



Papers presented by nurses at scientific events in Turkey

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Abstract

This study, which originated from the observation that the rate of participation in scientific events by nurses working in the field as well as that of academician nurses had gradually increased, was a definitive, record-scanning study made with the objective of examining the papers presented by nurses at scientific meetings between 1985 and 2003. Nursing research has become an increasingly important factor in the efforts devoted to making nursing an academic profession. The development of nursing research in different countries has been influenced by various factors. While there is a long tradition of nursing research in some other countries, the history of nursing research in Turkey is shorter. The environment of this research was formed from papers included in books and summary booklets of scientific meetings in which nurses participated between 1985 and 2003. 2,843 papers, contained in 80 scientific activity books and summary booklets, formed the sampling of the research. When the year-to-year distribution of authors who presented papers was examined, it was found that while there was an increase in the proportion of papers presented by nurses alone, by nurses and academician nurses, or by nurses and members of other disciplines, there was a decrease in the proportion of papers submitted by academician nurses. The results of this study show that nurses have contributed to the process of professionalizing nursing and are accepted by other members of the health team.

Keywords: Nursing research, papers, scientific event, academician nurses

1. Introduction

Nursing research has become an increasingly important factor making nursing an academic profession. The development of nursing research in different countries has been influenced by various factors¹. While there is a long tradition of nursing research in some other countries, the history of nursing research in Turkey is shorter.

Nursing is an applied discipline and the objective of nursing research is to form a strong scientific basis for nursing practices^{1,2,3}. At the same time, this theory and information provides a scientific basis for nurses to assume responsibility in the practice of their work, which is a requirement for professionalism and the development of professional authority and autonomy. If nursing is oriented towards the application of correct, valid, reliable and organized information based on research findings, then it can be recognized as a professional discipline².

Interest in nursing research and nursing theories and concepts started in Turkey only after the founding of the Nursing Institutions of Higher Education. Nursing research in Turkey did not stem from a need in the field, but only as a requirement in the academic activities of the teaching staff working at the Institutions of Higher Education⁴. Master's Degree programs were started in 1968, and PhD programs in 1972, so that today, countless nurses are carrying out professional research and presenting it at national and international scientific events. There is no doubt that the research and statistics courses included in both the undergraduate and postgraduate programs have a place in the formation of awareness of this. Furthermore, the fact that educators make use of previous research designs and findings has helped the students acquire the incentive for research. Also, the students' graduation thesis studies have provided major contributions in transforming knowledge and skills into practice. The research workshops and courses organized at the Institutions of Higher Education have provided contributions to increasing knowledge and skills related to nursing and nursing education^{3,5}.

These studies, which were made initially by academician nurses with the objective of academic promotion, were presented at scientific meetings at which academician nurses

mostly participated with papers, while nurses in the field participated as listeners. The Ege University Nursing Institution of Higher Education organized the first nursing congress in 1985. In subsequent years the frequency of these events gradually increased and the topic areas on which they focused diversified. It was observed that the rate of participation in scientific events by nurses working in the field as well as by academician nurses has gradually increased.

This study, which originated from the observation that not only had the rate of participation in scientific activities by academician nurses gradually increased, but also that of nurses working in the field, was a definitive, record-scanning study made with the objective of examining papers presented by nurses at scientific meetings between 1985 and 2003.

11. Material-Method

The environment of this research was formed from papers included in books and summary booklets of scientific meetings in which nurses participated between 1985 and 2003. 2,843 papers obtained by the researchers from 80 scientific activity books and summary booklets formed the sampling of the research. The data were collected between May 1 and September 1 2004. The percentage distribution of the data is given and the chi-square significance test is used in the analysis.

