

Perceptions of Oakland University Nursing Students Towards the Human Papillomavirus Vaccine

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Introduction

The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a common virus that can lead to six types of cancers later in life which include cervical, vaginal, vulvar cancer in women, cancer of the penis in men, and throat cancer in both men and women¹. Individuals can be protected from developing these cancers with the HPV vaccine, which is generally administered between the ages of 11-12 years old². Further, HPV infections are particularly common and nearly all men and women will get at least one type of HPV at some point in their lives. The mode of transmission for this virus is through intimate skin-to-skin contact with someone who has the virus³. Therefore, it is essential to not only educate and inform the common population of this virus and the importance of a vaccine, but to study the knowledge and perceptions of healthcare providers, such as nursing students, who have a vital role in educating patients about this virus.

The impact of the results of this study will provide information on the overall willingness of nursing students to support the administration of HPV vaccination. The research is being done to better understand the level of knowledge that Oakland University (OU) nursing students have on the HPV vaccine before they learn about the vaccine in their coursework.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of the research are as follows:

- Assess the perceptions of OU nursing students towards the HPV infection and vaccination prior to them learning about the HPV and the vaccine in their coursework.
- Analyze the knowledge and perceptions of OU nursing students towards the HPV infection and vaccination after they learn about the vaccine through educational materials.
- Assess the readiness of OU nursing students for the uptake of HPV vaccine.
- Assess the expected and new intents/tendencies of OU nursing students towards recommending the HPV vaccination to patients.

Methods

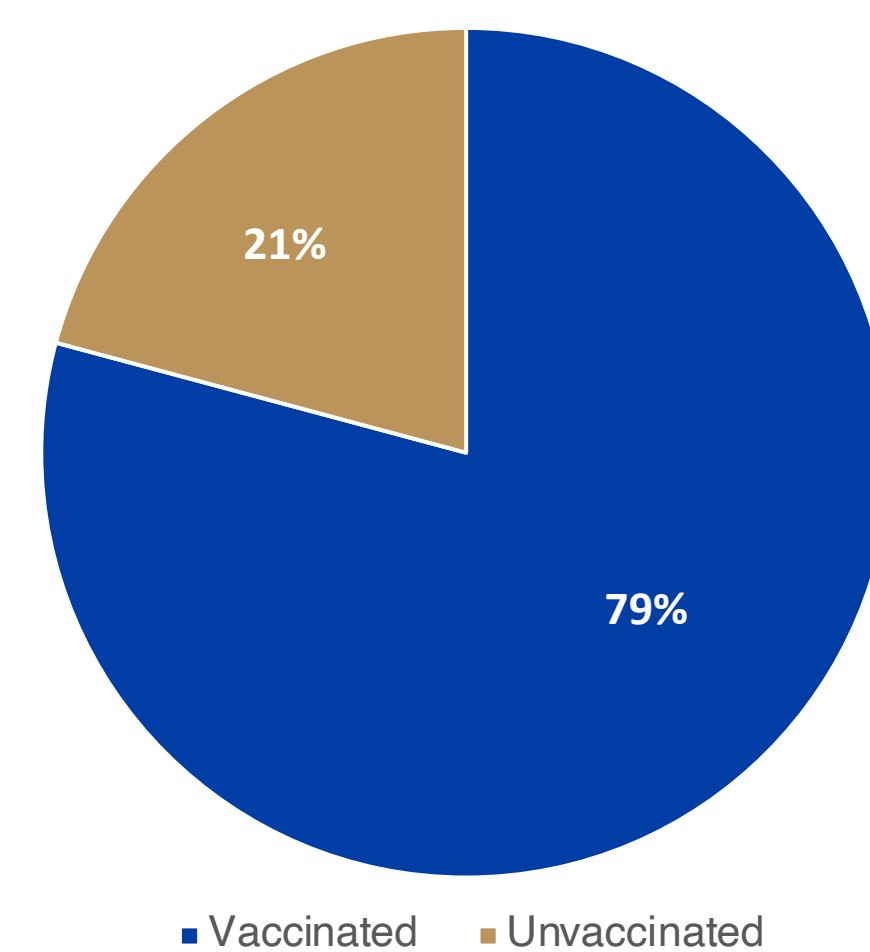
The proposed study is a cross-sectional survey presented in the form of an online self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) which will be administered to approximately 150 OU nursing students. The survey will encompass the following sections:

