



Turkish Journal of Geriatrics
DOI: 10.31086/tjgeri.2018240428
2018;21 (2) 271-278

- Burcu AKPINAR SÖYLEMEZ¹
- Özlem KÜÇÜKGÜÇLÜ¹
- Nil TEKİN³
- Merve Aliye AKYOL¹
- Ahmet Turan IŞIK²

CORRESPONDANCE

Burcu AKPINAR SÖYLEMEZ
Dokuz Eylül University, Faculty of Nursing,
Department of Internal Medicine Nursing,
İzmir, Turkey

Phone: 02324124793
Fax: 02324124798
e-mail: burcu.akpinar@deu.edu.tr

Received: 26/01/2018
Accepted: 06/03/2018

¹ Dokuz Eylül University, Faculty of Nursing,
Department of Internal Medicine Nursing,
İzmir, Turkey

² Dokuz Eylül University, Faculty of Medicine,
Department of Geriatrics, İzmir, Turkey

³ Narlıdere Residential and Nursing Home,
İzmir, Turkey

RESEARCH

NURSING HOMES NURSES' ATTITUDES TOWARD OLDER PEOPLE AND AFFECTING FACTORS

ABSTRACT

Introduction: The quality of nursing care for older people in nursing homes is closely related to nurses' attitudes toward older people. This study was conducted to determine the attitudes of nurses working in nursing homes and to determine the factors affecting attitudes of nurses.

Materials and Method: A descriptive study design was used. The sample consisted of 83 nurses, accounting for 79% of the research population. Participant Information Form and Kogan's Attitudes Toward Old People scale were used. The study utilized the value, mean, percentage frequency distribution and correlation, independent t test, Mann-Whitney U test, and Kruskal-Wallis test.

Results: Mean total of Kogan's score of the nurses who were working in seven nursing homes at the time of the study reached 144.75 [standard deviation (sd)=16.6]. Mean age of participants was 33.9 (sd=7.6); 88% of the participants were females. The number of participants who received no geriatric education before working and while they were students totaled 91.6% and 72%, respectively. Nearly half of the participants (47%) claimed previous experience of care giving for older people. A statistically significant difference was observed between gender, previous experience of care for older people, and average score in Kogan's scale.

Conclusion: Results showed that the nurses working in nursing homes showed slightly positive attitudes toward older people. Gender and care giving experience were determined as factors that influence attitudes toward older people.

Keywords: Aged; Attitude; Nursing Homes; Nurses

ARAŞTIRMA

HUZUREVİ HEMŞİRELERİNİN YAŞLILARA YÖNELİK TUTUMLARI VE ETKİLEYEN ETMENLER

Öz

Giriş: Huzurevlerindeki hemşirelik bakımının kalitesi, hemşirelerin yaşlılara yönelik tutumları ile yakından ilişkilidir. Bu araştırma, huzurevinde çalışan hemşirelerin tutumlarını belirlemek ve hemşirelerin tutumlarını etkileyen etmenleri belirlemek amacıyla yapılmıştır.

Gereç ve Yöntem: Tanımlayıcı araştırma tasarımı kullanılmıştır. Örneklem sayısı 83 hemşiredir, bu sayı araştırma popülasyonunun %79'unu oluşturmaktadır. Katılımcı Bilgi Formu ve Kogan Yaşlı İnsanlara Karşı Tutum Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Çalışmada sayı, ortalama, yüzde frekans dağılımı ve korelasyon, iki ortalama arasındaki farkın önemlilik testi (t testi), Mann-Whitney U testi, Kruskal-Wallis testi kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular: Araştırma zamanında yedi huzurevinde çalışan hemşirelerin Kogan puan ortalaması 144.75'dir [standart sapma (ss)=16.6]. Katılımcıların yaş ortalaması 33.9'dur (ss=7.6); katılımcıların %88'i kadındır. Daha önce geriatri eğitimi almamış olan katılımcılar çalışmaya başlamadan önce ve öğrenciyken sırasıyla, %91.6 ve %72'dir. Katılımcıların yaklaşık yarısı (%47) yaşlı bireylere daha önce bakım verme deneyimi olduğunu belirtmiştir. Cinsiyet, yaşlılara daha önce bakım verme deneyimi ve Kogan ölçeğinin ortalama puanı arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir farklılık gözlemlenmiştir.

