

Attitudes Toward Research and Factors Affecting Research Interest Among Nursing Students in College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital

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<https://doi.org/10.56201/wjimt.v10.no9.2026.pg111.123>

Abstract

Background: With ongoing changes in healthcare, nursing research is crucial for tackling complex patient care challenges, enhancing clinical practices, and influencing healthcare policies. Research shows that although many nursing students view research positively but various obstacles hinder their interest and involvement. Despite these findings, few studies have directly assessed how attitudes affect students' interest in research, especially within Nigerian Colleges of Nursing Science. Therefore, this study aimed to assess nursing students' attitudes toward research and to identify factors influencing research interest in College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital.

Research Method: This study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey design and 207 respondents were selected within the settings of the study encompassing all year three and year four nursing students. The data were presented in tables and analyzed using frequencies, percentages, mean scores and standard deviations and chi-square was tested for the association between variables.

Results: The findings of this study revealed that respondents had positive attitude ($2.87/4 \pm 0.97$) towards research. Also, the findings revealed that 79.4%, 77.9% and 77.9% of the respondents indicated lack of funding, limited access to research resources and difficulty in obtaining approval respectively affect their interest in research. Statistically, the finding revealed that there was a significant ($p = 0.013$) relationship between age and limited access to research resources, and also there was a significant ($p = 0.018$) relationship between level of study and lack of fund.

Conclusion: *The study concluded that nursing students at the College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital generally had a positive attitude toward research and that lack of funding, limited access to research resources, and difficulty in obtaining research approval were the major factors affecting research interest. However, support from lecturers was found to positively influence students' interest in research. It was recommended that institutions should improve students' access to research resources, including academic databases, journals, research software, and other relevant learning materials required for research activities. Funding opportunities, grants, and sponsorship schemes should be made available for students' research projects to reduce financial barriers to research participation.*

Keywords: *Attitude, Research Interest, Factors, Nursing Students.*

Background

Nursing research is vital for improving healthcare on a global scale. It forms the foundation of evidence-based practice, allowing healthcare decisions to be made using the most reliable evidence instead of relying on tradition or personal experience (Rawat *et al.*, 2022). In nursing, evidence-based practice means both applying research findings in daily work and actively engaging nurses in research activities (Nguyen *et al.*, 2023). As such, promoting a strong research culture within nursing education is essential for the sustained success of healthcare systems worldwide (Alfaki, 2024). With ongoing changes in healthcare, nursing research is crucial for tackling complex patient care challenges, enhancing clinical practices, and influencing healthcare policies (Rawat *et al.*, 2022).

Nursing students who participate in research and develop key skills are well positioned to offer important perspectives that improve the field of nursing practice (Almarwan, 2025). For students, practical challenges in training settings are significant obstacles to conducting research, such as limited funding, lack of time, and insufficient access to research resources like online materials, journals, and magazines (Ndu *et al.*, 2024). Research shows that although many nursing students view research positively, various obstacles hinder their interest and involvement. Moya-Salazar *et al.* (2023) observed that 50% of students expressed favorable attitudes while Amoo and Gbadamosi (2021) reported that 63% had positive views, yet only 39% actually participated in research. Haxhija *et al.* (2024) similarly reported that, despite students appreciating the significance of research, inadequate support from faculty and institutions limited their participation. Common barriers include lack of time, financial difficulties, research-related anxiety, and insufficient mentorship. Ndu *et al.* (2024) noted that even with positive attitudes, 41–55% of students faced research-related challenges. Ashraf and Habeeb (2025) also found that anxiety about research negatively influences students' attitudes. Despite these findings, few studies have directly explored how attitudes affect students' interest in research, especially within Nigerian Colleges of Nursing Science. Therefore, this study was conducted to assess nursing students' attitudes toward research and to identify factors influencing research interest in College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital. The objectives of the study were to assess nursing students' attitudes toward research at College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital, to identify factors influencing research interest among nursing students at the College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital and to determine the relationship between selected socio-demographic characteristics and major factors affecting research interest among nursing students at the College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital.

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. The setting of the study was the College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital., Lagos State, Nigeria.

Target Population

The target population consisted of nursing students who have been exposed to research courses or and have carried out a research project at the College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) during the period of the study. The total number of nursing students in the institution was 506, distributed across different academic levels as follows: Year 1 - 144 students, Year 2 - 155 students, Year 3 - 132 students, and Year 4 - 75 students (College of Nursing Sciences, LUTH, 2026).