11.1. Findings

Table 1. The Characteristics of Papers Presented by Nurses at Scientific Events

Type of Scientific Event		
Compilation	508	17.9
Research	2,012	70.8
Panel Discussion + Forum	136	4.8
Conference + Course	132	4.6
Case Presentation	55	1.9
Field of Activity		
Activities in the Nursing Field	1,903	66.9
Multidisciplinary Activities	940	33.1
Attributes of Activity		
Local Turkish	1,788	62.9
International, With International Participation	1,055	37.1
Duties of the Authors (Nurses)		

Nurse	433	15.2
Nurse + Academician Nurse	240	8.5
Academician Nurse	1,792	63.0
Nurse + Other	378	13.3
Institutions Where They Work		
NIHE-HIHE*	2,091	73.5
University Hospitals	451	15.9
Public Sector Hospitals	112	3.9
Private Hospitals - Centers	128	4.5
Foreign Nurses from Abroad	61	2.2
Number of Authors		
1 Person	836	29.4
2-3 Persons	1,221	42.9
4-5 Persons	483	17.0
6 Persons or more	303	10.7
TOTAL	2,843	100.0
Research Type		
Definitive	1,758	87.3
Semi-experimental	124	6.2
Experimental	130	6.5
TOTAL	2,012	100.0

* NIHE (Nursing Institution of Higher Education; HIHE (Health Institution of Higher Education)

Of the papers examined, 70.1% were presented in or after 1997. 70.8% were research papers, and of these, 87.3% were of the definitive type. It was determined that 66.9% of the scientific event types which entered into the scope of the research were scientific events in the nursing field and 33.1% were multidisciplinary events. Regarding the attributes of the events, 62.9% of them were carried out with local participation, and 37.1% were international or had international participation. Academician nurses presented 63% of the papers and nurses working in the field presented 15.2% of the papers. When the institutions where those who presented the papers are working were examined, it was seen that nurses working in university hospitals presented 15.9% of the papers. With regard to the number of authors who prepared the papers, 29.4% of them were prepared by one person and 42.9% by 2-3 persons (Table 1).

When the distribution from year to year of authors who presented papers was examined, it was found that while the number of papers presented by nurses alone, by nurses and academician nurses, or by nurses and by members of other disciplines increased, there was a decrease in the proportion of papers submitted by academician nurses alone. ($p < 0.001$).

While the proportion of papers presented at national scientific events decreased from year to year, the proportion of papers presented at science events with international or international participation increased ($p<0.001$).

While the proportions of science events in the nursing field decreased from 1997 onwards, there was an increase in the proportion of multidisciplinary events ($p<0.001$).

The proportion of papers presented at science events in the nursing field decreased year by year, but the proportion of those presented at multidisciplinary science events increased ($p<0.001$).

The proportion of papers prepared by a single person decreased and the proportion of papers prepared by groups increased year by year. Also there was a definite increase in the proportion of papers prepared by six or more persons from 1997 onwards ($p<0.001$).

There was a year-by-year decrease in the proportion of papers prepared by nurses working in university hospitals and an increase in the proportion of papers prepared by nurses working in hospitals connected to public sector organizations and in private hospitals and centers ($p<0.001$).

When the number of authors of the papers was examined, it was seen that the proportion of studies made by a single person gradually decreased year by year, while group studies increased ($p<0.001$). It was found that while the proportion of papers presented by nurses working in university hospitals decreased year by year, the proportion of papers presented by nurses working in private hospitals, health centers and public sector hospitals increased ($p<0.001$).

A majority of nurses working at all institutions presented papers at science events in the nursing field ($p<0.001$). A great majority of nurses, other than foreign nurses, presented papers of the research type ($p<0.001$). Foreign nurses presented papers mostly of the panel discussion/forum type. Nurses working in all institutions, other than foreign nurses, presented the studies they made with two or more persons.

IV. Discussion and Result

A majority (70.1%) of the papers examined were presented in or after 1997 (Table 1). It was thought that this increase in the number of papers presented after 1997 stems from the increase in the number of scientific events at National and International Nursing congresses as well as scientific events held in specialized fields of nursing, such as Child Surgery Nursing, Operating Room Nursing and Diabetes Nursing, and papers presented at these events. In fact, the rate of participation in national and international scientific events increased year by year. It has been stated that in Spain there has been an increase in recent years in meetings, congresses, conferences and presentations in which nurses participated⁶.

