

Identifying Nursing Students' Views of Studying Mental Health and Diseases Nursing Course via Distance Education during the Pandemic

Pandemi Sürecinde Ruh Sağlığı ve Hastalıkları Hemşireliği Dersini Alan Öğrencilerin Uzaktan Eğitime Yönelik Görüşlerinin Belirlenmesi

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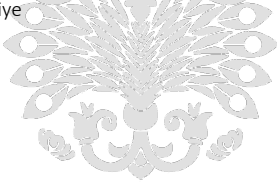


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ABSTRACT

Objective: This research was conducted to determine students' opinions about taking the mental health and disease nursing course through distance education.

Methods: The research, designed as a descriptive quantitative study, and conducted with students (n=243) taking the Mental Health and Disease Nursing course at the Nursing Department of a state university in Ankara. "Participant Information Form", "Assessment Form for Mental Health and Diseases Nursing Course Distance Education," created by the researchers, and the "Opinions About Distance Education Scale" were used to collect the data. In data analysis, content analysis was performed for open-ended questions, and the data were presented under themes, sub-themes, and categories. Number, percentage, mean, standard deviation, median, minimum, and maximum values were given for the scale scores.

Results: The views of students on distance education were conceptualized under four themes: "Views on distance education", "Effectiveness of teaching methods used", "Effectiveness of methods used in the practice skill courses", "Preparedness for provide nursing care to patients followed up with a psychiatric diagnosis." The total mean score of the participants for the opinions about the distance education scale was determined as 2.91±0.48.

Conclusion: The students evaluated the education provided through distance education as moderately sufficient. The teaching methods used in the mental health and diseases nursing course taken through distance education and ensuring permanence through repeated access to courses were stated as positive aspects in theoretical terms, significant deficiencies were expressed in terms of contacting patients in the clinical environment and gaining professional roles.

Keywords: Distance Education; Mental Health; Pandemic; Psychiatric Nursing

ÖZ

Amaç: Bu araştırma, öğrencilerin ruh sağlığı ve hastalıkları hemşireliği dersini uzaktan eğitim yoluyla almaya ilişkin görüşlerini belirlemek amacıyla yürütülmüştür.

Yöntemler: Tanımlayıcı niceliksel bir çalışma olarak tasarlanan araştırma, Ankara'da bulunan bir devlet üniversitesinin Hemşirelik Bölümü'nde Ruh Sağlığı ve Hastalıkları Hemşireliği dersini alan öğrenciler (n=243) ile gerçekleştirildi. Verilerin toplanmasında araştırmacılar tarafından oluşturulan "Katılımcı Bilgi Formu", "Ruh Sağlığı ve Hastalıkları Hemşireliği dersi Uzaktan Eğitim Değerlendirme Formu" ve "Uzaktan Eğitime Yönelik Görüşler Ölçeği" kullanıldı. Veri analizinde açık uçlu sorular için içerik analizi yapıldı ve veriler tema, alt-tema ve kategoriler altında sunuldu. Ölçek puanları için sayı, yüzde, ortalama, standart sapma, ortanca, minimum ve maksimum değerleri verildi.

Bulgular: Öğrencilerin uzaktan eğitime ilişkin görüşleri dört tema altında kavramsallaştırıldı: 'uzaktan eğitim ile ilgili görüşler', 'kullanılan öğretim yöntemlerinin etkinliği', 'uygulama beceri derslerinde kullanılan yöntemlerin etkinliği', 'psikiyatrik hastalık tanısıyla takip edilen hastalara hemşirelik bakımı verebilme konusunda hazır hissetme'. Katılımcıların uzaktan eğitime ilişkin görüş ölçeği toplam puan ortalaması 2,91±0,48 olarak belirlendi.

Sonuç: Öğrencilerin uzaktan eğitim yoluyla verilen eğitimi orta düzeyde yeterli değerlendirdikleri belirlendi. Uzaktan eğitim ile alınan ruh sağlığı ve hastalıkları hemşireliği dersinde kullanılan öğretim yöntemleri ve derslere tekrarlı ulaşım ile kalıcılığın sağlanması teorik anlamda pozitif yön olarak belirtilirken, klinik ortamda hasta ile temasa geçme ve mesleki rolleri kazanma açısından önemli eksiklikler ifade edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uzaktan eğitim; ruh sağlığı; pandemi; psikiyatri hemşireliği

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic (COVID-19) has become an epidemic that has affected and continues to affect the whole world, leading to significant changes and impacts in education, meanwhile, countries have decided to continue the education process.¹ After the first case was reported in Türkiye, measures and decisions were made to fight against the effects of the pandemic on education by the Higher Education Council. In line with the recommendations, the spring term of the 2019-2020 academic year was carried out within the framework of the emergency distance education plan, and the fall term of the 2020-2021 academic year was carried out as distance education.²

