



## NURSING STUDENTS' PREPAREDNESS IN FIRST AID FOR SELF-HARM INCIDENTS

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### ABSTRACT

Self-harm is a phenomenon of maladaptive actions in teenagers who are a group vulnerable to various changes. Almost 20% of teenagers experience this behavior. If it is not discovered and treated immediately, it will cause disability and death. Students have a great opportunity to become first responders in emergencies and must have the ability to provide first aid. The research aims to determine the readiness of Nursing students in Banyuwangi to provide first aid in cases of self-harm. This type of research is quantitative with descriptive research methods. Respondents totaled 326 people and sampling used the consecutive sampling method. The data collection tool uses a readiness questionnaire in the form of a Likert scale statement. The research results revealed that 31.7% of respondents were in the ready category, and 68.3% of respondents were in the not category. Most students were 21 years old (76.2%), and generally female (87.7%). As many as 84.3% had never performed first aid on patients who injured themselves, 55.6% had never attended first aid training and all respondents had received information related to first aid, especially from education and training (88.7%). It can be concluded that the majority of respondents stated that they were not ready to provide first aid if they experienced a victim injuring themselves (68.3%). The development of first aid education and training for students needs to be carried out to prepare student resources who can become first responders when a self-injury incident occurs.

**Keywords:** Self Harm, First Aid, Preparedness, Nursing Student

### ABSTRAK

Menyakiti diri sendiri suatu fenomena tindakan maladaktif pada remaja yang merupakan kelompok rentan terjadi berbagai perubahan. Hampir 20% remaja mengalami perilaku tersebut jika tidak ditemukan dan ditangani segera akan menyebabkan kecacatan dan kematian. Mahasiswa berpeluang besar menjadi first responder dalam situasi darurat harus memiliki kemampuan dalam memberikan pertolongan pertama. Tujuan penelitian adalah untuk mengetahui kesiapan mahasiswa Keperawatan di Banyuwangi dalam melakukan pertolongan pertama pada kejadian melukai diri sendiri. Jenis penelitian bersifat kuantitatif dengan metode descriptive research. Responden berjumlah 326 orang dan pengambilan sampel menggunakan metode consecutive sampling. Alat pengumpulan data menggunakan kuesioner kesiapan dalam bentuk pernyataan skala likert. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa 31,7% kategori siap, dan 68,3% responden kategori tidak. Sebagian besar mahasiswa berusia 21 tahun (76,2%), dan umumnya berjenis kelamin perempuan (87,7%). Sebanyak 84,3% belum

*pernah melakukan pertolongan pertama pada pasien melukai dirisendiri, 55,6% belum pernah mengikuti pelatihan pertolongan pertama dan seluruh responden pernah mendapatkan informasi terkait pertolongan pertama terutama dari pendidikan dan pelatihan (88,7%). Dapat disimpulkan bahwa, sebagian besar responden dinyatakan tidak siap untuk melakukan pertolongan pertama bila mendapatkan kejadian korban melukai diri sendiri (68,3%). Pengembangan pendidikan dan pelatihan pertolongan pertama pada mahasiswa perlu dilakukan guna mempersiapkan sumberdaya mahasiswa yang dapat menjadi first responder saat terjadi insiden melukai diri sendiri.*

**Keywords:** Keyword 1; self harm, pertolongan pertama, kesiapan, dan mahasiswa keperawatan

## **INTRODUCTION** (*Times new roman, 12pts, spaces 1.5*)

Mental health issues have become an increasingly significant global concern, with a high prevalence of self-harm incidents, particularly among adolescents and young adults (Townsend et al., 2022). According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), self-harm is considered one of the primary risk factors for suicide, which is the second leading cause of death among individuals aged 15 to 29 (Duarte et al., 2020). This has become a major concern in the context of healthcare, including in the field of nursing. Nurses, especially nursing students who will become future healthcare providers, play a crucial role in managing self-harm incidents, both in healthcare facilities and emergency situations. One of the critical initial steps in handling self-harm is the provision of first aid. Competence in delivering appropriate first aid can help reduce further risks, such as infection or more severe injuries, and potentially save lives (Poreddi et al., 2021).