Sonuç: Sonuçlar huzurevinde çalışan hemşirelerin yaşlılara yönelik biraz olumlu tutum gösterdiğini ortaya koymuştur. Cinsiyet ve bakım verme tecrübesi yaşlılara yönelik tutumu etkileyen etmenler olarak belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Yaşlılık; Tutum; Huzurevi; Hemşirelik

INTRODUCTION

The number of older people who live in nursing homes is projected to increase due to population and social changes. In this regard, nursing home services which are provided for older people have increased in Turkey (1). The quality of nursing home services that are provided to older people is closely related to the attitudes of health professionals who provide such care (2,3). The attitude of healthcare professional to older people is one of the key points for providing quality care for older people (4).

Most of the studies that analyzed attitudes toward older people showed results on groups of students who will become health professionals in the future (4-8). In the systematic review which analyzed nurses' attitudes toward older people (6), 17 out of 25 articles provided results on nursing students. However, owing to various reasons, the attitudes of health professionals toward older people change when they graduate and work. These reasons are listed as those related with the institution, those related with individuals, and deficiencies in health and social care services in Turkey (2, 9-11).

A systematic review which analyzed attitudes of nurses and nursing students toward older people showed the inconsistent results of studies (6). This inconsistency is assumed to result from conducting studies in different cultures and with different health professionals and sample sizes. This observation implies the need for studies on attitudes toward older people in different cultures using more specific health professionals and sufficient sample size and desirable design. Studies on nurses' attitudes toward older people focused on nurses working in hospitals (12, 13). In a systematic review, 5 of the 8 articles that analyzed the attitudes of nurses toward older people presented the attitudes of nurses working in acute care units toward older people (6). At most, the health professionals who work with older people comprise nurses who work in nursing homes. However, in Turkey, no study analyzed

factors that affect the attitudes of the nurses who work in nursing homes toward older people. For this reason, this study aimed to determine the attitude of nurses working in nursing homes and the related influencing factors.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Study design and sample

This research was a descriptive study which was conducted in seven nursing homes of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy in İzmir between May and December 2017. The capacity of the seven nursing homes varies between 94 and 966 older people. The number of nurses working in nursing homes varies between 7 and 46. Additionally, four nursing home has at least one doctor. The study included nurses who worked in the seven nursing homes (n=105), who volunteered to participate in the study, and who can be reached during data collection days (n=83). Nurses who participated in the study covered 79% of the research population. On the day of data collection, nurses who did not work, who were on annual and maternity leave, and who were out of town were not reached.

Instruments

Sociodemographic form

The sociodemographic form was prepared by the researchers to obtain data that can affect sociodemographic information and attitudes of nurses in the sample toward older people. The data include age, gender, alma mater, duration of working as nurse, duration of working at the institution, the experience of living with older people, experience of older people care, completing a specific education for older people and their care before the study, possessing a certificate in the field of geriatrics, willingness to work in the field of geriatrics, willingness to work with older people again.



Kogan's Attitudes Toward Old People Scale

Kogan's Attitudes Toward Old People Scale (14) is a tool that has been used to evaluate attitudes toward the older people for more than 50 years. The systematic review by Neville (2015) analyzed 8 different scales used in 42 different studies published between 2008 and 2013 to examine the attitudes of nursing students toward older individuals. Among these scales, Kogan's scale was frequently used for measuring attitudes toward older people (4). Therefore Kogan's original instrument needs to be reviewed, revised and validated to provide reliable and contemporary information reflecting today's undergraduate nurses' attitudes toward older people (4). In this study, first version of Kogan was used.

Kogan's scale is a six-point Likert scale consisting of 34 items. The scale comprises 17 positively and 17 negatively worded items about the older people. The negative statements are reverse-scored to attribute more positive attitudes to higher scores. Minimum and maximum scores obtained from Kogan's scale reached 34 and 238, respectively. High scores indicate a positive attitude toward older people, and low scores indicate the opposite (14). In Kogan's original study, the total-item correlation of the scale was between 0.1 and 0.7 in the Turkish version of the scale, and Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was 0.89 (15).