Distance education came to the fore as an emergency plan during the pandemic, but it is accepted that it started with letters in the 18th century.³ Distance education has been affected by the changes and developments in technology, and radio, television, and computers have brought a new dimension to distance education after the letter.^{3,4} Distance education applications can be used at all levels of education, and their most essential feature is that they offer students the opportunity to be independent of space and time, are student-oriented, and use methods that support active learning.⁵ In distance education, student-faculty communication, collaborative learning, active learning, instant feedback, high expectations, time spent in class, diversified learning, and technology applications have been determined as the basic principles for good application in online undergraduate education.⁵ While distance education is accepted as an alternative to traditional learning, sometimes the limitations imposed by physical and material conditions and sometimes crises such as the pandemic process show that distance education may be inevitable.⁶⁻⁹

Distance education can be as successful as face-to-face education, if the method and technology that can provide communication and interaction between the lecturer and the student in an appropriate and desired manner, is used.¹⁰ Just as the application of different methods in face-to-face education, there are many different methods in distance education. In this context, universities use synchronous, asynchronous, or both synchronous and asynchronous distance education methods depending on their existing and developing infrastructure.¹¹ Knowing these methods' characteristics is crucial in deciding how to integrate them into distance education applications.¹² Advantages of distance education are reaching more students, profit, value creation, satisfaction, low cost, less time, knowledge generation and dissemination, and more accessibility and faster communication.¹³ The difficulties of

distance education can be stated as time limitation, lack of education and experience, lack of sense of belonging, high cost, technology and infrastructure problems, and lack of motivation and attention.¹⁴ This education, which incorporates both advantages and disadvantages, will have a different effect on nursing undergraduate program students whose practice areas are clinical.

Unexpected emergencies such as pandemics or natural disasters (earthquakes, etc.) make it necessary to include distance education applications in the education process. Nursing education was also carried out online due to the fact that face-to-face education opportunities could not be used, and clinical practice could not be carried out during the pandemic period. Universities in our country have decided to continue the Mental Health and Disease Nursing course, which is included in the nursing curriculum, with distance education during this period. At the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing Education Workshop held by the Psychiatric Nursing Association on September 14, 2020, it was stated that the aims and objectives of distance education should be similar to face-to-face education.¹⁵ Faculty members have made various plans for the student's achievements to be familiar with the successes of face-to-face education. Within the scope of these plans, multiple teaching methods and techniques have been applied in distance education, and measures have been taken to support the clinical practice process.

In the literature, study results on the effectiveness of distance education for nursing students generally focus on the structuring and results of the educational process.¹⁶⁻¹⁹ Course-focused studies on the impact of distance education on vocational nursing courses, primarily where professional roles are taught through the clinical practice process, are limited. In the literature, in terms of conducting the mental health and psychiatric nursing course through distance education, Arslan et al.²⁰ stated that there was no difference in the comparison of students taking face-to-face and distance education in terms of course achievements and perception of psychiatric nursing.

However, students indicated that they wanted to receive face-to-face education and work with cases in clinical practice. In another study, Hallaç et al.²¹ examined a hypothetical case example used as a measurement tool in evaluating the implementation of the mental health and diseases course in the distance education process. Considering the studies in the literature in Türkiye, the current study directly focuses on students' views regarding the mental health and disease nursing course and the structuring of distance education, and qualitative findings support the quantitative findings. In this context, the study

is thought to significantly contribute to the literature by reflecting experimental student views in planning distance education, structuring learning environments, and choosing educational methods.

AIM

In this context, the study aims to determine the opinions of students taking the mental health and diseases nursing course during the distance education process regarding the effectiveness of this process.

The research questions were determined as;

- What are the students' views about distance education and teaching methods in the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course?
- What are the views of distance education students on the comprehensibility and permanence of theoretical knowledge?
- What are the views of distance education students about the effectiveness of the methods used in theoretical and practice skills courses?
- What are the views of distance education students about gaining practice skills?

METHODS

Design

The research was designed as a descriptive quantitative study.

Population and Sample

The study population consisted of fourth-year students (N=245) taking the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course in the Department of Nursing in the Faculty of Health Sciences of a state university during the fall term of the 2020-2021 academic year. No sample selection was used in the study, and the aim was to reach the entire population (N=245). The inclusion criteria were determined as follows: clicking the "I accept" option in the online informed consent form and then completing the data collection forms exactly. The exclusion criterion was taking the course repeatedly. The study's sample consisted of n=243 students since two students did not fill out the data collection tools via the link.

Instruments

"Participant Information Form", "Assessment Form for Mental Health and Diseases Nursing Course Distance Education" and the "Opinions About Distance Education Scale" were used to collect the data.

Participant Information Form: This form, prepared by the researchers, includes a total of 12 questions about the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants (such as age, gender, marital status, employment status, income

status, ability to use internet connection, device used, presence of a different family member receiving distance education, preference for taking the course as distance education or face to face).