Sample Size Determination

Census method was used to determine the sample size. A census is particularly appealing for specific populations. According to Nanjundeswaraswamy and Divakar (2021), census method considers the entire population as the sample size; this method is suitable only when population size is very small. For this study, the accessible population consisted of Year 3 (132 students) and Year 4 (75 students) which summed up to 207 students. This approach provides precise and accurate information since no unit is excluded. Thus, the entire population of 207 served as the sample size based on the limited population.

Inclusion Criteria: Students at College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital who have been exposed to research learning or and have participated in research activities.

Exclusion Criteria: Students that were in acute pain or were ill during the data collection.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling method was used to select year three and year four students for the study. This is a type of sampling where researchers use their discretion to select participants from the population for their researches. The purposive sampling technique relies on the researcher's assessment of who can offer the most valuable insights to fulfill the study's goals. The researcher targeted students who have been exposed to research courses and or have carried out a research project and they were invited to participate in the study.

Instrument for Data Collection

A self-structured questionnaire drafted from the literature reviewed was used. It comprised of three sections which focused on the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents (3 items), attitude of respondents towards research (6 items) and factors affecting research interest among nursing students (6 items).

Validity of Instrument

Face and content validity were assessed by three jurors who are expert in research who vetted the research instrument for clarity, simplicity of language, appropriateness, relevancy and completeness/comprehensiveness. Their observations, corrections and suggestions were implemented.

Reliability of Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach's alpha method, which measured the internal consistency of items within the questionnaire. A pilot test conducted

among 21 nursing students, representing 10% of the calculated sample size. The pilot test was carried out at Lagos State University College of Nursing, Igando, among nursing students. Data obtained was analyzed. The responses obtained were subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS version 26. The pilot test results showed that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient obtained for attitude toward research was 0.75 and factors affecting research interest was 0.80. All the values were above the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating that the instrument was reliable and suitable for use in this study.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher was introduced to the respondents. Brief explanations regarding the study were given to the respondents and confidentiality was assured. The questionnaire was distributed by the researcher to the respondents who met the criteria. Classroom seating arrangement was used. The questionnaire was distributed in an orderly manner. The respondents used their break time which was one hour to fill and return the questionnaires. The questionnaires were retrieved on the spot. After the retrieval of the questionnaire, the researcher appreciated all the respondents and wished them the best in their study.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected from respondents were coded, entered in to excel sheet, cleaned and transferred to Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 where the data was analyzed. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize the data. The results were presented in tables using frequencies, percents, mean scores and standard deviation while Chi-square test was used to determine associations between selected variables.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of College of Medicine, Lagos University Teaching Hospital with approval number CMUL/HREC/05/25/2275. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study before completing the questionnaire. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by ensuring that respondents' identities were not disclosed and that the information collected was used strictly for academic purposes and the instrument for data collection was destroyed by burning at the completion of the study.

Results

207 **questionnaire** was distributed to the eligible respondents using the face-to-face method. 199 **questionnaire** was adequately filled and returned while 8 **questionnaire** was not returned. Therefore, the study response rate was 96.1% and resultant 3.9% attrition (fall out) rate.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents (n= 199)

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Age (Years)		
16-20	88	44.2
21-25	100	50.3
26-30	11	5.5
Sex		
Male	56	28.1
Female	143	71.9
Level of study		

Year 3	124	62.3
Year 4	75	37.7

Table 1 showed the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents at College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital. A little more than half (50.3%) of the respondents were within the age range of 21–25 years. Females constituted the majority (71.9%), while males accounted for 28.1%. In terms of academic level, 62.3% of the respondents were in Year 3 while 37.7% of them were in Year 4.

Table 2: Attitude of respondents towards research (n=199)

Variables	SA F %	A F %	D F %	SD F %	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation
Research is useful for my future career	66 33.2	91 45.7	12 6.0	30 15.1	2.97	0.99
Research is relevant to my field of study	101 50.8	60 30.2	24 12.1	14 7.0	3.25	0.92
I am interested in learning about research	70 35.2	71 35.7	42 21.1	16 8.0	2.98	0.94
I enjoy engaging in research-related activities	55 27.6	75 37.7	47 23.6	22 11.1	2.82	0.96
Research makes me anxious	51 25.6	69 34.7	43 21.6	36 18.1	2.67	1.05
Research is difficult to understand	29 14.6	78 39.2	60 30.2	32 16.1	2.52	0.93
Aggregate	62 31.2	74 37.2	38 19.1	25 12.6	2.87	0.97

