

# Examining Nursing Students' Opinions on the Nursing Process and the Difficulties They Experience

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study aims to determine students' views on the nursing process and the difficulties experienced at each stage.

**Method:** The population of the descriptive research consists of all second-, third-, and fourth-year students studying in the nursing department of a health sciences faculty during the 2019-2020 academic year (N = 575). The sample consists of 219 students who were randomly selected using the non-probability sampling method and who volunteered to participate in the study. Ethics committee and institutional approvals were obtained. Data were collected using the Student Information Form. The data have been evaluated as frequencies, percentages, and averages using the program SPSS 22.0.

**Results:** The participants' mean age was determined as 20.78±1.4 years, and 88.6% are female. Of the students, 64.8% were determined to have received training on the nursing process, 48.4% to have mostly received training from professional practice courses and 26.9% from elective courses, 75.3% to have most frequently utilized lecture notes, and 69.4% to have frequently utilized Internet resources during the nursing process training. Of the students, 91.8% were seen to have selected the nursing process in the field of practice; however, the majority of them (85.4%) had difficulties, with 62.1% encountering many problems in the assessment stage, 61.2% in the evaluation stage, and 58.4% in the implementation stage. Of the students, 91.8% believe that the nursing process is practical for professional development; 91.3% believe that it is one of the tasks, authorities, and responsibilities of nurses; 91.3% believe that it contributes to determining priorities in patient care, and 90.0% believe that it provides written evidence related to care. However, 53.0% were noted to not feel ready to implement the nursing process, 52.1% to not consider the practical training they'd received to be adequate, and 51.1% to consider the nursing process to have not proceeded with the same significance between training periods.

**Conclusion:** Consequently, nursing students specified believing in the significance of the nursing process; however, they had challenges in every stage of the nursing process, particularly assessment and evaluation.

**Keywords:** Nursing process, nursing students, difficulties

## INTRODUCTION

The nursing process is a scientific problem-solving method commonly utilized to establish the care needs of healthy and ill individuals and to solve health problems systematically (1,2). Using the nursing process to care for healthy and ill individuals involves procuring individualized care with a holistic approach and ensuring that the given care is accurate, comprehensive, detailed, efficient, and coordinated (1,3). The nursing process offers the nursing profession a professional identity, contributes to increasing the quality of care, and is utilized as a scientific tool to

record maintenance (4). Furthermore, the nursing process develops nurses' critical thinking and decision-making skills and forms the basis of evidence-based implementations (1,2). As a dynamic approach, the nursing process consists of five interrelated stages: assessment, nursing diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation (5). In Türkiye, nurses' duties, authorities, and responsibilities related to the use of the nursing process are described in Article 4 of Nursing Law No. 6283, dated 2007 (6), and in Article 6 of Nursing Regulation No. 27515, dated 08/03/2010 (7). The effects of the nursing process on nursing care and for legal reasons are tried to be

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taught the necessary knowledge and skills to use the nursing process during nursing education, in all clinical courses and elective courses. (8). Research indicates that students accord importance to the nursing process (3, 9-12) yet experience problems at different stages of the nursing process. Şendir et al. (13) revealed that students experienced problems at the assessment stage; Bölükbaş et al. (14), Aydın and Akansel (15), and Kolaycı et al. (11) found these problems to occur regarding nursing diagnosis; Şendir et al. (13) found it for the planning stage; Bölükbaş et al. (14) found this for the implementation stage, and Efil (16) showed this to occur for the evaluation stage. Uysal et al.'s (17) study on second-year students determined students to have a high rate of accurate nursing diagnosis in their first clinical practice was high; to identify their nursing diagnosis with insufficient data; and to describe medical diagnosis, symptoms and findings as nursing diagnosis. Özer and Kuzu's (18) study stated that students to have a medium level ability for defining a nursing diagnosis, descriptive characteristics, related factors, outcome criteria, planning/implementation, and evaluation. When reviewing the current studies, they are seen to often concentrate on students' ability to implement certain stages of the nursing process; a limited number of studies is found evaluating their use of all stages of the nursing process as well (12,16,19,20). This study aims to determine students' views on the nursing process and the difficulties experienced at each stage.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

### Research Type

- This research is descriptive.

**Population and Sampling:** The population of the research consists of all second-, third-, and fourth-year students studying in the nursing department of a faculty of health sciences during the 2019-2020 academic year (N = 575). The sample consists of 219 students (reaching 38.1% of the population) who were randomly selected using the non-probability sampling method and who volunteered to take part in the research. First-year nursing students were excluded as they have not yet received information about the nursing process nor performed an implementation during the planned study period.