Assessment Form for Mental Health and Diseases Nursing

Course Distance Education: The form prepared by the researchers consists of two parts and a total of 20 questions. The first part of the form includes 13 questions about the methods used in the theoretical course and practice skill courses, which are rated with a 3-point Likert-type rating. The second part of the form includes seven questions. Two of the questions allowing to mark more than one answer: [1] about the difficulties of distance education and [2] the more useful ones among learning methods; and also five open-ended questions on the effect of distance education on comprehensibility and permanence, the teaching methods used, and the effectiveness of Web 2.0 methods (such as posters, interactive videos, questionnaires, word cloud, flashcards, and concept maps).

The Opinions About Distance Education Scale: The scale was developed by Yildirim et al.²² to determine the views of the students participating in distance education about the teaching offered. The scale has 18 items with a 5-point Likert-type rating. The scale score ranges are as follows; 'Strongly disagree (Quite insufficient): 1.00-1.79', 'Disagree (Insufficient): 1.80-2.59', 'Undecided (Moderately sufficient): 2.60-3.39', 'Agree (Sufficient): 3.40-4.19', 'Strongly agree (Quite sufficient): 4.20-5.00'. The scale has four subscales; "*Personal Suitability* referring to the suitability of distance education for students' personal lives"; "*Effectiveness* referring to views on the effects of teaching activities carried out in distance education environments on student success"; "*Instructiveness* referring to the possibility of comparing traditional teaching and distance education in terms of learning characteristics" and "*Familiarity* referring to the approaches of the learners to the studies that must be performed in the learning process." The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated as .86. In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha value was found to be .78.

Application

This study was conducted to determine the views of the students who took the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course in the fall term of the 2020-2021 academic year during the COVID-19 pandemic on distance education. The Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course was carried out in two stages (theoretical courses and practice skills courses). It was completed as theoretical courses of 120

minutes and practice skills courses of 80 minutes on Mondays every week. Theoretical courses were carried out synchronously by the responsible instructor of the course over the distance education system of the institution. Researchers attended the theoretical courses as assistant lecturers. Explaining, asking questions, discussing, surveying, and presenting interactively from teaching methods, as well as using word clouds from interactive presentation applications, were used to ensure student interactions during the teaching of the theoretical courses. In addition, reading notes on the subjects specified in the syllabus were given before the course to ensure that the students were active in the theoretical courses. Practice skill courses were synchronized over the institution's distance education system or Microsoft Teams application. Practice skill courses were taught predominantly in the form of presentation of student group works (case and subject-specific article presentations), experience sharing of nurses who did their doctorate in Psychiatric Nursing or were working in a psychiatry clinic, discussion by the instructor about the film analysis prepared as a practice individual homework and the role play application for Good Morning Meeting and Job Orientation Meeting regarding roles and responsibilities of psychiatric clinical nurse. The students prepared their group presentations with the counseling of the responsible research assistants. The presentations of current cases or research articles determined based on the subject of theoretical course in the course syllabus on that day were carried out using various teaching techniques. These techniques include Web 2.0 methods such as posters, interactive videos, surveys, word clouds, flashcards, and concept maps. At the end of the student group presentations, all instructors gave feedback, and peer assessment was received from the students for the group making the presentation. During the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course, Web 2.0 methods were actively used in theoretical and practice skills courses to establish more interactive, collaborative, effective communication and provide information sharing with the students.

The data were obtained between February and May 2021 after completing the theoretical and practice skills courses in Mental Health and Diseases Nursing in the fall term of the 2020-2021 academic year. The "Participant Information Form" which was prepared by the researchers, the "Assessment Form for Mental Health and Diseases Nursing Distance Education," and the "Opinions About Distance Education Scale" were used to determine the views of students about distance education. After the course assessment process was completed, a link containing the questionnaire was sent to all the students via e-mail, and

the students were expected to complete the data collection tools prepared through "Google Forms". They were expected to click the "I agree" option after reading the informed consent form, which is a mandatory part of the Participant Information Form, and then their answers were obtained.

Data Assessment

Descriptive analyses were assessed using the IBM SPSS 25.0 statistical package program. Number and percentage, mean, standard deviation or median, and minimum and maximum values were given in the presentation of the data. In the evaluation of the first part of the "Assessment Form for Mental Health and Diseases Nursing Course Distance Education" prepared by the researchers, the students' opinions were grouped as agree, partially agree, and disagree and stated as number and percentage. The content analysis technique was used in the second part of the analysis of the open-ended questions. Patton²³ defines content analysis as "any qualitative data reduction and interpretation effort to determine basic coherences and meanings by taking voluminous qualitative material". During the content analysis of the data, the researchers first transferred each participant's answers to a word file and carried out open codings. Codes with similar features from participant opinions were grouped under the same category, and categories were grouped under sub-themes and themes. In the content analysis stage of the data, the researchers worked as two separate groups, came together, and agreed on the categories and themes. The data analysis process was completed. The given conceptual structure was determined based on categories, sub-themes, and themes, and the data were supported by citing the participants' views on the relevant subject.