Statistical analysis

Data analysis was performed by the researchers using SPSS 22.0 software. Observed values, average, and percentage frequency distribution were examined. To determine the factors that affect attitudes, correlations according to the characteristics of the independent variables, t test, Mann-Whitney U test, and Kruskal-Wallis test were used. $p < 0.05$ was considered as statistically significant.

Ethical considerations

An approval to conduct the research was obtained from Izmir Provincial Directorate of Family and Social Policies and X University Ethical Committee (2016/33-04). Oral and written information were given to the nurses prior to the study. Written consents were obtained from all participants.

RESULTS

According to results, mean age of participants was 33.9 (sd=7.6), with 88% comprising females, whereas 51% were vocational high school graduates. A total of 72% of the participants received no previous courses in geriatrics, 65% claimed previous experience of living with an older family member, 79.5% worked with older people voluntarily, and 85.5% wanted to work with older people again. The mean working years of nurses reached 12.6 (sd=6.6) (min:1, max:32), and the ratio of nurses with the experience in the care of older people totaled 47% (Table 1).

The participants featured a mean score of 144.7 (sd=16.6), a mean positive score of 74.3 (sd=11.0), and a mean negative score of 65.6 (sd=11.5) for the KOGAN Attitudes Toward Old People Scale (Table 2). Independent variables were analyzed in terms of the influencing factors, and results showed that gender and older people care experience variables cause statistically significant differences in terms of the score in KOGAN Attitudes Toward Old People Scale. Mean score of positive attitudes of male nurses was statistically significantly higher than that of female nurses ($p = .01$). A statistically significant difference was detected between mean KOGAN negative attitude score ($p = .02$) and mean KOGAN positive attitude score ($p = .01$); and mean KOGAN total attitude score ($p < .01$) of the nurses with older people care experience (Table 1). The other independent variables that were analyzed showed no effect on attitudes toward older people (Table 1).

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of nurses who participated in the study (n=83).

Sociodemographic Characteristics	mean	sd
Age (years)	33.9	7.6
Duration of working as nurse (years)	12.6	6.6
Duration of working at the institution (years)	7.5	4.7
Gender	n	%
Female	73	88.0
Male	10	12.0
Graduated School		
Vocational high school	42	51.0
University	36	43.0
Post-graduate education	5	6.0
Taking a specific education for older people (while student)		
Yes	23	28.0
Experience of living with older people		
Yes	54	65.0
Experience of older people care		
Yes	39	47.0
Having a certificate in the field of geriatric		
Yes	7	8.4
Willingness to start to work with older people		
Yes	66	79.5
Willingness to rechoose working with older people		
Yes	71	85.5

Abbreviations: SD, standard deviation

Table 2. Average scores of nurses in the KOGAN Scale (n=83).

	Min-Max	mean	sd
Positive Score of KOGAN	48–117	74.38	11.06
Negative Score of KOGAN	43–97	65.62	11.59
Total Score of KOGAN	112–206	144.75	16.69

Abbreviations: SD, standard deviation



Table 3. Sociodemographic characteristics and KOGAN mean scores of nurses.