However, various studies indicate that nursing students' preparedness in managing self-harm incidents varies significantly. Some students may lack adequate knowledge and skills in providing first aid for self-harm cases, which can affect their response to patients experiencing such incidents. According to WHO data on nursing students' preparedness to administer first aid in self-harm cases, 78,6% fall into the category of "less prepared," 21,4% are categorized as "moderately prepared," and 28,3% are classified as "prepared." In Indonesia, data show that the level of preparedness among students to provide first aid in self-harm cases falls into the "prepared" category (Zega et al., 2022). An initial survey at the research site involving 32 students revealed that 16 students (50%) had moderate preparedness, while 16 students (50%) were less prepared to administer first aid in self-harm cases.

The lack of preparedness among nursing students in administering first aid for self-harm incidents is influenced by various internal and external factors. Internally, the lack of hands-on experience in facing real emergency situations often leaves students anxious and hesitant to take the appropriate actions. Psychological pressures, such as an inability to manage stress and emotions when dealing with critically ill victims, also contribute to reducing the effectiveness of interventions. Additionally, limited motor skills and coordination due to insufficient practical training make students less proficient in correctly performing first aid procedures. Externally, the lack of realistic simulations in academic environments and limited guidance during clinical training are major obstacles to adequately preparing students for real-life emergencies (Albadrani et al., 2023).

To improve nursing students' readiness to administer first aid in self-harm incidents, a holistic approach is needed, involving the enhancement of practical skills and psychological

support (Ghasemi et al., 2020). One effective solution is to increase scenario-based simulations that are deeply designed, including scenarios involving victims with psychological disorders. These simulations can provide students with the opportunity to practice technical skills and emotional management under pressure. Moreover, it is crucial to integrate stress management training and effective communication into the curriculum to help students remain calm and make appropriate decisions in emergency situations. More intensive supervision by experienced instructors is also necessary, so that students can receive direct feedback and better guidance during clinical practice (Rafati et al., 2017).

This study aims to explore the extent of nursing students' preparedness to provide first aid in self-harm incidents. It is expected that this research will provide deeper insights into the knowledge and skills of nursing students regarding the management of self-harm and offer recommendations for improving nursing education curricula in the context of mental health and first aid.

## **METHODS**

This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive design to evaluate nursing students' preparedness in administering first aid for self-harm incidents. Data were collected using a questionnaire distributed to nursing students of all academic levels at STIKES Banyuwangi. The questionnaire was designed to assess several dimensions of preparedness, including knowledge, practical skills, stress management, mental and emotional readiness, and practical experience in emergency situations.

### **Participants**

The participants in this study consisted of 326 nursing students from all cohorts. The inclusion criteria were students who voluntarily agreed to participate and were actively enrolled at STIKES Banyuwangi. The exclusion criteria included students who were absent during the study due to illness, academic leave, or off-campus activities, or those who did not provide written consent.

### **Instruments**

The measurement tool used in this study was a self-designed questionnaire based on relevant literature and standardized preparedness assessment tools. The questionnaire comprised 20 items with a 5-point Likert scale, covering five main dimensions: (1) First Aid Knowledge, (2) Practical Skills, (3) Stress Management, (4) Mental and Emotional Readiness, and (5) Practical Experience. The validity of the questionnaire was assessed through expert judgment by three nursing experts, and reliability testing was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a score of 0.87, indicating a high level of internal consistency.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Data were collected over a two-month period from May to July 2024. The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms. Before completing the questionnaire, each participant was provided with a detailed explanation of the study's purpose and electronically gave written informed consent. The questionnaire took approximately 20-30 minutes to complete, and participants were

allowed to download a copy of their responses upon completion. All data were collected anonymously, with confidentiality ensured.

### Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26. A univariate descriptive analysis was conducted to assess the frequency distribution and mean scores for each preparedness dimension and demographic data.

## RESULTS

The results of the recapitulation of research data based on respondent characteristics are presented in the following table

**Table 1. Distribution and frequency of respondent data**

Variabel	<i>n</i>	%
Age		
20 years	21	6,4
21 years	249	76,3
22 years	48	14,7
23 years	8	2,4
Gender		
Male	40	12,3
Female	286	87,7
History of action FA		
Once	51	15,6
Never	275	84,4
History received information about FA		
Once	289	88,7
Never	37	11,3
Source of FA education		
Education	153	46,3
Sicial Media	173	53,7
History of FA Training		
Once	145	44,5
Never	181	55,5
Preparedness FA in SHI		
Prepared	103	31,7
Less Prepared	222	68,3

