care, general self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and intent to work in oncology.	Multi-institutional cross-sectional study	178	Undergraduate nursing students who were most likely to specialize in oncology nursing (28.6%) were more likely have positive attitudes towards caring for dying patients and greater self-efficacy than their peers. Self-efficacy was a strong predictor of both attitude and knowledge levels.
Escribano <i>et al</i> (2021) Spain	To examine the impact of a simulation program with standardized patients in intricate chronic and end-of-life care scenarios, with variables including attitude, self-efficacy and communication skills among nursing students.	Quasi experimental study	161	Nursing students participated in a simulation program with standardized patients. The results of this study showed an increase in self-efficacy, with scores rising from 81.73 to 95.09 after the intervention. This simulation program can improve self-efficacy and communication skills among nursing students.
Chang <i>et al</i> (2022) Hong Kong	To explore the impact of simulation-based experiences in palliative care on nursing students.	Mixed method study	29	The intervention was simulation-based learning (SBL). The results showed an increase in self-efficacy scores, from pre-intervention (M = 90.07) to post-intervention (92.52). This indicates that self-efficacy related to palliative care improved following the intervention.
Clark & Lippe (2022) The United States	To evaluate the impact of vicarious learning versus active learning in enhancing nursing students' self-efficacy in delivering among nursing therapeutic communication during pediatric end-of-life scenarios.	Quasi experimental study	100	After the simulation, both the active learning and vicarious learning groups experienced a significant increase in self-efficacy scores for all 9 SECS items. In particular, for items 3 and 5 of the SECS, the vicarious learning group showed greater improvement compared to the active learning group. This pediatric end-of-life simulation improved nursing students' self-efficacy to communicate effectively with challenging patient situations.
Conley (2023) The United States	To evaluate the validity and reliability of the "End-of-Life and Postmortem Self-Efficacy Scale" and to explore nursing students' self-efficacy in their ability to care for individuals during the dying process and after death.	Quantitative - descriptive - cross-sectional	498	The average self-efficacy of nursing students in providing end-of-life and post mortem care was measured at a score of 62 (0-100 scale). This relatively low score suggests that nursing students may not be fully prepared to deliver high-quality care to patients during the dying process and after death.
Jeon <i>et al</i> (2024)	To evaluate the effectiveness of a	Randomized	80	Communication self-efficacy can be enhanced by the TechICNS (Technology-

Author (Year)/ Country	Aims	Type of Research	Sample	Main Findings
South Korea	technology-based interactive communication simulation enhances nursing students' self-efficacy, communication skills, empathy, and program satisfaction.	Controlled Trial.		based interactive communication simulation) program, with average score of pre-test = 110.95, post-test = 1120.80 and follow-up test = 122.47. The TechICNS program has a significant impact on self-efficacy in nursing students.
Esteban-Burgos <i>et al</i> (2024). Spain	To investigate how nursing students' self-efficacy in palliative care, death coping, and emotional intelligence are affected by simulation using standardized patients.	Randomized Clinical Trial and Complementary Qualitative Study.	264	The intervention, in the form of simulation with standardized patients, proved effective in increasing self-efficacy ($p < 0,01$) among nursing students. The increase was more significant among the nursing students who actively participated in the simulation scenario.
Salmani, Keshmiri & Bagheri (2024) Iran	To determine the effectiveness of combined (theoretical-practical) training in palliative care on nursing students' perceived self-efficacy.	Semi-experimental study	23	The average perceived self-efficacy score increased after the intervention from 24.52 to 37.56. This study found that combined (theoretical-practical) training can enhance the self-efficacy of nursing students.

DISCUSSION

Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as confidence in one's ability to regulate their motivation, behavior, and social environment. Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to persevere, continue striving to learn, make significant efforts, and persist longer in achieving their goals (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). Self-efficacy has a significant impact on the success of the learning process in students, with students who are more confident being more likely to achieve higher academic performance (Al-abyadh & Azeem, 2022). Self-efficacy towards palliative care indicates a person's belief in their own capacity to provide effective palliative care. Self-efficacy towards palliative care refers to an individual's belief in their ability to provide palliative care for patients facing serious illnesses. High self-efficacy is associated with the likelihood of delivering quality care and contributing to improvements in work performance (Dehghani et al., 2020). Additionally, high self-efficacy can help reduce emotional stress, enhance engagement in care and thereby improve the quality of life for both patients and their families (Lin et al., 2022).

Research conducted by Zhou et al., (2020) on 187 nursing students found that the average self-efficacy score for palliative care obtained was 1.96. Similarly, a study by Conley (2023) on 498 nursing students found that an average self-efficacy score of 62 for end of life and postmortem care. Both studies indicated that nursing students demonstrate a low level of self-efficacy towards palliative care. As Bandura (1997) stated, people with high self-efficacy tend to expend greater effort and persevere longer in the face of adversity, whereas those with low self-efficacy may doubt their abilities, limiting their potential (Artino, 2012). Low self-efficacy toward palliative care indicates that nursing students may not be adequately prepared to deliver high-quality palliative care to patients.