One of the modern roles of nurses is the role of researcher. The basic objective of research is to form the foundation of professional knowledge². 70.8% of the papers included within the scope of this study were research papers and 61.8% of these were of the definitive type (Table 1). In a study conducted by Aksayan and Emiroğlu (1999)⁷, the majority of papers were descriptive and analytical. Experimental research is activity contributing to the formation of scientific knowledge related to nursing. However, it is difficult to carry out experimental studies for such reasons as inadequacy of funds allocated for research or difficulties in finding sponsors or gathering data.

A majority (66.9%) of the papers taken within the scope of the study were presented in the field of nursing, and an important proportion (33.1%) were presented at scientific events in the multidisciplinary field (Table 1). This finding could be connected to the increase in participation of nurses in multidisciplinary scientific events, such as Surgery, Psychiatry, Workers' Health, Diabetes and Healthy Aging, which are organized by medicine and other disciplines as well as in the field of nursing. In fact, while a year-to-year decrease was observed in the proportion of papers presented at events in the field of nursing, there has been an increase in the proportion of those presented at multidisciplinary events, despite the fact that there has been an increase in both. This difference was found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).

When the attributes of the events at which the papers were presented are examined, it can be seen that a majority (62.9%) were local, while a significant part (37.1%) were international

or had international participation (Table 1). While the number of papers presented at both local and international events increased year by year, the rate of participation at international events and those with international participation increased even more, and the difference was found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). In the past nurses presented their papers only at events related to nursing. It is thought that the proportion of papers presented at local events in the field of nursing decreased when some of these papers started to be presented at multidisciplinary events. The increase in the proportion of papers presented by nurses at the national level, at events with international participation and at multidisciplinary scientific events has increased the proportion of studies on nursing as well as increasing their quality, and consequently it is thought that they have started to be accepted internationally and in multidisciplinary fields. In recent years, the number of scientific events related to the field of nursing made in parallel with Medical Faculties, such as Child Surgery and Cancer, have gradually increased. Some of these have become regular events.

60.3% of papers were presented by academician nurses, 15.2% by nurses working in the field, 15.5% by nurses and members of other disciplines, and 8.5% by nurses and academician nurses (Table 1). Engaging in research is one of the basic duties of academicians. For this reason, it is only to be expected that most of the papers would be presented by them. When the distribution of the authors who present papers is examined by year and according to their duties, an increase can be seen in the proportion of papers presented by nurses alone, nurses and academician nurses, or by nurses and members of other disciplines, and it was determined that there has been a decrease in the proportion of the papers presented by academician nurses despite the overall increase in numbers. The differences between the groups were found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Research and statistics courses given in undergraduate and postgraduate programs, research workshop activities, and courses organized in the institutions of higher education are all increasing the knowledge of nurses and teaching nurses on this subject. Graduation thesis activities are helping nurses to develop research-making skills. In a study conducted by Davies *et al.* (2002)⁸, well-educated practice nurses had greater research experience and interest, and graduates and practice nurses studying for a first or Masters degree were three times more likely to want to undertake research than other practice nurses. Today, countless nurses are carrying out professional research and are presenting it at local and international scientific events (Bayık 2002). Engaging in research is one of the basic roles of nurses. All nurses have

a responsibility to extend scientific knowledge specific to nursing. Also, the increase in the proportion of research presented at events where nurses participate along with other disciplines and at multidisciplinary events makes one think that nurses have started to be accepted by other disciplines (Tierney 1998)⁹. According to the ICN, nurses should make a positive contribution to health by participating in interdisciplinary activities².

When the distribution of nurses who presented papers is examined according to the institutions where they work, we see a year-by-year decrease in the proportion of papers prepared by nurses working in university hospitals, and an increase in the proportion of papers presented by nurses working in hospitals connected to public sector organizations and in private hospitals and centers. The difference was found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). This result can be attributed to an increase in the number of graduate nurses who are working in the public sector and private sector hospitals. Khorshid (1996)¹⁰ determined that 39.17% of the nurses who graduated with a bachelor's degree had engaged in research and that 46.31% of these had done this research as a graduation thesis requirement. Despite the fact that there has been a yearly decrease in the proportion of papers presented by nurses working at university hospitals, an increase in their overall number was observed. This situation is considered to be related to the fact that nurses working in university hospitals have a bachelor's degree and the fact that university hospitals are institutions which are open to research. Ekizler *et al.* (1995)¹¹, in a study which they made on nurses working at 6 hospitals connected to different institutions, determined that 9% of the nurses participated in scientific activities and that this participation was affected by their increased educational level and the fact that they worked at a university hospital.