Sociodemographic Characteristics	Positive Attitudes scores of KOGAN mean (sd)	Negative Attitudes scores of KOGAN mean (sd)	Total scores of KOGAN mean (sd)
Gender			
Female	72.90 (9.71)	65.45 (11.36)	143.45 (15.32)
Male	85.20 (14.61)	66.90 (13.83)	154.30 (23.36)
	U=183.500 p=0.010 ^b	U=356.000 p=0.900 ^a	U=267.000 p=0.170 ^a
Graduated School			
High school	75.26 (12.16)	66.16 (11.85)	145.09 (17.86)
University	73.52 (9.99)	66.19 (11.33)	143.33 (16.01)
Post-graduate education	73.20 (10.20)	57.00 (9.69)	152.20 (10.63)
	KWx ² =0.328 p=0.849 ^a	KWx ² =3.023 p=0.221 ^a	KWx ² =2.073 p=0.355 ^a
Taking a specific education for older people (while student)			
Yes	74.04 (8.57)	66.95 (9.31)	143.08 (11.20)
No	74.51 (11.94)	65.11 (12.39)	145.40 (2.37)
	U=672.500 p=0.859 ^a	U=618.500 p=0.467 ^a	U=660.000 p=0.760 ^a
Experience of living with older people			
Yes	74.44 (11.32)	65.46 (11.93)	144.98 (17.43)
No	74.27 (10.77)	65.93 (11.15)	144.34 (15.51)
	U=751.000 p=0.760 ^a	U=748.500 p=0.742 ^a	U=763.500 p=0.852 ^a
Experience of older people care			
Yes	77.46 (10.36)	62.69 (10.01)	150.76 (16.78)
No	71.65 (11.06)	68.22 (12.37)	139.43 (14.85)
	t=2.455 p=0.016 ^c	t=-2.221 p=0.02 ^c	t=3.264 p=0.002 ^b
Having a certificate in the field of geriatric			
Yes	75.42 (9.71)	62.14 (11.23)	149.28 (15.64)
No	74.28 (11.23)	65.94 (11.65)	144.34 (16.82)
	U=236.000 p=0.623 ^a	U=209.000 p=0.354 ^a	U=212.500 p=0.380 ^a
Willingness to work with older people			
Yes	74.36 (11.17)	65.69 (12.05)	144.66 (16.66)
No	74.47 (10.98)	65.35 (9.96)	145.11 (17.32)
	U=546.000 p=0.870 ^a	U=542.500 p=0.835 ^a	U=529.000 p=0.718 ^a
Willingness to work with older people again			
Yes	74.88 (10.57)	65.74 (11.85)	145.14 (16.42)
No	71.45 (14.50)	64.90 (10.89)	142.54 (19.77)
	U=293.500 p=0.187 ^a	U=388.500 p=0.978 ^a	U=291.500 p=0.178 ^a
Age	r=.130 p=.241 ^a	r=-.107 p=.337 ^a	r=.160 p=.147 ^a
Duration of working as nurse (years)	r=.006 p=.960 ^a	r=-.089 p=.423 ^a	r=.066 p=.555 ^a
Duration of working at the institution (years)	r=.082 p=.462 ^a	r=-.007 p=.949 ^a	r=.060 p=.595 ^a

Abbreviations: SD, standard deviation, U value: Mann-Whitney U test, KWx² value: Kruskal-Wallis test, t value: independent samples t test, r value: Correlation coefficient, ^a: p > .05, ^b: p < .01, ^c: p < .05

DISCUSSION

Nurses who participated in the current study reported slightly positive attitudes toward older people. This result displayed a Turkish society which considers the older people. Traditionally, people in Turkey consider older people as a source of wisdom and guidance. In general, older people are important, strong, and wise people within the family. Social norms and families play important roles in shaping attitudes. Result of this study coincides with those in literature in Turkey, China, and Sri Lanka (8, 16-18). Notably, results of these studies are rooted in culture. The studies have emphasized that healthcare professionals are influenced by societal attitudes toward the older people (6). Attitudes toward older people are transmitted to people as a cultural heritage in the family life before they enter the nursing profession (19). Willingness to work with older people is closely related to positive attitude (5,6). In the current study, 79.5% of the nurses working in the nursing home stated that they worked in the nursing home voluntarily. For this reason, attitudes of the nurses are assumed to be positively related to their willingness to work with older people.

The vast majority (85.5%) of the nurses who participated reported that they will still want to work with the older people given the opportunity. This condition is thought to be caused by the cultural structure in Turkey. Older people are considered respectable in the society (20). Showing respect to older people is a religious and traditional phenomenon in Turkey. For this reason, respect for the older people in Turkish culture also provides spiritual satisfaction (20). Özmete (2016) reported that according to job satisfaction scale score, 65% of health professionals favor working in the institutional older people care sector (21). High job satisfaction is observed in health professionals working in the institutional older people care field, possibly as a result of the desire to work in the same sector. Literature reported that nurses who have been with older people for a long time show

positive emotions toward other older people (22). For these reasons, nursing home nurses are thought to be willing to work with older people given the opportunity to work again in this field.

When the factors affecting attitudes were analyzed, no statistically significant difference was observed between age and duration of working and score in KOGAN Attitudes Toward Old People Scale of the nurses. This finding is consistent with the results of other studies in literature (3,13). On the other hand, literature, results showed that age affect attitudes toward older people, and more positive attitudes toward old people were observed with increasing age (23).