In the study by Alrasheedi et al., (2021), 28.6% of nursing students who interested in

oncology nursing had higher self-efficacy scores than their peers. The intention to work in oncology indicates an interest in this field. Interest and self-efficacy influence each other (Kurnia et al., 2019; Schweder & Raufelder, 2022), and interest can positively affect self-efficacy (Alhadabi, 2021; Lestari, 2021). This study also highlights that among undergraduate nursing students, self-efficacy is a significant predictor of attitudes and knowledge levels towards palliative care. Knowledge and perception are the main influences on self-efficacy in the application of palliative care (Kurnia et al., 2019). Students with high self-efficacy experience more positive emotions, when students believe in their ability to successfully perform tasks, they are more likely to enjoy the learning process (Hayat et al., 2020). Adequate palliative care education can improve knowledge, positive attitudes, skills, and self-efficacy among undergraduate nursing students (Durojaiye et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2020). Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to be optimistic in facing obstacles and believe they can solve the problems they encounter, which increases their chances of achieving success (Salim & Fakhurrozi, 2020). Providing nursing students with adequate education in managing palliative patients, including effective communication and psychosocial-spiritual support can enhance their professional skills in palliative care (Esteban-Burgos et al., 2024). Effective clinical learning can enhance self-efficacy and self-esteem in students (Abdal et al., 2015). This literature review identifies three factors that influence self-efficacy towards palliative care during clinical learning, including palliative care simulation programs (Chang et al., 2022; Escribano et al., 2021; Esteban-Burgos et al., 2024; Jeon et al., 2024), vicarious learning methods (Clark & Lippe, 2022) and combined learning methods (theoretical-practical) (Salmani et al., 2024).

The palliative care simulation program provides nursing students with realistic experience in communicating with palliative patients. This program uses standardized patients and is conducted according to pre-agreed scenarios. Studies that have implemented palliative care learning using this simulation program include those by Chang et al., (2022), Escribano et al., (2021), Esteban-Burgos et al., (2024) and Jeon et al., (2024). At the end of the studies, the results showed an increase in self-efficacy following the intervention. Additionally, the program improved various aspects of palliative care, including knowledge (Chang et al., 2022), communication skills (Escribano et al., 2021; Jeon et al., 2024), skills/attitudes (Chang et al., 2022; Jeon et al., 2024), compassion (Jeon et al., 2024), program satisfaction (Jeon et al., 2024), coping with death (Esteban-Burgos et al., 2024), and emotional intelligence (Esteban-Burgos et al., 2024) in nursing students. Students believe that simulation-based education should be improved, with more opportunities for observation, practice and repetition to enhance self-efficacy in their abilities (Abdal et al., 2015). Palliative care simulation is recommended for integration into the nursing curriculum, with content that includes symptom management, treatment, and target groups for palliative care (Li et al., 2019). Palliative care simulation offers numerous benefits, such as enhancing palliative care knowledge and communication skills in managing difficult end-of-life conversations, and provides students with valuable opportunities to experience caring for dying patients for the first time (Gillan et al., 2021).

In the study by Chang et al., (2022), debriefing in the form of focus groups after simulation was found to improve palliative care learning and communication in nursing students. Communication in palliative care is crucial because families rely on nurses to improve communication among patients, families, and other healthcare professionals (Rosa et al., 2021). The implementation of palliative care requires nurses to apply the principles of effective communication (Mursid et al., 2024). Communication in palliative care encompasses the course of the illness, patient's preferences for types of care, and their hopes and fears about

death (Deswita & Adelirandy, 2023). Self-efficacy in communication is a key factor in facilitating end-of-life discussions in palliative care (Koppel et al., 2019). In the study of Esteban-Burgos et al., (2024), interviews conducted after the intervention revealed that students felt nervous, insecure, sad and unsure of how to manage their emotions or maintain control over them. Unstable emotions, such as anxiety, fear, stress, and others, can reduce self-efficacy (Fitriyah et al., 2019). Palliative care involves providing support to patients with terminal illnesses and equipping nurses to address the challenges of loss, grief, and the emotional complexities surrounding the end of life (Rosa et al., 2021). Nursing students must develop a good self-perception when providing palliative care and be able to manage their own emotions in order to offer compassionate care both before and after the patient's dies (Sukcharoen et al., 2023).

In the study by Clark and Lippe (2022), vicarious learning and active learning groups were compared, with the active learning group performing simulations and the vicarious learning group watching videos and audios from the simulation lab. After the intervention, both groups showed a significant improvement in their self-efficacy. However, for the 3rd and 5th items of the SECS instrument, the vicarious learning group demonstrated a greater increase in scores compared to the active learning group. According to Bandura, as cited in Mayes (2015), vicarious learning illustrates how learning can occur by observing the behavior of others and paying attention to the consequences of that behavior. A person can increase self-efficacy by observing others, as witnessing the success of others can enhance the likelihood of success. However, observing others who fail may reduce motivation. In a study by Salmani et al., (2024), palliative care training was conducted using a combined learning method (theoretical-practical) consisting of ten theoretical sessions and three practical sessions. This approach aims to prepare nursing students to effectively care for palliative patients by equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills. The activities included watching films, small group discussions, case-based learning and bedside learning under the supervision of an instructor. Students conducted patient interviews, identified symptoms, and planned and implemented nursing care as part of their palliative care experience. The results indicated that combined learning (theoretical-practical) improved nursing students' self-efficacy scores. Palliative nursing education which combines theory and practice, supports the understanding of palliative care among nursing students (Umara et al., 2024).

Nursing Implications

The findings indicate that palliative care simulation programs, vicarious learning, and combined learning methods (theoretical-practical) can enhance self-efficacy towards palliative care among undergraduate nursing students. These approaches can assist educational institutions in developing more effective palliative care education systems, ultimately improving self-efficacy towards palliative care among undergraduate nursing students. Collaboration and cooperation among relevant stakeholders must be strengthened to enhance the quality of palliative care education.

CONCLUSION

Low self-efficacy indicates nursing students are unprepared to provide palliative care. Factors that can enhance self-efficacy in clinical learning include palliative care simulation programs, vicarious learning, and combined learning methods (theoretical-practical) for nursing students. Self-efficacy towards palliative care is essential for nursing students as it forms the foundation for ensuring their readiness and ability to provide quality palliative care. This research is crucial for improving the quality of palliative care education and increasing self-efficacy among nursing students.

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