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree

Table 2 showed the distribution of respondents' attitudes toward research at College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital. The mean scores equal to or greater than ($\geq$) 2.5 out of 4 and less than ($<$) 2.5 out of 4 were calculated to be decisive mean score for positive attitude and negative attitude respectively. The individual items indicated a mean attitude score within a range of 2.53 ± 0.93 (SD) to 3.25 ± 0.92 (SD) and the overall/aggregate mean attitude score was 2.87 ± 0.97 (SD). This indicated that respondents had positive attitude towards research.

Table 3: Factors affecting research interest among nursing students (n=199)

Variables	Agree		Disagree	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Lack of funding discourages me from engaging in research	158	79.4	41	20.61
Lack of mentorship affects my research interest	154	77.4	45	22.6
Limited access to research resources affects my participation	155	77.9	44	22.1
Difficulty in obtaining approval discourages research participation	155	77.9	44	22.1

Lack of motivation reduces my interest in research	152	76.4	47	23.6
Support from lecturers encourages my research interest	144	72.4	55	27.6

Table 4.3 showed the distribution of factors affecting research interest among nursing students at the College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital. The findings showed that 79.4% of the respondents indicated lack of funding as a factor that affects research interest, followed by 77.9% of them who indicated that both limited access to research resources and difficulty in obtaining approval affect their interest in research then 77.4% of them indicated lack of mentorship while 76.4 % of them indicated lack of motivation funding affects research interest. However, 72.4% of the respondents indicated that support from lecturers encourages research interest; this implied this factor positively affects students' research interest unlike the previous factors that affect research interest negatively.

Table 4: Relationship between selected socio-demographic characteristics and major factors affecting research interest among nursing students

Socio-demographic Variable	Major Factors Influencing Attitude towards Research	χ^2	df	p-value
Age (Years)	Lack of funding	4.352	2	0.114
	Limited access of research resources	8.734	2	0.013*
	Difficulty in obtaining ethical approval	3.642	2	0.162
Gender	Lack of funding	0.921	1	0.337
	Limited access of research resources	0.378	1	0.539
	Difficulty in obtaining ethical approval	0.055	1	0.814
Level of study	Lack of funding	5.608	1	0.018*
	Limited access of research resources	0.726	1	0.394
	Difficulty in obtaining ethical approval	2.424	1	0.119

Significant level ($p < 0.05$)

Table 4 showed the relationship between selected socio-demographic characteristics and major factors affecting research interest among nursing students at the College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital. The finding showed that there was a significant ($p = 0.013$) relationship between age and limited access to research resources while there was no significant relationship between age and lack of funding as well as difficulty in obtaining ethical approval with p values of 0.114 and 0.162 respectively. Also, the finding showed that there was no significant relationship between gender and lack of fund, limited access of research resources or difficulty in obtaining ethical with p values of 0.337, 0.539 and 0.814 respectively. Furthermore, the findings showed that there was a significant ($p = 0.018$) relationship between level of study and lack of fund while there was no significant relationship between level of study and limited access of research resources or difficulty in obtaining ethical approval with p values of 0.394 and 0.119 respectively.

Discussion of Findings

Attitudes of Nursing Students towards Research

Findings on the attitude of nursing students towards research at College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital revealed that the mean attitude score of the respondents was 2.87 out of 4 points. This indicated that the respondents had a positive attitude towards

research. This study finding was in agreement with Nguyen *et al.* (2024) study on nursing students' attitudes and barriers toward research in the context of education: a cross-sectional study in Ho Chi Minh City, China; the finding revealed that the respondents had a positive attitude towards research with an overall mean attitude score of 4.76 out of 7. The finding of this study was similar to a cross-sectional survey conducted by Dailah (2025) on attitudes of nursing students in Saudi Arabia toward Evidence-Based Research among 603 participants. The findings revealed that the overall mean attitude score was 3.13 out of 5. Also, the finding of this study was in consistent with a descriptive survey by Ndu *et al.* (2024) on knowledge and attitude of student nurses of University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital Enugu towards carrying out Research among 195 students which revealed a grand mean of 2.76 out of 4 points indicating students' positive attitude towards research.

In the above findings of the studies, the positive attitude toward research indicated by most of the respondents implied that they recognized the relevance of research in education and also evidence-based care for professional practices.

