

Linda Goodfellow, PhD, RN (Reviewer 2)

Reviewer

Recommendation Accept With Minor Revisions

Term:

(1) Answer yes or no for each of the questions below:

Do you have a conflict of interest in reviewing this paper? Yes_____

No__X__

Do you perceive a conflict of interest for the authors within the paper?

Yes_____ No__X__

Comments to
Editor:

Do you agree to hold its contents confidential?

Yes__X__ No_____

Does this paper meet the IRB standards?

Yes__X__ No_____

IS A STATISTICAL REVIEWER NEEDED?

Yes_____ No__X__ I don't think so_____

General Review

1. The topic is timely and important in regard to testing the efficacy of education and training to increase communication skills in cancer nursing. This research has implications for nursing practice and continued research in China but also in developing countries as well as developed countries.

2. The title is representative of the paper. The abstract is overall well written but needs to indicate in the methods section what measures were used for the control group since they differ (Formative Evaluation was not administered to the control group).

3. Most references used are current. Overall the manuscript is well written and easy to read. Ideas are clearly expressed in most cases. The manuscript flows accordingly and is organized in a logical fashion. The writing style is good and command of the English language for the most part is excellent. Some editorial changes are needed and these will be indicated accordingly in this review.

Comments to
Author:

4. The content is literature and research based. The interpretations and conclusions are sound.

5. The tables and figures complement the manuscript. No additional tables/figures are needed. Each table/figure is discussed below. The titles of the tables where appropriate should reflect mean scores.

Table 1 --- I do not think this table is needed. This valuable information can be easily incorporated into the text as each instrument is described.

Table 2 --- Replace the word "all" with "the" and delete "before training" from the title. Also, if 117 is the total number of subjects from both intervention and control group then upper case "N" should be used rather than lower case "n". If there is missing data then this needs indicated. I'm unclear as to the number of subjects in the study. Under the Sample/Setting section N=129.

Table 3 is very informative and I like the way it was set up to include all of the variables and important information. A note (according to APA style) needs to be included at the bottom of the table to indicate to the reader exactly how the relative scores were calculated.

Table 4 is also informative. Please change the title to Relationships between

nurses' variables. Then indicate in the Note at the bottom of the table that Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the relationships.

Table 5 --- I'm not sure whether this information really needs to be in a table or could be just discussed as the authors did in the text. If the table is used to present the information, then a note needs to be included that will indicate to the reader what the asterisks indicate in regard to level of significance.

Table 6 --- Includes a wealth of information and the table is set up in a way that provides a lot of valuable information to the reader. Please include a note indicating what the asterisks represent in regard to level of significance. I like the use of T1, T2, and T3 and would use this more often in the actual text. It may be helpful to the reader to also include the change in scores from T2 to T3.

Table 7 --- Using the C to indicate control group is confusing to me. I would stick with the T1 to indicate Time 1, T2 - Time 2, and T3 - Time 3. So then, in this table one would only see the comparison of changes in scores from T1 to T3 for both the intervention and control group. Please include a note at the bottom of the table to indicate what the asterisks indicate relative to level of significance.

Figure 1 and Figure 2. It may not be necessary to include these figures since the time points are clearly indicated in the text. If however the figures are included, I would include T1, T2, and T3 to better represent the time points and define them.

Research Report --- Specific Comments

(Please note that it would be helpful if line numbers and page numbers were included in the manuscript so that reviewers could easily refer to them with specific comments.)

1. Introduction - Good introduction

2nd paragraph should start begin with the word "The"; line 13 - delete the word "actually"; Line 14 - Studies suggest --- cite the studies; Line 16 --- the sentence starting with For example needs to be restructured so that it is a complete sentence. The section under objectives should be moved to the Introduction/Literature review. The problem statement is inferred in the Introduction.

2. The conceptual framework is appropriate for this study, explained, and easy to understand.

3. Methods - Authors should start with the Design section, followed by Setting/Sample. Then, the training program section can be included under Procedures. Introduce the timing sequence for both intervention and control groups.

a. Design - An appropriate design was used. Indicate in this section Time 1, 2, and 3 in parentheses relative to each evaluation.

b. Setting/Sample The sample was clearly defined. Was a power analysis done to determine sample size? If so, please include. If not, please explain why.

c. Outcome Measures The instruments used to measure outcome variables seem to be appropriate. Please include the information relative to reliability etc. found in Table 1 in the text to further describe each instrument.

Nurses' Basic Communication Skills Scale - I believe there is an error in translation related to this seven-point rating scale in that "lightly" should read "slightly".

d. Procedures - Include this as a section as indicated above. Clearly describe the procedures used to recruit participants after approval to conduct study was given. The authors could include their IRB (ethics committee) statement here and

eliminate the section they called Ethical Considerations. Then describe the protocol and specific time points by which data was collected over the 6-month period of time.

e. Data analysis - Overall it is clear as to how they analyzed the data collected.

Line 11 under this section should read ... perform statistical analysis...

The last two sentences of this section need rewritten for clarification. Something like this... To determine pair-wise comparisons on the differences found significant, a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with a SNK (spell out first time) post hoc test was performed after the variables were ranked according to the transformation procedures. A two-tailed test of significance was used with alpha set at $< .05$.

f. Results

f1. 1st paragraph - include the word "the" three measures; include "as shown" in Table 2.

f2. Title needs shortened to something like Baseline Measures of Communication Skills. The discussion under this section related to relative scores is not clear to me. Further explanation is needed.

f3. Relationships among the basic communications skills, etc... section

First sentence should read... Pearson Product moment correlations (r) were performed to determine the magnitude and intensity of the relationship between variables including xxx as shown in Table 4. ... These (plural) findings... The last two sentences in this section seem somewhat awkward to read and need rewritten.

Earlier the authors indicate that even after transformation of data was performed the normality assumption was not met and nonparametric tests were used to analyze the data. If so, then I would think that Spearman's correlational tests should have been used instead of Pearsons.

f4. Comparability test of the training groups... Title is too long. Please shorten if possible.

The information in this section should be presented in the very beginning of the results section. Also, please cite the source related to Rank Cases procedure found at the end of this section.

f5. Consolidation of the training efficacy in the training group

First sentence should read --- The mean scores of the dependent variables for the nurses in the training group are displayed in Table 6.

Please incorporate the use of the terminology Time points (T1, T2, & T3) measured in this discussion. I think it will help the reader and also provide continuity with text and table.

Please clarify "subparts".

f6. Training efficacy based on nurses'....

Again I would incorporate the terminology related to Time points in this section.

6. Discussion - Overall, well written and informative. Results of the study are discussed relative to the literature. The limitations of the study could easily be addressed and incorporated within the discussion of this section . Also implications for nursing practice and research need addressed. The conclusion statement should be included as the last paragraph in the Discussion section.

Manuscript Rating Question(s): Scale Rating

Problem Statement:

[1-3] 1

Attention to relevant literature	[1-3]	1
Theoretical framework:	[1-3]	1
Research design:	[1-3]	1
Data analysis:	[1-3]	1
Discussion of results:	[1-3]	1
Organization:	[1-3]	1
Writing Style:	[1-3]	1
Value of topic:	[1-5]	3
Probable reader interest in topic:	[1-5]	3
Importance of present contribution:	[1-5]	3
Priority of topic for publication:	[1-5]	3
Rank this manuscript for its value:	[1-5]	3