Ethics Approval

Before starting the study, approval from the Ethics Committee of Gazi University (Decision No: 11.12.2020-E.133170, Research Code No: 2020-651) and written permission from the related institution were obtained. In addition, permission was obtained from the responsible author via e-mail to use the "Opinions About Distance Education Scale" in the study. Before sending the link for the data collection tools to the students participating in the study, they were informed verbally and via e-mail. The students were expected to mark the "I accept" option after reading the explanation of the informed consent form, which is a mandatory field in the participant information form. Since it aimed to evaluate the students' views on conducting the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course with distance education methods, the application was carried out upon completion of the course evaluation process to prevent students from experiencing test anxiety.

RESULTS

The mean age of the students participating in the study was 21.88 ± 1.13 (min.=20.0; max.=28.0), 85.2% of them were female, all were single, 6.2% of the students were working in any job, 84.0% evaluated their income status as a medium, 55.0% were residing in the city center, and 74.1% had a nuclear family. It was determined that 58.0% of the participants had problems with internet use, 54.5% of the students were connected to distance education via phone, and 69.5% had another family member taking distance education. The students stated that they had problems mostly in socialization (20.1%), motivation (18.6%), and communication (16.0%) regarding distance education. Also, 85.6% of the students said they would prefer to take the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course with the face-to-face education system after the pandemic. The students stated that specialist nurse experience sharing (14.1%), film analysis (13.6%), and case discussion (12.0%) among the teaching methods used in the practice skill course were the most effective methods (Table 1).

The majority of the students stated that the different teaching methods used in the theoretical and practical skill courses related to the distance education of Mental Health and Diseases Nursing were interesting, made them ready for the subject, reinforced the subject, and increased the interaction. Moreover, they stated that the practices within the scope of the practice skills course were supportive in knowing the roles and responsibilities of the psychiatric clinical nurse, observing the symptoms specific to psychiatric diagnosis, preparing an appropriate care plan, and developing critical thinking, decision-making, and practice skills. Article presentations within the scope of the courses enabled the acquisition of up-to-date information and improved the point of view (81.9%). About half of the students (47.3%) stated that peer assessments after group presentations helped them recognize their deficiencies (Table 2). The total mean score of the participants for the opinions about the distance education scale was determined as 2.91 ± 0.48 . Their mean scores for the subscales of the scale were 2.95 ± 1.09 for Personal Suitability, 2.65 ± 1.10 for Effectiveness, 4.02 ± 0.98 for Instructiveness, and 2.03 ± 0.90 for Familiarity (Table 3).

The answers to the open-ended questions asked to determine the students' views on distance education were conceptualized under four themes: 'Views on distance education', 'Effectiveness of teaching the methods used', 'Effectiveness of methods used in the practice skill courses' and 'Preparedness for provide nursing care to patients

followed up with a psychiatric diagnosis.' The theme of views on distance education was divided into two sub-themes: advantages and disadvantages. The sub-theme of advantages was grouped into two categories: being understandable and permanent and accessing the courses repeatedly. In the category of being understandable and permanent, 141 students gave their opinions. The sub-theme of disadvantages included physical and technical deficiencies, time constraints, and intensive content that could have been more effective than face-to-face education. Most of the students stated physical and technical deficiencies as a disadvantage (n=37).

Table 1. Characteristics of Students' Access to The Distance Education System (n=243)

Variables	n (%)
Had problem using the internet	
Yes	141 (58.0)
No	102 (42.0)
Devices used in distance education*	
Computer	147 (44.0)
Phone	182 (54.5)
Tablet	5 (1.5)
Status of had another family member taking distance education*	
Yes	169 (69.5)
No	74 (30.5)
The challenges of distance education	
Socialization problems	184 (20.1)
Lack of motivation	170 (18.6)
Communication problems	145 (16.0)
Technology problems	134 (15.0)
Planning and coordination problems	121 (13.2)
Financial problems	67 (7.3)
Familial problems	87 (9.5)
Other (Conflict of classes with working hours, lack of practice)	3 (0.3)
Preference regarding the way the course is conducted	
Face-to-face	208 (85.6)
Distance education	35 (14.4)
Teaching methods found useful in conducting the course*	
Concept map	103 (7.6)
Animation- video	157 (11.7)
Word cloud	129 (9.6)
Online quiz	137 (10.2)
Example scenario work	133 (10.0)
Video display	151 (11.2)
Expert nurse experience sharing	185 (14.1)
Case discussion	162 (12.0)
Film analysis	183 (13.6)

*Percentages calculated from folded n.