Factors affecting research interest among nursing students

The findings of this study revealed that 79.4%, 77.9% and 77.9% of the respondents revealed **that** lack of funding, limited access to research resources and difficulty in obtaining approval respectively **were** the major factors affecting students' interest in research. This was in line with a descriptive survey finding among 198 respondents by Sowunmi *et al.* (2021) on factors influencing nurses' involvements and utilizations of research findings among nurses in a teaching hospital, South West, Nigeria **which** revealed that 78.8% and 71.2% of the respondents indicated that lack of fund and limited access to research resources respectively were the major factors that affect nurses' involvement in research. Also, this study finding was in consistent with a cross-sectional study conducted in Uganda by Kiyimba (2022) on research involvement among 420 undergraduate health profession students in a resource-limited setting: awareness, attitude, motivators and barriers. The finding revealed that 79.6% of the respondents indicated that the most factor that affected their research interest was lack of fund. However, the Kiyimba (2022) finding was in contrast to this study finding as only 38.9% of the respondents indicated difficulty in obtaining approval for the study. This study finding was dissimilar to the descriptive survey finding of Osakah *et al.* (2025) on knowledge and attitude of student nurses towards research writing in two selected schools of nursing in Imo State among 250 respondents which revealed that 45% of the respondents indicated a research material were accessible.

Relationship between selected socio-demographic characteristics and major factors affecting research interest among nursing students

The findings of this study revealed a statistically significant ($p = 0.013$) relationship between age and limited access of research resources which implied that nursing students' perception of access to research resources differed across age groups. This finding was in agreement with Nguyen *et al.* (2023), who reported a significant ($p = 0.008$) association between age and research-related interest. Dissimilarly, Alfaki (2024) found that age significantly ($p < .001$) influenced nursing students' orientation toward research.

The finding of this study revealed that there was no significant relationship between gender and lack of fund, limited access of research resources or difficulty in obtaining ethical with p values of 0.337, 0.539 and 0.814 respectively. This was similar to Abiodun *et al.* (2023) on knowledge, attitudes, practice and barriers related to the involvement of medical and nursing students in medical research which revealed that there was no significant ($p = 0.229$) relationship between gender and lack of fund as well as inadequate facilities for research.

However, Abiodun *et al.* (2023) finding was in contrast to this finding as it revealed that there was statistically significant ($p = 0.036$) relationship between gender and difficulty in obtaining approval from ethical review boards.

The findings of this study revealed a statistically significant ($p = 0.018$) association between level of study and lack of funding. This suggests that students at different academic levels perceived funding constraints differently, possibly because students in higher levels are more actively involved in research and therefore have greater awareness of the financial demands associated with conducting research. This study finding was in line with Abiodun *et al.* (2023) finding as it was found that there was a very strong statistically significant ($p = 0.000$) relationship between year of study and inadequate funding for research. However, Abiodun *et al.* (2023) **finding disagreed** with this finding as it revealed that there was statistically significant ($p = 0.002$) relationship between year of study and inadequate facilities for research.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that nursing students at the College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital generally had a positive attitude toward research and that lack of funding, limited access to research resources, and difficulty in obtaining research approval were the major factors affecting research interest. However, support from lecturers was found to positively influence students' interest in research. Furthermore, age was significantly associated with limited access to research resources while level of study was significantly associated with lack of funding.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Educators should provide opportunities for student participation in research projects, workshops, seminars, and conferences should be increased to enhance research exposure and strengthen research competencies.
2. Institution should improve students' access to research resources, including academic databases, journals, research software, and other relevant learning materials required for research activities. Funding opportunities, grants, and sponsorship schemes should be made available for student research projects to reduce financial barriers to research participation.
3. Educators should continue to encourage and support students' involvement in research activities, as lecturer support was identified as an important factor influencing research interest among nursing students.

Contributions to Knowledge

- This study contributed that lack of funding (79.4%), limited access to research resources (77.9%), and difficulty in obtaining approval (77.9%) were the most significant factors affecting students' interest in research.
- There is a statistically significant ($p = 0.013$) relationship between age and limited access to research resources.
- There is a statistically significant ($p = 0.018$) association between level of study and lack of funding to carry out research.

Limitation of Study

There was a poor response to the online questionnaire. To minimize this limitation, hard copies of the questionnaire was administered to the respondents.