**Data Collection:** The data were collected at a convenient time for the students outside of class hours and within the date range the school administration allowed for the study. Filling out the research form took an average of 15 minutes.

**Data Collection Tools:** Research data were collected using the 19-question Student Information Form provided by the researchers under the guidance of the literature. The first part of the survey form consists of questions regarding the students' individual characteristics and nursing process training experiences (13 questions). The second part includes questions for identifying the problems they experienced during the implementation of the nursing process (5 questions - assessment stage of the nursing process [12 items], nursing diagnosis stage [10 items], planning [4 items], implementation

[3 items], and evaluation stage [4 items]). The third part includes questions about the student's opinions on the nursing process (1 question [35 items], including "yes/no/undecided" options) (3,10,12,13,16,21,22).

**Ethics Committee Approval:** To conduct the research, written permission was obtained from the university health research and publication ethics committee (Ethics Committee Number: 25 December 2019/ 2019-13) and from the institution where the data was collected (Research Commission Date/Number: 21.02.2020/01). The research was conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the Helsinki Declaration. All participants gave written informed consent.

### Data Analysis

The program Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, version 23.0) was used for the data analysis. In descriptive statistics, numerical data are presented as means and standard deviations, whereas categorical variables are expressed as frequencies and percentages.

## RESULTS

The research findings are discussed under three headings: students' sociodemographic characteristics, their views on the nursing process, and the difficulties they have experienced when implementing the nursing process.

### Students' Sociodemographic Characteristics

The mean age of the students who participated in the study is  $20.78 \pm 1.4$  years (min. = 18 years; max. = 29 years). Of the students 88.6% were determined to be female, 64.8% to have graduated from an Anatolian high school, 32.9% to be second-year, 38.8% to be third-year, and 28.3% to be fourth-year nursing students. Of the students, 53% expressed having medium academic success and 11% stated having worked as nurses/student nurses (Table 1).

### Students' Views on the Nursing Process

Of the students, 91.8% believe that the nursing process is beneficial for professional development; 91.3% believe that it is one of the duties, authorities and responsibilities of nurses; 91.3% believe that it contributes to determining priorities in patient care; and 90.0% believe in providing written evidence related to care. Meanwhile, 53.0% stated not feeling ready to implement the nursing process, 52.1% to not find the practical training they'd received adequate, and 51.1% to think the nursing process was not treated with the same importance between classes (Table 2).

### Students Experiences and Difficulties in Implementing the Nursing Process

Of the students, 64.8% received information related to the nursing process, with professional practice courses and elective courses being the most substantial sources of information for 48.4% and elective courses for 27.4%; 75.3% frequently utilized

**Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of students (n=219)**

Variables	n	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	194	88.6
Male	25	11.4
<b>Graduated High School</b>		
Health Vocational High School	30	13.7
Anatolian High School	142	64.8
Science High School	7	3.2
Imam Hatip High School	12	5.5
Other High Schools	28	12.8
<b>Class</b>		
Second grade	72	32.9
Third grade	85	38.8
Fourth grade	62	28.3
<b>Perception of Academic Success</b>		
Very good	25	11.4
Good	58	26.5
Middle	116	53.0
Bad	16	7.3
Too bad	4	1.8
<b>Working as a Nurse/Student Nurse</b>		
Yes	24	11.0
No	195	89.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>100</b>

lecture notes, 69.4% the Internet, and 67.1% books while implementing the nursing process. Of the students, 92.7% were determined to have used the nursing process during clinical practice, 85.4% to have had difficulties while using the nursing process. Stages of the nursing process that were often had difficulties were assessment stage (62.1%) and evaluation stage (61.2%) (Table 3).