Table 2. The Opinions of Students About The Mental Health And Diseases Nursing Course Taken Via Distance Education (n=243)

The Opinions of the Students	Disagree n(%)	Partially Agree n (%)	Agree n (%)
1. The word cloud application used to increase student interaction in theoretical courses increased my interest in the course.	8 (3.3)	35 (14.4)	200 (82.3)
2. Reading notes in theoretical courses were useful for me to be ready for the subject.	15 (6.1)	41 (16.9)	187 (77.0)
3. Conducting practice skills courses after the theoretical courses enabled to reinforce the subject.	8 (3.3)	25 (10.3)	210 (86.4)
4. Different teaching methods in the practice skills course increased my interest in the course.	7 (2.9)	21 (8.6)	215 (88.5)
5. Inviting nurses who were specialist in their fields (PhD student in Psychiatric Nursing, Consultation Liaison Psychiatry Nurse) to the course and sharing their experiences increased the interaction.	5 (2.1)	13 (5.3)	225 (92.6)
6. The sharing of nurses who were specialist in their fields, helped me to gain knowledge about the roles and responsibilities of psychiatric nursing and clinical experience.	2 (0.8)	15 (6.2)	226 (93.0)
7. As an individual homework in practice skill courses, film analyses enabled me to observe the symptoms specific to the diagnosis.	8 (3.3)	23 (9.5)	212 (87.2)
8. The discussion of the individual homework film analysis of the practice skills courses by the instructor allowed me to plan nursing care specific to the diagnoses.	4 (1.6)	22 (9.1)	217 (89.3)
9. Role-play practices (nurse-patient interview, good morning meeting and job orientation meeting) in practice skill courses enabled me to improve my practice skills.	7 (2.9)	32 (13.1)	204 (84.0)
10. Group presentations (case and article presentations) in practice skills courses helped me develop my critical thinking and decision making skills in psychiatry-specific cases.	10 (4.1)	38 (15.6)	195 (80.3)
11. Article presentations in practice skill courses helped me learn current information and improve my perspective on Mental Health and Diseases Nursing.	9 (3.7)	35 (14.4)	199 (81.9)
12. Sharing the questions that will create a discussion environment in the group presentations in practice skill courses contributed to the fluency of the course.	10 (4.1)	57 (23.5)	176 (72.4)
13. Conducting a peer review at the end of group presentations helped me recognise my own deficiencies.	79 (32.5)	49 (20.2)	115 (47.3)

Table 3. Mean scores of the Opinions About Distance Education Scale and Its Sub-dimensions (n=243)

Scale	$\bar{X} \pm SS$	min. –max.
Total score	2.91±0.48	1.5-5
Personal Suitability	2.95±1.09	1-5
Effectiveness	2.65±1.10	1-5
Instructiveness	4.02±0.98	1-5
Familiarity	2.03±0.90	1-5

X, Mean; SD, Standart deviation; min., minimum; max. maximum

Regarding the “effectiveness of the teaching methods used” two sub-themes were determined as effective and ineffective. The sub-theme of effective teaching methods consisted of four categories: making learning enjoyable,

keeping the focus, increasing interest, and providing comprehensibility and permanence. Within the framework of the determined sub-theme, the students mostly expressed positive opinions regarding providing comprehensibility and permanence (n=101). The “effectiveness of the methods used in practice skills courses” theme included the sub-themes of skill acquisition and the ability to apply nursing skills in the clinic. The majority of students' opinions were collected under the sub-theme, stating that the methods used were effective in acquiring skills. The theme of “preparedness to provide nursing care to patients followed up with a psychiatric diagnosis” was divided into three sub-themes: yes, partial, and no. Although some of the students stated that they felt ready (n=95), a significant part of them (n=78) indicated that they did not feel ready (Table 4).