When gender variable was analyzed, inconsistent results were identified in literature. According to the results of some studies, gender showed no effect on attitudes toward older people (5,13,24). In these results, no significant difference was observed in attitudes according to gender, and this condition was explained with insufficient number of males. Gender was assumed to cause no effect on attitudes owing to the same educational conditions in both genders in the studies conducted with student nurses. Results of other studies reported that women exhibit more positive attitudes toward older people due to their motherhood role and feminine care instincts (9,23). In this study, male nurses showed a more positive attitude toward older people compared with women, and this result is similar to the results of the study of Ünalın Soyuer and Elmalı (2012). They reported that women undertake more difficult physical care and support roles in the care of older people (3). According to this study, the females meet older people care needs, such as hygiene and bathing, compared with men, and this condition leads to tiredness and exclusion of women during providing care for older people. In this study, given that 90% of men claimed experience of living with an older people in the same house, males showed more positive attitudes toward older people compared with females. A total of 61% of the women reported experience of



living with an older people in the same house. At the same time, in this study, the large part of the sample was comprised of women (10 male, 73 female). Therefore, this study is considered inadequate in showing the actual attitudes of male nurses and gender difference may not be generalized. More sophisticated studies should be conducted to clarify the inconsistent results associated with gender.

Although many studies showed that education features a positive effect on attitudes toward older people, this research revealed that the alma mater exerted no effect on attitudes toward aged people. Such result is attributed to the inadequacy of geriatric education at the national-level nursing education curriculum. Among the nurses who participated in this study, 72% stated not receiving any specific course toward older people during their education period, and 91.6% reported not receiving any special education for the older people before they worked as nurses. A number of nurses cannot receive education for older people from their institutions due to the lack of curriculum during their education period. Studies reported that only a few participants take courses about older people care. For these reasons, alma mater, the training undertaken during education period or after starting to work, is assumed to cause no effect on the attitudes toward older people.

A large majority of the nurses who participated in the study stated that they had lived in the same

house with an older people before, and nearly half of the participants experienced care giving to older people. In this study, results showed that the experience of care giving is the most influential variable for attitude to older people. This result is consistent with those found in literature (3). Before working in a nursing home, the nurses who provided care to older people show more positive attitudes toward the other older people. Observing the lives of older individuals in their own families, monitoring their needs and expectations develop tolerance for older people and also affect the positive attitudes toward the older people in the business field. Given their improved experience in care giving, nurses with the opportunity to provide care for older people in clinical practices while finishing school are assumed to be more positively affected with regard to older people.

In conclusion, nurses who participated in the current study reported slightly positive attitudes toward older people. Gender and caregiving experience have been identified as factors that influence attitudes toward older people. Clinical applications toward older people during nursing education are assumed to increase the positive attitudes toward older people. In terms of gender, conducting qualitative studies is suggested to deeply analyze the attitudes toward older people of male and female nurses and to provide more accurate results.

REFERENCES

1. Karakuş B. Ministry of Family and Social Policies, Directorate General of Services for Persons with Disabilities and Elderly People. Institutional care needs for elderly in Turkey. 2015; pp 18.24. [Internet] Available from: <http://eyh.aile.gov.tr/data/595de492290eac101cfd1a92/Kurumsal%20Yaşlı%20Bakım%20İhtiyacı%20Tespit%20ve%20Öneriler%20Raporu%202015.pdf>. Accessed:12.01.2018. (in Turkish)..
2. Hanson RM. Is elderly care affected by nurse attitudes? A systematic review. *Br J Nurs* 2014;23(4):225-9. (PMID:24809152).
3. Ünalın D, Soyuer F, Elmalı F. Evaluation of attitude towards the elderly in geriatric centre workers. *Kafkas J Med Sci* 2012;2(3):115-20. (in Turkish).
4. Neville C. Undergraduate nurse attitudes toward older adults and perceptions of working with older adults: An analysis of measurement instruments. *Nurse Educ Today* 2015;35(1):183-8. (PMID:25245662).