Source: *Data Primer 2024*

The demographic data showed that the majority of the respondents were 21 years old (76.3%, n=249), followed by those aged 22 years (14.7%, n=48). Only a small percentage of respondents were 20 years old (6.4%, n=21) and 23 years old (2.4%, n=8). In terms of gender, most of the respondents were female (87.7%, n=286), while only 12.3% (n=40) were male. Regarding the history of performing first aid (FA), only 15.6% (n=51) of students reported having previous experience, while the majority (84.4%, n=275) had no prior experience. Additionally, 88.7% (n=289) of respondents had received information about FA, while 11.3% (n=37) had not. The source of FA education primarily came from social media (53.7%, n=173), whereas 46.3% (n=153) obtained it through formal education.

In terms of first aid training, less than half of the respondents (44.5%, n=145) reported having attended FA training, while the majority (55.5%, n=181) had not. The level of preparedness to

administer first aid in self-harm incidents was concerning, as only 31.7% (n=103) of students were categorized as "prepared," while the majority, 68.3% (n=222), were classified as "less prepared." This finding suggests a significant gap in nursing students' readiness to manage self-harm cases effectively.

## DISCUSSION

The research results showed that the majority of respondents, namely 222 students (68%), fell into the category of being less prepared to provide first aid in self-harm incident. These findings indicate a significant gap between the theoretical knowledge and practical readiness of nursing students in dealing with emergency situations involving self-harm. This fact illustrates that students in the category are less prepared to face various obstacles in terms of knowledge, skills, stress management and emotional readiness. This will be influenced by several factors such as age, gender, clinical experience and history of exposure to information about performing FA in cases of self-harm (Ghasemi et al., 2020).

The results showed that 76.3% of respondents were 21 years old, most of the nursing students were still in the middle stages of their education or had just started their clinical experience. This age is often associated with a lack of experience in the field, especially in handling complex emergency situations such as self-harm incidents. This limited practical experience makes them less trained to handle real situations, even though they have learned the theory in class. Without enough exposure to simulations or real experience in dealing with self-injury victims, students may feel anxious or unsure about taking first aid steps. Young age, with limited clinical experience, often means they are unprepared to face stressful conditions (John, 2010).

Emotional and psychological maturity at 21 years old is still developing. This age is often marked by a search for identity and deep self-understanding, as well as developments in emotional management. When faced with an emergency situation involving a victim of self-harm, these young college students may feel emotionally unprepared, especially if they are not used to dealing with situations involving mental health or severe physical trauma. Students may experience difficulty in managing their own stress and emotions when having to deal with victims who are in poor psychological and physical condition. This can make them panic or feel self-conscious, which ultimately affects their effectiveness in providing first aid (Xiao et al., 2022).

Students at the age of 21 may still be in the stage of developing fast and effective decision-making skills, especially in crisis situations. In the context of first aid for self-harm incidents, quick and correct decisions are very important. Younger students tend to be slower

in responding or feel hesitant due to lack of experience and the influence of cognitive maturity that is not yet fully mature. This uncertainty in making decisions can stem from concerns about the wrong consequences or doubts about whether they are taking the right steps, especially if this is the first time they have faced this situation (SM & Latipah, 2024).

Another factor that is assumed to influence students' readiness to carry out FA in the self-harm incident is gender, 87.7% of whom are female. Research shows that women tend to have a greater emotional response to situations involving physical or emotional trauma, including cases of self-harm. This can make them more vulnerable to experiencing emotional distress when dealing with victims experiencing injuries or psychological crises. In situations of self-harm, women may be more affected by the victim's emotional state, which can make it difficult for them to remain calm and focus on the help they need to take. This highly emotional response, although indicative of empathy, can be a challenge in emergency situations, as it can hinder quick and appropriate decision making, which is necessary in providing first aid.

Women tend to have higher levels of empathy than men, which is an advantage in the nursing profession. However, in emergency situations such as self-harm, too much empathy can make women focus more on the emotional aspects of the victim rather than on the first aid steps that must be taken. For example, they may put more effort into calming the victim emotionally, but ignore the need for immediate physical intervention such as stopping bleeding. Empathy is important, but in the context of first aid, priority should be given to physical actions to save lives or prevent conditions from getting worse. This imbalance could be one of the reasons women are less prepared to deal with incidents of self-harm.