Of the students, 54.8% stated frequently encountering difficulties regarding the diagnostic phase of the nursing process due to the forms being long, 47.5% due to not being able to ask questions related to some fields in the diagnostic form, and 40.25% due to patients not providing enough information. Of the difficulties the students commonly experience regarding the nursing diagnosis phase, 32.4% stated differences based on class in formulating nursing diagnosis, 31.5% stated not knowing a recent nursing diagnosis, and 31.1% stated not using other nursing diagnoses apart from the specific nursing diagnosis. Of the problems the students frequently experienced related to the planning stage, 32.9% stated being unable to decide on the appropriate nursing interventions due to inadequate medical knowledge, and 28.8% stated having difficulty defining the goals and objectives for the problems. Of the problems the students frequently encountered in the implementation

**Table 2. Students' opinions on the nursing process (n=219)**

Variables	Yes		No		Undecided		Unanswered	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
The nursing process is useful for professional development	201	91.8	4	1.8	7	3.2	7	3.2
The nursing process is under the duties, authority and responsibilities of nurses	200	91.3	6	2.7	7	3.2	6	2.7
The nursing process ensures that priorities are determined during patient care	200	91.3	5	2.3	7	3.2	7	3.2
The nursing process provides written evidence of care	197	90.0	5	2.3	9	4.1	8	3.7
Nursing process creates a resource for education/research	193	88.1	7	3.2	12	5.5	7	3.2
The nursing process provides ethical documentation related to care	192	87.7	7	3.2	12	5.5	8	3.7
The nursing process improves the nurse's critical thinking ability	191	87.2	8	3.7	13	5.9	7	3.2
The nursing process provides the nurse with the opportunity to use the theoretical knowledge she has learned.	190	86.8	9	4.1	13	5.9	7	3.2
The nursing process is a professional nursing approach	190	86.8	8	3.7	15	6.8	6	2.7
The nursing process contributes to the development of decision-making ability	190	86.8	6	2.7	17	7.8	6	2.7
The nursing process helps improve the quality of health care services	189	86.3	9	4.1	14	6.4	7	3.2
The nursing process provides care to the individual/ family/ society with a holistic view	188	85.8	9	4.1	15	6.8	7	3.2
The nursing process proves that nursing is a profession that uses scientific and intellectual/cognitive skills	186	84.9	9	4.1	17	7.8	7	3.2
The nursing process ensures continuity of communication between the individual and the nurse	185	84.5	5	2.3	21	9.6	8	3.7
The nursing process is necessary to provide systematic nursing care.	183	83.6	10	4.6	20	9.1	6	2.7
The nursing process enables communication and collaboration with other healthcare team members	182	83.1	10	4.6	19	8.7	8	3.7
The nursing process is a scientific problem solving method	181	82.6	9	4.1	22	10.0	7	3.2
The nursing process enables nurses to communicate and cooperate with each other	181	82.6	13	5.9	18	8.2	7	3.2
The nursing process ensures effective use of time during nursing care	180	82.2	12	5.5	20	9.1	7	3.2

**Table 2. Continue**

Variables	Yes		No		Undecided		Unanswered	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
The nursing process increases the nurse's independent functions	179	81.7	14	6.4	20	9.1	6	2.7
The nursing process ensures universality in nursing care	179	81.7	8	3.7	25	11.4	7	3.2
The nursing process helps provide individualized nursing care	178	81.3	11	5.0	23	10.5	7	3.2
The nursing process provides written evidence associated with nursing care	177	80.8	8	3.7	26	11.9	8	3.7
The nursing process contributes to the efficient use of time and energy in care	177	80.8	14	6.4	18	8.2	10	4.6
The nursing process can be used in every area where nursing services are carried out	165	75.3	11	5.0	37	16.9	6	2.7
I would like to apply the nursing process when I graduate	162	74.0	23	10.5	27	12.3	7	3.2
I think there are differences between classes related to the application of the nursing process	147	67.1	27	12.3	38	17.4	7	3.2
Nursing process should be used by nurses with a bachelor's degree	145	66.2	37	16.9	30	13.7	7	3.2
Preparation for the nursing process takes a lot of time	120	54.8	31	14.2	59	26.9	9	4.1
I think the theoretical education I received is sufficient to apply the nursing process	117	53.4	43	19.6	51	23.3	8	3.7
Nurses do not have enough time to practice the nursing process	114	52.1	43	19.6	55	25.1	7	3.2
It is possible to routinely apply the nursing process in clinics	109	49.8	34	15.5	68	31.1	8	3.7
I think that the nursing process is treated with the same importance in all education periods	107	48.9	58	26.5	47	21.5	7	3.2
I think the practical training I received is sufficient to apply the nursing process	105	47.9	55	25.1	51	23.3	8	3.7
I feel ready to apply the nursing process	103	47.0	51	23.3	56	25.6	9	4.1

