Nurse Practitioners’ Knowledge, Experience and Intention to Use Health Literacy Strategies in Practice

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Background and Theoretical Framework

• Paucity of research exploring nurse practitioner providers and their health literacy knowledge
• Less known about NPs’ experience with health literacy strategies in practice
• Future use of health literacy strategies with patients was explored using Theory of Planned Behavior as a framework (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, 2010)
Research Questions

• What do nurse practitioners (NPs) know about health literacy (HL) and related strategies for clinical practice?

• What health literacy strategies are currently used by NPs in clinical practice?

• What is the intention of NPs to use health literacy strategies in future clinical practice?
Study Methodology/Instruments

- Descriptive, correlational, quantitative
- **Knowledge** measured with Health Literacy Knowledge and Experience Survey (HLKES), Part I (Cormier, 2006)
- **Experience** measured with Health Literacy Knowledge and Experience Survey (HLKES), Part II, Experience Scale (Cormier, 2006)
- **Intention** measured with Health Literacy Strategies Behavioral Intention (HLSBI) Questionnaire (Cafiero, 2012)
Study Findings

- **Demographics:**
  - 456 nurse practitioners (NPs) **73% return rate**
  - Sample compared with national profile:
    - Increased number certified
    - Increased number with doctoral preparation
    - More working in primary care

- **Knowledge: Poor**
  - Overall mean score: 69/100
  - Gaps noted in regard to: HL effect on healthcare status, screening tools for low health literacy and evaluation measures of education materials
Study findings (continued)

- **Experience: Some**
  - 75% of participants reported “never” or only “sometimes” having HL emphasized in NP curriculum
  - Culturally appropriate *written materials* were most frequently used for patient education
  - 66% of NPs reported “never” or “sometimes” evaluating reading level of written materials
  - Audiotapes, videotapes and computer software were used least often

- **Intention: Strong**
  - Mean score for each item 5.44 out of 7 Likert scale
  - Higher the score, the greater the likelihood participants intend to use health literacy strategies
Study Findings (continued)

- Significant relationship between Experience and Educational Preparation
  - Doctorally prepared NPs had higher mean scores on experience than post-master’s prepared NPs ($p = 0.039$)

Practice setting
  - Specialty practice NPs had higher mean scores on experience than episodic urgent care NPs ($p = 0.008$)
## Instrument Reliability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability of instruments</th>
<th>Cormier (2006) with RNs (Cronbach’s α)</th>
<th>Cafiero (2012) with NPs (Cronbach’s α)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HLKES Part I Knowledge</td>
<td>None reported</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLKES Part II Experience</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLSBI Intention</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>.76</td>
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</tbody>
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Study Implications

Knowledge:
- Increase NPs’ knowledge of health literacy (HL)

Experience:
- Improve NP evaluation of written patient education materials for use with low HL patients
- Develop HL appropriate patient education materials in other formats

Intention:
- Support intention of NPs to use of health literacy strategies
Future Research

• **Knowledge:**
  - How best to provide NPs with educational opportunities related to health literacy and health literacy strategies

• **Experience:**
  - The relationship between practice settings and use of health literacy strategies

• **Intention:**
  - How best to support intention to use HL strategies
  - Further testing of HLSBI instrument
References