Table 4. Assessments on Mental Health and Diseases Nursing Course Taken Via Distance Education: Content Analysis of Student Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Question	Theme	Sub-theme	Category	n	Example quote
Please indicate your views on the comprehensibility and permanence of the theoretical courses within the scope of the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course you have taken via distance education?	1. Views on distance education	1a. Advantages	Being understandable and permanent	141	"Although the theoretical courses were given via distance education, their comprehensibility and permanence are clear, understandable and well-arranged as in face-to-face education." (P15) "In face-to-face education, our classrooms were very crowded and we couldn't even see the instructor teaching us ... Now at home, it is as though the instructor is teaching us one-on-one, things are clearer." (P61)
			Accessing to the courses repeatedly	15	"Having access the courses again allowed us to reinforce the courses that were already productive." (P7) "The ability for me to watch the course at any time has done a lot for me. When I watched the course multiple times over, I was able to recognise parts that I had not understood before." (P174) "Re-watching the parts of the course that I could not understand during the course helped me to complete the lack of theoretical knowledge." (P38)
			Physical and technical deficiencies	37	"I remember less in distance education than I do from face-to-face education. Moreover, limited internet access makes it difficult to join courses" (P126), "If I listen to the courses regularly, it becomes permanent, but it was very difficult to allocate time and make planning due to both the internet problem and family responsibilities at home." (P131),
		1b. Disadvantages	Time constraints and intensive content	7	"Someone walking into the room, trying to talk to me, and receiving notifications from my cell phone all the time all distracted me as I watch the course. I'm already distracted and can't focus on anything for more than 20 minutes"(P97). "...Although the instructor was good at explaining many subjects, the course subject contents were too intense, and therefore I can't grasp everything." (P13),
			Not being as effective as face-to-face education	27	"The topics were explained very clearly, but ... after a while I had difficulties in focusing in front of the screen." (P41). "Theoretical courses were quite understandable for me, but I can definitely say that it is not more effective than face-to-face training." (P12), "Theoretical courses were very understandable. However, I think the face-to-face education is more permanent." (P58).
Concerning Web 2.0 methods used in the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course you have taken via distance education; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are your views on its contributions to the <i>theoretical courses</i>? What are your views on the contributions to the <i>practice skill courses</i>? 	2. Effectiveness of the teaching methods used*	2a. Effective	Making learning enjoyable	13	"I think that using these methods reduces the great number of the presentations, makes learning fun and arouses curiosity." (P70) "The use of many different methods increased the interest of all students. The use of remarkable content in the course also made the course fun." (P129)
			Keeping the focus	24	"I think that the interactive course and the educational methods applied had a positive effect on the learning process by increasing our attention on the subject." (P24) "I think that we are more active and encouraged to participate in the course. Also it increases focus because it arouses curiosity." (P12)
			Increasing interest	52	"They played a role in increasing my interest in the course. Instead of a monotonous course, I got more involved with different reinforcement techniques." (P51)
		Providing comprehensibility and permanence	101	"Since my visual memory and intelligence are better, it was greatly advantageous for me. It was very useful in theoretical courses in terms of the permanence of the information." (P33) "The word cloud helped me learn concepts. The concept map made it easy for me to learn" (P78) "I think they helped to understand the topics better." (P67)	
		2b. Ineffective	-	11	"In the online education process, it was not as effective as the face-to-face" (P118).

*Web 2.0 methods (Poster, interactive video, survey, word cloud, flashcards, concept map)

** Case representation, article discussion, specialist nurse experience sharing, case study on film analysis

Table 4. Continued

Question	Theme	Sub-theme	Category	n	Example quote
Within the scope of the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course you have taken via distance education, the methods used in the practice skill courses (case presentation, article discussion, experience sharing sessions, case study on film analysis); • Explain how did it affect skill acquisition? • Please explain what are your views on the skills gained in practicing in the psychiatry clinic and its applicability?	3. Effectiveness of the methods** used in the practice skills courses	3a. Skill acquisition	Effective	132	<p>"I think it is very useful in concretising an abstract subject." (P21)</p> <p>"It was permanent for mentioned symptoms of diseases and a nursing planning." (P56)</p> <p>"The only successful thing of distance education, especially in the film analysis, this improved my perspective on nursing diagnoses." (P166)</p> <p>"Especially watching films brought the disease, etched the characteristics into our minds." (P16)</p> <p>"Experience sharing sessions were the most useful method for me, and I learned more clearly what my attitude should be when I encounter with patients." (P49)</p> <p>"Especially the sharing of the experiences of the working nurses gave an idea about what kind of environment we will enter." (P10)</p>
			Ineffective	38	<p>"Of course, it contributed to us about the causes and symptoms of the diseases, but because we were not in the clinic, what was learned was not fully reinforced." (P57)</p> <p>"Although the works are good, I do not think that it is as effective as a one-on-one conversation with the patient." (P83)</p> <p>"I can say that it supports the subject in terms of theory, but I think it is not enough in terms of skills." (P86)</p>
		3b. Ability to apply nursing skills in the clinic	I have acquired clinical skills and can apply them.	152	<p>"I felt as if I was doing an internship. I put my theoretical knowledge into practice." (P84)</p> <p>"While I had questions such as how can I communicate with the patient, how do I give training, etc., now I think I can do my duty very well towards a patient in the hospital." (P27)</p> <p>"Should we work at a psychiatric clinic upon graduation, at least in the beginning we'll have some idea about the challenges we'll be confronted with. They were very useful methods for us to be adapted quickly to the clinic." (P28)</p> <p>"It allowed me to look at patients from different angles. It allowed me to evaluate them holistically." (P121)</p> <p>"I now have a better idea about how I ought to act when making a diagnosis and communicating with patients." (P185)</p>
			Needing to be supported with clinic.	91	<p>"In general, it was good to deal with a patient in homework and to plan, but I think that I am insufficient in improving our communication skills because we do not communicate with a real patient." (P40)</p> <p>"I think it will positively affect our communication with patients, but every time the real experience is different." (P77)</p> <p>"Even if we weren't actually in the psychiatry clinic, they were at least instructive methods about what skills we should gain. However I don't think it can take the place of clinical practices." (P111)</p> <p>"I believe that I have learned all of them in terms of applicability, but I cannot think that I have gained skills. I feel little inadequate. When I encounter with a patient in real life, I do not know how to behave without one of my instructors." (P87)</p> <p>"Data on diseases in psychiatry provided us to have knowledge about their diagnosis and practices. However, I do not think that theoretical knowledge can be fully reinforced without clinical practice." (P167)</p>