5. Alkaya Ayaz S, Birimoğlu Okuyan C. Nursing students' attitudes towards the elderly. *Journal of Hacettepe University Faculty of Nursing* 2017;4(1):43-52. (in Turkish).
6. Liu Y-E, Norman IJ, While AE. Nurses' attitudes towards older people: A systematic review. *Int J Nurs Stud* 2013;50(9):1271-82. (PMID:23265870).
7. Sözvurmaz S, Mandiracıoğlu A. Health sciences students' ageing anxiety and attitudes towards older people. *Turk J Geriatr* 2017;20(1):54-60.
8. Turan E, Yanardağ M, Metintas S. Attitudes of students of health sciences towards the older persons. *Nurse Educ Today* 2016;36:53-7. (PMID:26239278).
9. Adibelli D, Kılıç D. Difficulties experienced by nurses in older patient care and their attitudes toward the older patient. *Nurse Educ Today* 2013;33(9):1074-8. (PMID:22542986).
10. Alamri BH, Xiao LD. Health professionals' knowledge and attitudes toward older people in primary care in Saudi Arabia. *Saudi Med J* 2017;38(3):229-36. (PMID:28251216).
11. Yıldırım Usta Y, Demir Y, Yönder M, Yıldız A. Nursing students' attitudes toward ageism in Turkey. *Arch Gerontol Geriatr* 2012;54:90-3. (PMID:21353316).
12. Dikken J, Hoogerduijn JG, Lagerwey MD, Shortridge-Baggett L, Klaassen S, Schuurmans MJ. Measurement of nurses' attitudes and knowledge regarding acute care older patients: Psychometrics of the OPACS-US combined with the KOP-Q. *Geriatr Nurs* 2017;38(5):393-7.
13. Aydın L, Yönet GH, Bayat E, Günay B. Nurses' attitudes towards elderly people and examining affecting factors. *Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Nursing E-Journal* 2016;3(1):10-8. (in Turkish).
14. Kogan N. Attitudes toward old people: the development of a scale and an examination of correlates. *J Abnorm Soc Psychol* 1961;64:44-54. (PMID:14457779).
15. Küçükgüçlü Ö, Mert H, Akpınar B. Reliability and validity of Turkish version of attitudes toward old people scale. *J Clin Nurs* 2011;20(21-22):3196-203. (PMID:21518058).
16. Rathnayake S, Athukorala Y, Siop S. Attitudes toward and willingness to work with older people among undergraduate nursing students in a public university in Sri Lanka: A cross sectional study. *Nurse Educ Today* 2016;36:439-444. (PMID:26507448).
17. Zhang S, Yan-Hui L, Hong-Fu Z, Li-Na M, Peng-Xi L. Determinants of undergraduate nursing students' care willingness towards the elderly in China: Attitudes, gratitude and knowledge. *Nurse Educ Today* 2016;43:28-33. (PMID:27286941).
18. Darling R, Sendir M, Atav S, Buyukyılmaz F. Undergraduate nursing students and the elderly: An assessment of attitudes in a Turkish university. *Gerontol Geriatr Educ* 2017;1-12. (PMID:28353413).
19. Lovell M. Caring for the elderly: Changing perceptions and attitudes. *J Vasc Nurs* 2006;24(1),22-6.
20. Canatan A. Social values and elderly. *Journal of Elderly Problems Research* 2008;1:62-71. (in Turkish).
21. Özmete E. Psycho-social risk for older care: The evaluation of the professionals who work in the institutional care of reasons of stress, burnout and job satisfaction level. *Cumhuriyet University Journal of Economics and Administrative Sciences* 2016;17(1):243-264. (in Turkish).
22. Gallagher S, Bennett K, Halford J. A comparison of acute and long-term health care personnel's attitudes toward older adults. *Int J Nurs Pract* 2006;12(5):273-9. (PMID:16942515).
23. Hweidi IM, Al-Hassan MA. Jordanian nurses' attitudes toward older patients in acute care settings. *Int Nurs Rev* 2005;52(3):225-232. (PMID:16033450).
24. Doherty M, Mitchell EA, O'Neill S. Attitudes of healthcare workers towards older people in a rural population: A survey using the Kogan Scale. *Nurs Res Pract* 2011;1-7. (PMID:21994823).