**Table 3. Students' experiences related to the implementation of the nursing process (n=219)**

Variables		n	%
Getting knowledge about the nursing process	Yes	142	64.8
	No	77	35.2
Source of information regarding the nursing process *	Vocational applied courses	106	48.4
	Elective courses	60	27.4
	Books	17	7.8
	Internet	5	2.3
	Other	4	1.8
	Resources used when applying the nursing process *	Lecture notes	165
Internet		152	69.4
Books		147	67.1
Educators		82	37.4
Nurses working in the clinic		82	37.4
Articles		35	16.0
Other		4	1.8
Using the nursing process in practice	Yes	203	92.7
	No	16	7.3
Having problems during the implementation of the nursing process	Yes	187	85.4
	No	32	14.6
The step of the nursing process in which there is a problem *	Assessment	136	62.1
	Nursing diagnosis	120	54.8
	Planning	99	45.2
	Implementation	128	58.4
	Evaluation	134	61.2

\* More than one option is marked.

phase, 48.9% stated not being competent in implementing planned nursing interventions, and 43.4% stated not being able to implement planned interventions. Of the difficulties the students frequently experienced related to the evaluation

stage, 58.4% stated their inability to evaluate the results of care due to the short clinical practice period, and 52.5% stated the failure to monitor patients due to the different distribution of patients each week in the clinical implementation (Table 4).

## DISCUSSION

The nursing process gives a scientific identity to nursing practices and includes various benefits. The nursing process allows nurses to provide individual-centered nursing care, to provide care in the direction of a plan and thus use their time more efficiently, and to develop communication

plan development on actual patients. In this context, faculty members have critical obligations (8,10,12). Nevertheless, various studies have revealed that students lack knowledge of the stages of the nursing process (3,10). In the current study, only 64.8% of the students mentioned having received information on the nursing process, and only 48.4% of students taking professional practice courses as a source of

**Table 4. Difficulties experienced by students regarding the implementation of the nursing process (n=219)**

Difficulties Encountered		n	%
ASSESSMENT	Forms are long	120	54.8
	Inability to ask questions related to some fields in the assessment form	104	47.5
	Patients not providing information	88	40.2
	Inability to perform physical examination due to patients not giving permission	76	34.7
	Using different nursing process forms	75	34.2
	Inability to make a physical diagnosis due to my insufficient medical and nursing knowledge.	74	33.8
	Difficulty in accessing patient data (laboratory findings, medications, etc.)	67	30.6
	Difficulty establishing therapeutic communication	67	30.6
	Inability to obtain information from members of the healthcare team responsible for the patient's care	66	30.1
	Inability to use electronic patient record systems	56	25.6
	Not knowing what data I should collect specific to the patient and their medical diagnosis	51	23.3
Other	3	1.4	
NURSING DIAGNOSIS	Class-based differences in the formulation of nursing diagnoses (nursing diagnoses are not expressed together with symptoms/findings and etiological factors/risk factors)	71	32.4
	Not knowing new nursing diagnoses	69	31.5
	Not using other nursing diagnoses other than specific nursing diagnoses.	68	31.1
	Inability to determine the appropriate nursing diagnosis for the individual	59	26.9
	Difficulty distinguishing etiological factors and descriptive features	58	26.5
	Inability to prioritize nursing diagnoses	55	25.1
	Difficulty expressing the diagnosis due to the lack of language unity associated with naming nursing diagnoses	49	22.4
	Inability to distinguish between nursing diagnosis and medical diagnosis	35	16.0
	Not knowing the differences between risk nursing diagnosis and actual nursing diagnosis	32	14.6
Other	4	1.8	
PLANNING	Inability to decide on appropriate nursing interventions due to my insufficient medical knowledge.	72	32.9
	Difficulty in determining goals/goals for the problem	63	28.8
	Difficulty determining individual-specific nursing interventions	62	28.3
	Other	7	3.2
IMPLEMENTING	Not being competent in implementing planned nursing interventions	107	48.9
	Inability to implement planned nursing interventions	95	43.4
	Other	10	4.6
EVALUATION	Inability to evaluate care results due to short clinical practice period	128	58.4
	Inability to monitor the patient due to different patient distributions every week in clinical practice	115	52.5
	Not knowing how the evaluation should be done	51	23.3
	Other	10	4.6

between team members. The process also makes nursing services apparent by creating written resources and evidence for nursing education and research. Utilizing the nursing process ensures systematic nursing care (10). The knowledge, attitudes, and skills that nurses need to have in order to utilize the nursing process are imparted through various teaching methods during nursing education, including through lectures, question-and-answer sessions, case analyses, small group work, simulations, standardized patient use, and care

information suggests that the students had problems with the notion of the nursing process. In the institution where the research was carried out, students are known to utilize the concept of a care plan instead of the nursing process. Of the students, 75.3% were noted to frequently use lecture notes, 69.4% to frequently use the Internet, and 67.1% to frequently use books while implementing the nursing process. Keski and Karadağ's (10) study found lecture notes, books,



and the Internet to be the resources nursing students most commonly use.