*Web 2.0 methods (Poster, interactive video, survey, word cloud, flashcards, concept map)

** Case representation, article discussion, specialist nurse experience sharing, case study on film analysis

Table 4. Continued

Question	Theme	Sub-theme	Category	n	Example quote
Do you think that taking the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course via distance education made you prepared to communicate effectively with the patient followed up with a psychiatric diagnosis and to provide nursing care? (Please explain)	4. Preparedness for provide nursing care to the patients followed up with a psychiatric diagnosis	4a. Yes	-	95	“We have gained knowledge about communicating, I think I can apply it face to face..” (P11). “Although we took the course via distance education, information that I could use in my working life was tried to be taught with different methods. The course not only progressed by teaching theoretical knowledge, but also helped us to practice with different applications. Experts shared their experiences, which also helped us to have an idea about what kind of environment we will work in.”(P86).
		4b. Partial	-	66	“Partially. Although our course was really understandable and reinforced with practice sections, I don't think we can be completely ready for this subject without communicating one-on-one with the patient.” (P72). “Partially yes. In the light of theoretical knowledge, we were able to get an idea about what we could do or what our approach could be. But the experience is always different. We will only fully comprehend the theoretical information when we actually go to the clinic.” (P28)., “In other words, I can't say exactly, but we can manage to take a step because it contributes to our knowledge.” (P16).
		4c. No	-	78	“Distance education has very negative aspects, especially for departments like our department, where practice and communication are very important. Since there is no communication with a real patient, it incorporates many negative aspects such as communicating with predictable reactions, inability to collect sufficient data, and not being able to provide care.” (P70) “I believe that if we don't put what we have learned in theory into practice, they will disappear. Since we couldn't do the internship, I don't think it fully prepared us.” (P46) “The place where we can best reinforce the education we have received is clinical practice. Although various ways are used to increase the permanence of education and the participation of students in the online environment, the best place to learn the profession is clinical practice.” (P35)

*Web 2.0 methods (Poster, interactive video, survey, word cloud, flashcards, concept map)

** Case representation, article discussion, specialist nurse experience sharing, case study on film analysis

DISCUSSION

The pandemic has led to significant changes and effects in the world and Türkiye, especially in health, economic, and social dimensions. Positive and negative results have occurred within the scope of education, which is one of the most affected areas, and countries have decided to continue the education process through distance education.¹ It was determined that most of the students in the present study who continued their education process through distance education had problems using the internet, were connected to distance education by phone, and had another family member taking distance education. The students reported having problems mostly in socialization, motivation, and communication. The literature, it was stated that students experienced communication problems because distance education led them to individual studies.^{24,25} The study of Kürtüncü and Kurt¹⁸ reported that students had difficulty following the lessons due to internet problems. In another study, students reported that they commonly experienced internet problems during the distance education process, and they experienced deficiencies in socialization, study motivation, and discipline.²⁵⁻²⁷ The students in the present study found that the distance education applications were moderately sufficient. The total score of the Opinions About Distance Education Scale was found to be moderately sufficient in the study of Düzgün and Sulak²⁸ with students, which is similar to the present study. In the present study, the students evaluated the effect of the teaching methods used in distance education on their success as moderately sufficient. Another data supporting the effectiveness of teaching methods was when they compared traditional teaching and distance education in terms of learning characteristics, it was determined that distance education was evaluated as sufficient in terms of instructiveness. Students were insufficient in terms of familiarity with the studies planned to be carried out during the distance learning process. It is thought that the difficulties experienced by students in developing skills through distance education affect this result.

Qualitative Findings

In the study, the views of the students who took the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course via distance education during the pandemic were conceptualized under four themes as a result of the content analysis: 'Views on distance education', 'Effectiveness of teaching methods used', 'Effectiveness of methods used in the practice skill courses' and 'Preparedness for provide nursing care to patients followed up with a psychiatric diagnosis'.

Views on Distance Education

In the study, the majority of the students stated that distance education was understandable and permanent, and the ability to access the courses repeatedly was an advantage. From another point of view, it was noted that distance education provided a disadvantageous education process with its different aspects (physical and technical deficiencies, limited course duration, and intensive course content, not being as effective as face-to-face education). When considering the study results in the literature, it has been found that the positive effects of distance education are the opportunity to watch the course videos whenever they want and the subjects that are not understood.^{18,29-30} In terms of its disadvantages, especially the students showed their physical and technical deficiencies in the foreground. Moreover, they stated that the course duration was too short compared to the intensive course content. Likewise, the studies conducted with university students reported that distance education was negatively affected due to technical problems³¹, that distance education was tedious due to technical problems³², and that students complained about connection problems³³. In line with the results, although repeated access to course recordings for students is an influential factor in consolidating the course, improving the conditions of students during the distance education process is an inevitable necessity.