- general non-identifying information
- knowledge of HPV vaccination,
- attitudes towards HPV vaccination,
- expected intents/tendencies towards HPV vaccination.

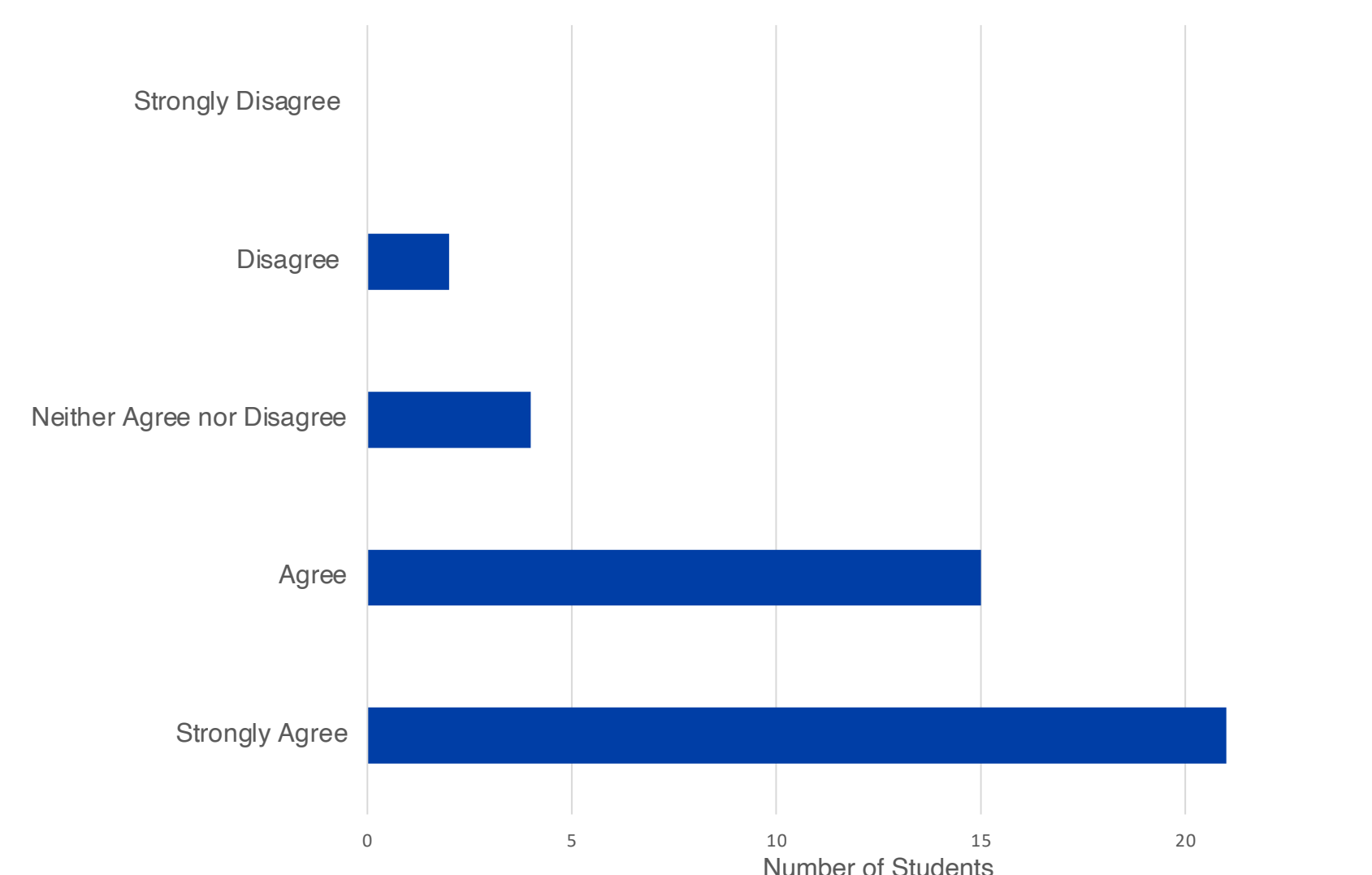
Participants are evaluated based on their knowledge of the HPV vaccination and attitudes towards the HPV vaccination after learning about it through the survey.

