

**Title:**

Student Characteristics to Assess in End-of-Life Education Research

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**Session Title:**

Education Posters Session 2

**Keywords:**

demographics, end of life and nursing education

**References:**

Arslan, D., Akca, N. K., Simsek, N., & Zorba, P. (2014). Student nurses' attitudes toward dying patients in central Anatolia. *International Journal of Nursing Knowledge*, 25(3), 183–188. <http://doi.org/10.1111/2047-3095.12042>

Conner, N., E., Wochna Loerzel, V., & Uddin, N. (2014). Nursing student end-of-life care attitudes after an online death and dying course. *Journal of Hospice & Palliative Nursing*, 16(6), 374–382. <http://doi.org/10.1097/NJH.0000000000000080>

Wochna Loerzel, V., & Conner, N. (2014). Advances and challenges: Student reflections from an online death and dying course. *The American Journal of Hospice & Palliative Care*. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1049909114549182>

**Abstract Summary:**

This poster will present the findings of a literature review identifying characteristics of student samples to measure when conducting research in end-of-life nursing education. Gaps in the extant literature will also be discussed.

**Learning Activity:**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
The attendee will be able to list all key student characteristics to measure in end of life education research.	Student characteristics to assess: -Age - Previous experience in caring for dying persons -Previous experience with death/loss - Previous education on end-of-life care - Religion -Program of Enrollment (when applicable)
The attendee will be able to report at least two gaps in extant literature regarding student characteristics in end of life research.	Gaps to be discussed: - Optimum means of obtaining characteristic information remain unclear - Characteristics are manipulated differently in research; therefore, determinations of impact of characteristics on learning outcomes are unable to be determined

**Abstract Text:**

**Introduction:** Within nursing education research, student characteristics are always measured; yet what is measured and by what means remains up to the discretion of the researchers. As a result, consistency across educational research is lacking. This poster presentation will share the results of a literature review identifying student characteristics to measure in palliative and end-of-life care research.

**Methods:** Databases assessed for identification of articles included: PubMed, EBSCOHost, ERIC, and CINAHL. Inclusion criteria were: peer-reviewed, written in English, published in or before 2015 (when review conducted), and assessed characteristics of undergraduate (associate degree and baccalaureate degree) nursing students.

**Results:** Twenty-five articles met inclusion criteria. Within these articles, authors reported characteristics to describe the sample (n=15) or to identify associations of the characteristics with certain variables (n=10). Across all identified studies, age (n=19) and gender (n=19) were the most frequently assessed variable. While age had a positive impact on other variables when measured, gender did not. Previous experiences in caring for dying persons (n=13) and with death/loss (n=9) as well as previous education on end-of-life care (n=10) and religion (n=9) were analyzed consistently in the literature and appeared to have some impact on other variables measured. Less frequently measured characteristics were aspects of academic progression or previous education (n=7), ethnicity/race (n=6), program of enrollment (n=6), aspects of previous healthcare experiences (n=4), and place of residence (n=3).

**Discussion & Conclusions:** Characteristics recommended to be measured in palliative and end-of-life care research are: age, previous experience in caring for dying persons, previous experience with death/loss, previous education on end-of-life care, and religion. Program of enrollment should be measured when appropriate for the study design. Measurement of other characteristics is not supported in the literature. Two gaps in extant literature were also identified. First, the optimum means by which to collect information, apart from gender, remains unclear. Second, characteristics are analyzed inconsistently in literature, leading to unclear impact of characteristics on other variables measured within palliative and end-of-life education research. Implications for future research will be presented.