Effectiveness of Teaching Methods Used

In the present study, almost all students stated that the education methods used in the distance education process's theoretical and practice skill courses were effective. They stated that the methods used in the course were very effective in providing an enjoyable learning environment, keeping the focus, increasing interest, comprehensibility, and permanence. A study stated that the teaching methods used in distance education positively impacted students' focus better, increasing permanence and developing their researcher spirit.³⁴ On the other hand, some students stated that the teaching methods used in the theoretical and practical Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course taken via distance education were not as effective as face-to-face education. Students stated that they did not see distance education as effective in nursing education and that there would be deficiencies in practice-oriented professions.¹⁹ In this context, it is thought that enriching teaching methods through visual and audio materials in distance education will increase the quality of education. With an interactive education approach, it is beneficial to create different platforms to increase students' interaction with their peers and instructors and discuss their theoretical knowledge.

Effectiveness of the Methods Used in the Practice Skill Courses

In the present study, most students stated that teaching methods such as case presentation, article discussion, specialist nurse experience sharing, and case study on film analysis used in practice skill courses effectively gained skills and embodied abstract concepts. However, although some students considered the methods used effective, they stated that they needed to be more when compared with clinical practice experience.

While the students stated that they could apply their nursing skills (communicating effectively, providing care for the patient followed up with a psychiatric diagnosis) in the clinic owing to the methods used in the practice skill courses, they focused on the importance of supporting the acquired skills with the clinic practice in terms of their applicability. In the study, Kürtüncü and Kurt¹⁸ stated that students' staying away from the practice area prevented them from learning in the field, and therefore, the distance education system was not the right choice for the nursing department. The mental health and diseases nursing course aims to provide students with skills such as mental state assessment, observation, and interviewing. In addition, skills such as providing and maintaining a therapeutic environment and maintaining group activities are learned primarily through clinical observations and experiences. In this context, although mental health and disease nursing philosophy, mission and vision, roles, and responsibilities are tried to be taught in distance education through teaching methods such as case presentation, article discussion, expert nurse experience sharing, case study on film analysis; it is necessary to plan laboratory and hospital applications to gain clinical experience skills.

Preparedness for Provide Nursing Care to Patients Followed Up with Psychiatric Diagnosis

In the present study, some students stated that they felt ready to provide care with the knowledge after the theoretical and practice skills courses they took with distance education. In contrast, a significant majority indicated that they did not feel ready. Likewise, the literature has reported that taking theoretical courses through distance education may be sufficient, but practical courses may cause problems.^{35,36} In the study conducted by Casafont et al.³⁷ with fourth-year nursing students, they reported that students needed help to cope with ambivalent emotions in clinical practice. To train newly graduated psychiatric nurses who use effective communication and therapeutic environments as tools in providing patient care, the necessity of planning face-to-face clinical practices integrated into the distance education process is essential and cannot be ignored.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study are based on the opinions of participants who received training at only one institution. In addition, the subjective statements of the participants may not reflect observable behaviors.

In light of the research findings, the distance education method during the pandemic period has been found to be advantageous in terms of providing repeated access to the course and the effectiveness of the teaching methods used, providing a pleasant learning environment, increasing focus, increasing interest in the course and growing permanence. However, due to physical and technical deficiencies and insufficient course time, a negative difference was detected when distance education was compared with face-to-face education. In line with the study results, when mental health and disease nursing education is implemented entirely online, psychiatric nursing, as a profession focused on clinical skills, may bring about deficiencies in learning professional roles and responsibilities. The Students stated that they felt inadequate in terms of readiness to provide care for the patient in the clinic and would prefer to take the Mental Health and Diseases Nursing course, which they took with distance education, in face-to-face education.

Course outcomes determined within the scope of the purpose, philosophy, practice standards, professional roles, and responsibilities of Mental Health and Disease Nursing can be very difficult to impart to students through distance education and may not be assimilated from the student's perspective. In this context, it is recommended that the mental health and disease nursing course, as an applied course, should not be given via distance education except in compulsory cases. In the case of distance education, it is recommended that teaching methods in theoretical education be diversified and supported with techniques such as audio-visual materials, case studies, sharing the experiences of expert nurses in the field, and case discussions through movies. It would be supportive to develop the clinical practice process with the opportunity to work online with simulated/standard patients. Students' experiences taking the mental health and diseases nursing course via distance education are essential. In line with the study's results, which were conducted in a quantitative descriptive type and examined student experiences in depth within the scope of open-ended questions, it is recommended to investigate the subject with qualitative semi-structured focus group studies.

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Hakem Değerlendirmesi: Dış bağımsız.

Yazar Katkıları: Fikir- SD,DKİ,FE; Tasarım- FE,DKİ,EA,MI,SSŞ; Denetleme- SD; Malzemeler- SD,FE,DKİ; Veri Toplama ve/veya İşleme- DKİ,EA,MI,SSŞ; Analiz ve/veya Yorum- FE,DKİ,EA,MI,SSŞ; Literatür- DKİ,FE,EA,MI,SSŞ; Yazıyı yazan- SD,DKİ,FE; Eleştirel İnceleme: SD, FE.

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