Suggestions for Further Studies

- Similar studies should be conducted among nursing students in other colleges of nursing sciences and universities across different regions of Nigeria to enable comparison of findings and improve generalizability.
- Qualitative studies should be conducted to gain deeper insight into the reasons behind students' attitudes toward research and the challenges affecting their interest and participation in research activities.

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Informed Consent Form

Title of Research: Attitudes towards Research and Factors Affecting Research Interest among Nursing Students at the College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital

You are being invited to participate in this study because you are a nursing student at the College of Nursing Sciences, LUTH, who has been exposed to research activities as part of your academic training. Research is an important aspect of nursing education as it supports evidence-based practice and professional development. Understanding students' attitudes toward research, their research skills, and the factors that influence their interest in research will help improve research training and engagement among nursing students.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to assess the attitudes towards research among nursing students and determine the factors affecting research interest among nursing students, and examine the association between selected socio-demographic characteristics and research interest.

Procedures: This study will use a structured self-administered questionnaire to obtain information from you. The questionnaire will be distributed physically. You will be required to read the questions and select the options that best reflect your views. Completing the questionnaire will take approximately **10-15 minutes** of your time. The purpose of the study will be clearly explained, and guidance will be provided where necessary.

Potential Benefits: The findings from this study will help improve research training and engagement among nursing students. It may also assist educators and policymakers in developing strategies to enhance research skills and promote interest in research among nursing students.

Potential Risks: There are no known risks associated with this study. The study involves only answering questions, and no harm will come to you as a result of your participation.

Confidentiality: All information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality. Your name or any personal identifiers will not be included in any report or publication arising from this study. Data collected will be securely stored and used strictly for academic purposes.

Willingness to Participate: Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Statement of person obtaining informed consent: I _____ have fully explained this research to the respondent and given sufficient information, including the risks and benefits to make an informed decision.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Statement of Person Giving Consent: I _____ have read the description of the research, I understand that my participation is voluntary. I know enough about the purpose, methods, risks and benefits of the research study to judge that I want to take part in it. I understand that I may freely stop being part of this study at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form to keep for myself.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Questionnaire

Research Title: Attitudes towards Research and Factors Affecting Research

Interest among Nursing Students in College of Nursing Sciences, Lagos University Teaching Hospital.

Instruction: Tick the option that you agree to

Section A: Socio-demographic Characteristics

- Age (Years): (a) 16-20 [] (b) 21-25 [] (c) 26 and above []
- Sex (a) Male [] (b) Female []
- Level of study (a) Year 3 [] (b) Year 4 []

Section B: Attitude toward Research

S/N	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Research is useful for my future career				
2.	Research is relevant to my field of study				
3.	I am interested in learning about research				
4.	I enjoy engaging in research-related activities				
5.	Research makes me anxious				
6.	Research is difficult to understand				

Section C: Factors Affecting Research Interest

S/N	Statements	Agree	Disagree
1.	Lack of funding discourages me from engaging in research		
2.	Lack of mentorship affects my research interest		
3.	Limited access to research resources affects my participation		
4.	Difficulty in obtaining approval discourages research participation		
5.	Lack of motivation reduces my interest in research		
6.	Support from lecturers encourages my research interest		



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Re: Attitudes toward Research and Factors Influencing Research Interest among Nursing Students in
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CMULHREC Number: CMUL/HREC/05/25/2275

Name of Principal Investigators: Eminiken Oyindamola

Date of receipt of valid application: 6th May, 2026

Date of meeting when final determination of research was made: 18th June 2026

APPROVAL LETTER

The above named proposal has been adequately reviewed; the protocol and safety guidelines satisfy the conditions of CMULHREC policies regarding experiments involving human and or animal participants.

Therefore, the study under its reviewed state is hereby **approved by the Health Research Ethics committee of College of Medicine of the University of Lagos.**

Prof. Kehinde S. Okunade

Name of CMULHREC Chairman

Signature & Date

Dr. Margaret O. Ilomuanya

Name of CMULHREC Member

Signature & Date

This approval is given with the investigator's responsibility declaration as attached and that;

- i) You will submit in CMULHREC prescribed forms, annual progress report during the course of this study, if it is more than one year and final report as the case may be if less than one year and after completion of the study.

- ii) The CMULHREC reserves the right to monitor and review this approval; even after the commencement of your study and inform you of any further changes or amendments that may be required for your compliance.

This approval dates from **18/06/2026 to 17/06/2027** If there is delay in starting the research, please inform the HREC so that the dates of approval can be adjusted.