

## Personal Factors Affecting Completion of Health Statistics Course among Undergraduates Nurses: A Cross-sectional Study in a State University of Sri Lanka

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Health statistics is considered a hard course in the undergraduate curriculum. Though many factors have been identified in the global context on the success of students in statistics education, underlying factors affecting the successful completion of this course among undergraduate nursing students in the local context have scarcely been investigated. Thus, this study aimed to determine personal factors influencing completing the Health Statistics course. This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in 2019 and included diploma-qualified nurses (n=96) who enrolled to pursue a nursing degree at a state university in Sri Lanka. A pre-tested, self-administered online questionnaire was administered. It contained 33 questions assessing factors divided into three domains; student-related (12 questions), home related (9 questions), and occupational-related (11 questions). Responses were rated on a 5 point Likert scale and mostly influential denoted by high mean scores and vice versa. Data was analysed using SPSS 21. Descriptive statistics was used. Ethical clearance was obtained. Most nurses were females (88.7%) and married (78.4%). The overall scores of perceived student-related factors, home-related factors, and occupational-related factors were 39.71 (range 12 - 60), 28.31 (range 9 - 45), and 30.37 (11 -55) respectively. This denotes that student-related and occupational-related factors mostly influence students more than home-related factors in the completion of the course. The most influential personal factors for successful completion of the course were completion of assignments on time (mean 4.13), adequate self-preparation for continuous assessments and final examinations (mean 3.97), active listening to the teacher during the lecture (mean 3.96), financial support (mean 3.94), family support (mean 3.93) and determination of showing good performance in the course (mean 3.92). In conclusion, successful completion of the Health Statistics course is mostly based on the students' learning engagement and the support of their families. Further studies are warranted in a larger sample.

**Keywords:** *personal factors, health statistics course, undergraduate nurses, state university, Sri Lanka*