The high percentage of respondents (84.4%) who had never performed first aid directly influenced their lack of preparation in dealing with incidents of self-harm. Hands-on experience is essential in honing first aid skills. Students who have never performed first aid, including in cases of self-harm, will feel less confident and doubtful in dealing with real situations. Without experience, they may rely solely on theory learned in class, which is not enough to help them act quickly and appropriately when faced with a stressful emergency situation (Bashekah et al., 2023). This lack of experience also causes students to be unfamiliar with the complexity and dynamics of emergency situations, such as managing time pressure, unstable conditions of victims, and coordinating with other teams. The high percentage of students who have never performed first aid greatly influences their lack of preparedness in dealing with incidents of self-harm. Their lack of experience means they do not have the practical skills, confidence, or ability to manage stress needed in emergency situations (Zanus et al., 2021).

Information about first aid in cases of self-harm will influence students' self-confidence in dealing with real incidents. This is in contrast to the fact that 88.7 % students received information about first aid but it was not enough to make them ready to face real conditions. This fact assumes that the quality and source of information received also greatly influences a person's readiness. If the information obtained is not comprehensive, does not come from a reliable source, or does not follow standard first aid guidelines, students may feel that they are not ready to act (Joseph et al., 2014). Information that is not in-depth enough or is not relevant to the condition of self-harm can leave them confused or unsure about the steps they should take. According to research data, 57.7% got it from social media, so that information sources that only focus on theory without providing clear practical guidance can make students feel unprepared, even if they have studied the topic (Huy et al., 2022).

## CONCLUSION

The research results showed that the majority of respondents, namely 222 students (68%), were in the category of not being ready to provide first aid in the incident of self-harm. These findings highlight a significant gap between the theoretical knowledge and practical preparedness of nursing students in dealing with emergency situations involving self-harm. Factors that influence this lack of preparedness include age, gender, clinical experience, and history of information obtained regarding first aid. Most respondents were 21 years old, still in the early stages of education and had limited clinical experience. This age is often associated with a lack of experience in handling complex emergency situations, thereby limiting their ability to act quickly and effectively. Emotional and psychological maturity at this age is also not fully developed, which can result in difficulties in managing stress and emotions when dealing with victims who have suffered physical and psychological injuries.

In addition, with a percentage of 87.7% female respondents, this study found that women tend to have a greater emotional response to trauma, which can affect their ability to remain calm and focused in providing first aid. Although empathy is a valuable asset in the nursing profession, excessive emotional responses can hinder quick and appropriate decision making in emergency situations. Lack of practical experience is also an important factor, with 84.4% of respondents having never performed first aid directly, so they felt less confident and hesitant to act. Even though 88.7% of students received information about first aid, the quality and sources of the information obtained were inadequate to equip them to face real situations. In particular, information obtained from social media tends to be theoretical without providing clear practical guidance, thus adding to students' confusion and uncertainty in taking action.



Overall, the results of this study indicate the need for a more comprehensive approach in nursing education, including increasing practical experience through simulations, training, and providing quality information to increase student readiness in dealing with self-harm incidents.

### **ETHICS OF STUDY**

This study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards for research involving human participants. Prior to the commencement of data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of KEPK STIKES Banyuwangi, ensuring that the study adhered to established ethical guidelines for research. The primary ethical considerations addressed in this study include informed consent, confidentiality, and the protection of participants' rights.

#### **Informed Consent:**

All participants were provided with detailed information regarding the purpose, objectives, and procedures of the study. Participation was entirely voluntary, and each student was required to give informed consent electronically before completing the questionnaire. The consent form outlined their right to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty and assured them that their participation, or lack thereof, would not affect their academic standing.

#### **Confidentiality:**

To protect the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents, all data were collected anonymously, with no identifying information linked to individual responses. The use of online data collection tools ensured secure handling and storage of the data. Participants were assured that their responses would be used solely for research purposes and would not be shared with unauthorized parties.

#### **Protection of Participants:**

Given the sensitive nature of the topic—self-harm and first aid response—measures were taken to minimize any potential emotional or psychological distress among the participants. The questionnaire was carefully designed to avoid any intrusive or distressing questions. Moreover, participants were provided with contact information for mental health resources should they experience discomfort or emotional stress during or after the study.

#### **Compliance with Ethical Guidelines:**

The study followed the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki and adhered to the ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects. Any potential risks to participants were considered minimal, and the benefits of the research, in terms of enhancing nursing education and preparedness in handling self-harm incidents, were deemed to outweigh any potential harm

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