In the current study, 91.8% of the students stated that the nursing process is practical for professional development; 91.3% stated thinking the nursing process is one of the duties, authorities, and responsibilities of nurses; and 92.7% stated using the nursing process in clinical practices. These findings are significant as they show that acquiring and transferring knowledge and skills regarding the nursing process are substantial and that the institution where the study was performed addresses the nursing process as part of its program. Other studies that have examined this issue arrived at results that support this study's findings (10,12,23).

The students were found to strongly agree with the remarks regarding the benefits of the nursing process, with benefit seen by 91.3% for "ensuring that priorities are determined during patient care," by 90.0% for "providing written evidence related to care," 88.1% for "providing resources for education/research," by 87.7% for "providing ethical documents related to care," and by 87.2% for "improving the nurse's critical thinking ability." These findings comply with Şendir et al.'s (13) study on student nurses.

Of the students, 75.3% were found to state being able to use the nursing process in every field where nursing services are provided and 74.0% to state wanting to implement the nursing process when they graduate. Meanwhile, 53.0% stated not feeling ready to implement the nursing process and 52.1% to state the practical training they'd received to be insufficient. These results demonstrated the students to have had positive attitudes toward utilizing the nursing process but to however lack knowledge regarding how to implement the nursing process.

The literature has reported that nursing students encounter difficulties at various stages of the process (3,10,12,13,16,21,22). The current study specifies that students had problems in all phases of the nursing process, especially assessment (62.1%) and evaluation (61.2%). Taşdemir and Kızılkaya's (20) study detected that students' ability to determine nursing diagnosis, outcome criteria, planning, implementation, and evaluation in their care plans to be low according to the symptom, etiology and problem (SEP) format while Aydın and Bektaş's (19) study stated that students had inadequacies and deficiencies in the assessment, evaluation, goal setting, planning, implementation and evaluation stages of care plans for diagnosed pain. Dalcal's (21) study revealed that students had problems mostly in the nursing diagnosis stage. Çevik and Olgun's (8) research stated that most students learn the nursing process theoretically; nevertheless, they have difficulty efficiently planning and implementing patients' clinical care. Similar studies have revealed students to have problems in various stages of the nursing process, though the stages of the nursing process in which most issues are encountered are dissimilar.

This study found assessment to be the stage of the nursing process that students stated having the most difficulty. Similar

studies conducted with nursing students have also noted the assessment phase to be one of the most challenging stages of the nursing process (12,13,21,22). This current study identified that factors such as the length of the forms nursing students use during clinical practice and the inability to ask questions regarding some fields in the diagnostic form cause difficulties when creating a care plan. These results are similar to the study findings of Akansel and Palloş (3). The literature suggests that students have difficulties collecting patients' data, particularly with regard to sexuality due to being shy and embarrassed talking about something that seems intangible to them (23). Using all information sources regarding the individual is essential during the assessment stage, as well as analyzing and using the gathered data (24). Assessment forms are a data collection source and should be comprehensively created using a specific systematic, as these guide students throughout the meeting and physical examination, prevent the relevant data from being ignored, facilitate the analysis of the data during the assessment stage, and provide the opportunity to compare a patient's previous condition through repeated assessments (25). The fact that the assessment forms were perceived as long by the students is thought to perhaps be related to their lack of knowledge regarding data collection and the loss of time due to trying to collect data only through the patient history during the assessment. Students in this research stated having difficulty with the assessment stage due to the patients not providing information. Similar to the findings of this study, different studies have determined nursing students to have difficulty with the assessment stage due to reasons such as patients not sharing information with the students, patients not wanting to talk (3,26), problems communicating with the patient (3,21,26), and students with deficient communication skills (22). These results reveal that increasing nursing students' awareness of the assessment stage is essential. Because assessment is the basis for all stages of the nursing process, making a complete and accurate evaluation is essential for ensuring proper safe care, as any problems during the assessment will lead to misinterpretations in all stages. A nurse who cannot obtain accurate and sufficient data will make the wrong nursing diagnosis, diagnose the wrong nursing interventions, and follow an incorrect implementation process. A nurse cannot solve the problem because an evaluation cannot be made correctly when steps are improperly implemented.