Regarding the number of authors preparing the papers, 29.4% were prepared by one person and 42.9% were prepared by 2-3 persons (Table 1). The proportion of papers prepared by one person decreased and the proportion of papers prepared by a group of people increased year by year, and it was determined that the difference was statistically significant. A definite increase was observed in the proportion of papers prepared by six or more people in and after 1997 ($p < 0.001$). It is thought that the increase in group studies has increased the sharing of knowledge and manpower among researchers.

60.8% of the papers by university teachers and lecturers working at the nursing institutions of higher education and health institutions of higher education, 53.9% of the papers of those working in university hospitals, and 64.3% of the papers of those working in public sector hospitals were presented at events in the field of nursing. The differences between groups were found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). A majority of all the papers presented by nurses working at various institutions were presented at events related to the field of nursing. Participation in multidisciplinary scientific events provides for the sharing of knowledge with other disciplines and the promotion of the nursing profession to other disciplines. But nurses first of all aim to share their research results and other papers with their own colleagues.

The fact that the papers presented by the majority of nurses working in all institutions other than those participating from abroad are research papers shows that nurses want to make a scientific contribution to the profession. However, the quality of the research carried out is debatable. In this study, the quality of the research was not examined. The fact that a majority of the nurses coming from abroad presented papers in the form of panel discussions and forums could be connected to the fact that these nurses had been invited with the objective of transferring knowledge on a particular subject.

49.2% of the papers presented by university teachers and lecturers working at nursing institutions of higher education and health institutions of higher education were prepared by 2-3 people; 29.9% of the papers presented by those working in university hospitals and 30.4% of the papers presented by those working in public sector hospitals were prepared by 6 or more people; 38.3% of the papers presented by those working in private hospitals and centers were prepared by 2-3 people; and 83.6% of the papers presented by nurses participating from abroad were prepared by a single person. The differences between the groups were found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Despite the fact that there was an year-on-year increase in studies made by groups, it was determined that the proportion of papers presented by nurses together with academician nurses was lower than those which they presented together with people in other disciplines. This could be connected to the fact that nurses work in the same environment as other health team members and that nurses are included in the research team due to their contributions in the collection of data. The increase in the proportion of papers presented by nurses alone after 1997 may be connected with the

increase in the number of nurses who have received undergraduate and postgraduate education, so that the self-confidence of the nurses in preparing papers has increased.

Regarding types of papers prepared and the number of authors according to the types of scientific event, 91.8% of the case presentations, 85.9% of the conferences and courses and 68% of the compilations were presented at events in the field of nursing, while 46.1% of the research papers, 35.7% of the panel discussions and forums and 32% of the compilations were presented at multidisciplinary events. The difference was found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). The fact that the case presentations, conferences and courses were mostly presented at events related to the field of nursing could be connected to the fact that the presentations were made on subjects unique to the nursing profession.

There are some limitations that need to be acknowledged and addressed regarding the present study. One limitation of this study could be that only the books and summary booklets of the scientific meetings were included to the investigation and there were some books and booklets which were unavailable. Secondly, a study using web search engines would be of great interest. The reliability of the study would be increased by a smaller proportion of missing data.

In conclusion, it can be said that since 1997 there has been a definite increase in the total number of papers presented by nurses, in the proportion of papers presented at meetings with international participation, and in the proportion of papers presented by nurses working in the field. Emphasis should be placed on nursing research in order to develop the nursing sciences. In this process, all nurses are contributing to the development of nursing sciences in their own areas of expertise.

In accordance with these conclusions, it is proposed that:

- Research should be carried out to examine the year-by-year distribution of the participation of nurses in scientific events and the factors influencing this.
- Research should be carried out to examine the main themes of the scientific events in which nurses participated and the subjects of the papers they presented.

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