

INPLASY

Attitudes and perceptions of mental health nurses towards non-suicidal self-injury behaviors in children and adolescents: A scoping Review

INPLASY2023120089

doi: 10.37766/inplasy2023.12.0089

Received: 22 December 2023

Published: 22 December 2023

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Medical College, Chengdu, China.**ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION****Support** - No external funding.**Review Stage at time of this submission** - Formal screening of search results against eligibility criteria.**Conflicts of interest** - None declared.**INPLASY registration number:** INPLASY2023120089**Amendments** - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 22 December 2023 and was last updated on 22 December 2023.**INTRODUCTION**

Review question / Objective This paper provides a scoping review aims to summarize the attitudes and perceptions of nursing staff, particularly mental health nurses, as compared to non-mental health nurses, in healthcare facilities towards adolescents with non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI), and the differences between them. This paper will review the nurse's attitude, experience and knowledge of their assessments of self-harm, and consider an alternative view of the meanings being conveyed by self-harm to guide interventions. Previous literature has conflicting research regarding the factors influencing nurses' attitudes. A gap exists within the nursing literature of a discrete analysis of the whether age (age range between 11 and 25 years) itself affects these attitudes, and how adolescents and children are impacted by the differing attitudes of nurses.

Background The increasing prevalence of self-harm among adolescents and its correlation with a higher suicide rate have been identified as a high-risk group in many countries and regions. Although there is existing literature on the attitudes, awareness, and behaviors of nursing staff regarding self-harm or Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI), it is generally focused on patients of all age groups, with less emphasis on adolescent patients. Historically, staff in Accident & Emergency (A&E) departments have shown negative attitudes towards patients with self-harm, although recent studies suggest a shift in these attitudes. Retrospective evidence indicates that satisfaction with A&E services among adolescent self-harmers is low, and there are relatively few studies specifically investigating attitudes towards adolescent self-harm. Currently, there is no consensus on the attitudes and behaviors of nurses internationally, and the literature often presents conflicting views. There are gaps in

research, and the concept of NSSI or self-injury remains ambiguous without a unified definition. The attitudes and behaviors of nurses in different departments or work environments towards adolescent NSSI are still unclear, and it is uncertain whether there is a difference in attitudes and awareness between mental health nurses and non-mental health nurses, such as emergency and children's nurses. In China, research in this area is particularly scarce, especially concerning the attitudes of nurses towards the adolescents group. However, many studies mention that nurses are often the first healthcare group to interact with adolescent patients, and their positive attitudes and awareness can significantly impact the mental health of children, subsequent care, and treatment of these adolescents. Therefore, choosing this topic for research is of great significance.

Rationale Participants or population: Only nurses from units with the highest frequency of NSSI (Non-Suicidal Self-Injury) were contacted and invited to participate in the study. Institutions included inpatient forensic units, youth offender institutions, child and adolescent mental health service agencies, and general hospitals. Participants were categorized for analysis based on gender, educational level (high or middle education), religious status (active or inactive), and work environment (psychotherapeutic and non-psychotherapeutic settings).

Intervention: No applicable.

Comparator: None.

Study designs to be included: Qualitative studies, quantitative studies, and mixed-method studies are included. Relevant review studies identified during the search or data extraction process will be mentioned in the introduction and discussion of the final manuscript, but review studies are not included in the systematic search.

METHODS

Strategy of data synthesis Information sources: The electronic databases include CNKI, Wan fang, VIP, Sino Med, CINAHL, MEDLINE, OVID (Psych Info), PubMed, Web of Science, Scopus, EMBASE, NICE, and the Cochrane Library.

Search strategy: Search terms were customized for each database to address variations in synonym libraries and indexing. A further search was conducted on the reference lists of included studies and related systematic reviews. Literature retrieval was limited to articles published in English or Chinese; as full texts in peer-reviewed journals; and selected primary research published from 2009 to 2023 using any research methodology. After removing duplicates and discussions among

authors, key findings were focused on results relevant to the research objectives. The collected data for included studies retained detailed information such as: study records (year of publication, location of research), study design, study population, research objectives, methodology, main results, and findings. Data was initially extracted by one author, then reviewed and independently inquired by a second author. A final check was conducted by both authors to ensure rigor and authenticity. Both the medical subject headings (Mesh) and text words related to PCC elements (Population, Concept and Context) (Peters et al., 2017) were used to form the search terms. The search strategy will consist of 3 filters composed of Mesh for the following: (Nurses) AND (Children OR Adolescent) AND (Perception OR Attitude of Health Personnel). Additional group of terms preceded by the Boolean operator NOT to improve the specificity of the search strategy will be added. All filters will be adapted for all databases. To ensure the transparency of the search strategy, we conducted a comprehensive search on the literature following the PRISMA guidelines (PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews, PRISMA- ScR, FileS1) (Tricco et al., 2018).

The specific search strategy for all databases used was: 1) "self-injury" OR "self-harm" OR "nonsuicidal self-injuring" OR NSSI OR "non-suicidal self-injury" OR "self-inflict" OR "self-mutilate" OR "self-cut" OR "self-lacerate" OR "self-poison"

2) children OR child OR adolescent* OR "young adult" OR "young people" OR teenagers OR kids

3) nurse OR nursing

4) Perceptions OR Attitudes OR view

5) #1 AND #2 AND #3 AND #4.

Eligibility criteria Eligibility criteria: The eligibility criteria for identified studies will be based on the Population, Concept, Context (PCC) strategy. Population: mental health nurses (MHNs) and non-psychiatric nurses, regardless of their registration status. Concept: Non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI), defined as the direct and deliberate destruction of one's own body tissue without suicidal intent and not socially or culturally sanctioned. Individuals may engage in self-injury to alleviate emotional distress, as a form of self-punishment, or to seek attention from others. The majority of self-injurers are aged between 11 and 25 years. This age group has more hospital visits due to self-injury than any other, and while it may be associated with mental health issues, it is not necessarily linked to severe mental illness. Sometimes, it is a way to cope with extreme emotional stress. Mental health nurse, also known

as psychiatric nurses, these are specialized nurses who focus on providing care and emotional support for mental health. They usually work in hospitals, community health centers, psychiatric hospitals, clinics, or in patients' homes, offering care and support to individuals with a variety of mental health issues. These issues may include anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, addiction, and more, Context: This scoping review will consider studies conducted in medical institutions and safety centers with NSSI adolescent populations in countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, China, and Slovenia.". The time frame for inclusion will be set from Jan 1st, 2009, to Feb 28th, 2023.

Source of evidence screening and selection

Before assessing the eligibility of full-text studies, two authors independently screened the titles and abstracts of the search citations to discard any irrelevant articles. The research team held regular monthly meetings to resolve disagreements and ensure rigor in the study selection process. As a scoping review has a broader 'scope', the inclusion criteria are less restrictive and are based on Population, Concept, and Context (PCC) elements. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) guidelines were used to promote consistency, accountability, completeness, and transparency in the implementation of this review.

Data management Using Excel to record literature information, including author(s), article title, year of publication, publishing journal, impact factor, country, type of design, sample size, research objectives, characteristics of participants, theoretical framework, main research findings, limitations, etc.

Language restriction English or Chinese.

Country(ies) involved China (School of Nursing, Chengdu Medical College, Chengdu, China).

Keywords scoping review ; adolescents; self-harm; non-suicidal self-injury; children; nurses; attitudes.

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