Nursing diagnosis is the second stage of the nursing process. It is implemented to discover the patient's needs and problems and is the stage where the nurse establishes the issues on which they will focus for planning and implementing interventions (24). Mistakes that occur when making a nursing diagnosis may lead to: loss of time and energy during the nursing implementations, failure to plan the required nursing interventions to solve the problem, failure to monitor positive or adverse outcomes related to care, and legal and ethical problems (27-29). The current study has noted that students encountered difficulties in the nursing diagnosis stage. Similar results were detected in the studies of Sönmez and Kısacık (30) and Keskin et al. (23) The present study observed that the difficulties students frequently experience are class-

based differences in formulating nursing diagnoses, not being knowledgeable of recent nursing diagnoses, and being unable to use nursing diagnoses other than specific nursing diagnoses. Similar results were reported in the study of Dalcalı (21). Şendir et al.'s (13) research stated that students experience differences between courses with regard to formulating the nursing diagnosis, and Freire et al.'s (31) study stated that 31.5% of students were unfamiliar with the NANDA-I taxonomy and therefore were unable to arrive at an accurate diagnosis. Various studies have determined that students believe nursing diagnoses to be necessary (4,30,32,33); however, they think that they lack adequate knowledge about nursing diagnosis (30,32), that they cannot describe nursing diagnosis using the assessment system and terminology (10,15,17), and that they use nursing diagnosis mostly related to the physiological field (4,14,16,17,20,23,34). In line with these results, utilizing efficient teaching methods is essential for teaching nursing diagnosis in basic nursing training, for planning initiatives to reduce the differences between courses, for attaching more importance to nursing diagnosis, for providing information regarding NANDA-I taxonomy, for guiding students through the assessment stages, and for ensuring continuous feedback.

The nursing process stage with which the students in this research stated having the least problems was planning. These outcomes are consistent with those of Yılmaz et al. (12) and Keski and Karadağ. (10) The students were determined to frequently have challenges in determining the goals/objectives for the problem and in identifying individual-specific nursing interventions in this stage. Similar to this study's findings, the studies by Dalcalı (21) and Terzioğlu et al.(35) observed that nursing students had problems determining priorities and planning interventions during the planning stage. These results reveal that students need knowledge and guidance on how to establish goals/objectives and plan interventions.

This study has specified that students frequently have such challenges in the implementation stage as not being competent enough for implementing nursing interventions and not being able to implement the nursing interventions they'd planned due to various reasons. Similar to these findings, Dalcalı (21) noted that students had difficulty implementing the interventions they'd planned, Bölükbaş et al.(14) stated that the interventions for the determined nursing diagnoses were limited, and Yılmaz et al. (12) revealed that more than half of the students were incapable of describing the implementation stages.

The present research has specified the evaluation stage as one of the stages of the nursing process that students had the most difficulty; due to the short time, the students often had challenges in this stage regard situations such as evaluating care outcomes, not being able to monitor the patient, and not knowing how to evaluate. In line with this study's findings, Efil's (16) research found that students mentioned encountering the most problems during the evaluation phase. Dalcalı's (21) study noted intern nursing students to have difficulty knowing the evaluation criteria and to lack time during the

evaluation stage. The fact that the students had attended the implementation only once a week made them unable to carry out the evaluation stage. Carrying out case studies to improve students' evaluation skills and discussing the evaluation criteria used during implementation are believed would have practical benefits. Contrary to the current study's findings, , the studies conducted by Şendir et al. (13) and Keski and Karadağ (10) identified the evaluation stage as the one in which students experienced the least difficulty.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Consequently, nursing students have been identified as believing in the significance of the nursing process. Nonetheless, they stated not feeling ready to implement the nursing process. Nursing students faced challenges in every stage of the nursing process, particularly the assessment and evaluation stages. According to these outcomes, this study recommends using different teaching methods to provide information, consultancy services, and feedback regarding the areas where students stated having problems while applying the nursing process.

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**Ethics Committee Approval:** In order to conduct the research, written permission was obtained from Bursa Uludağ University Health Research and Publication Ethics Committee (Ethics Committee Date/Number: 25 December 2019/ 2019-13) and from the institution where the data was collected (Research Commission Date/Number: 21.02.2020/ 01). The research was conducted in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration.

**Informed Consent:** Written consent was obtained from the participants.

**Peer Review:** Externally peer-reviewed.

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