Results

Percent of Nursing Students Who Have Been Vaccinated with the HPV Vaccine

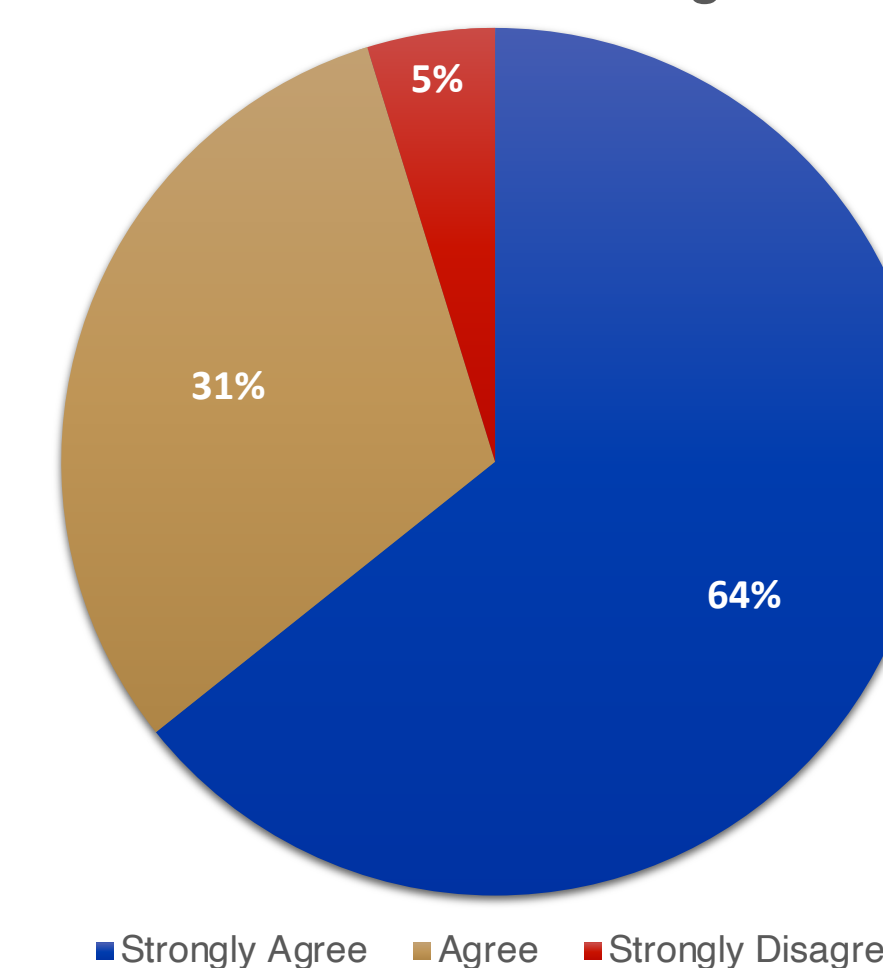


Student Responses to "I believe that my knowledge thus far on the HPV vaccine has equipped me with the ability to confidently recommend it to patients"

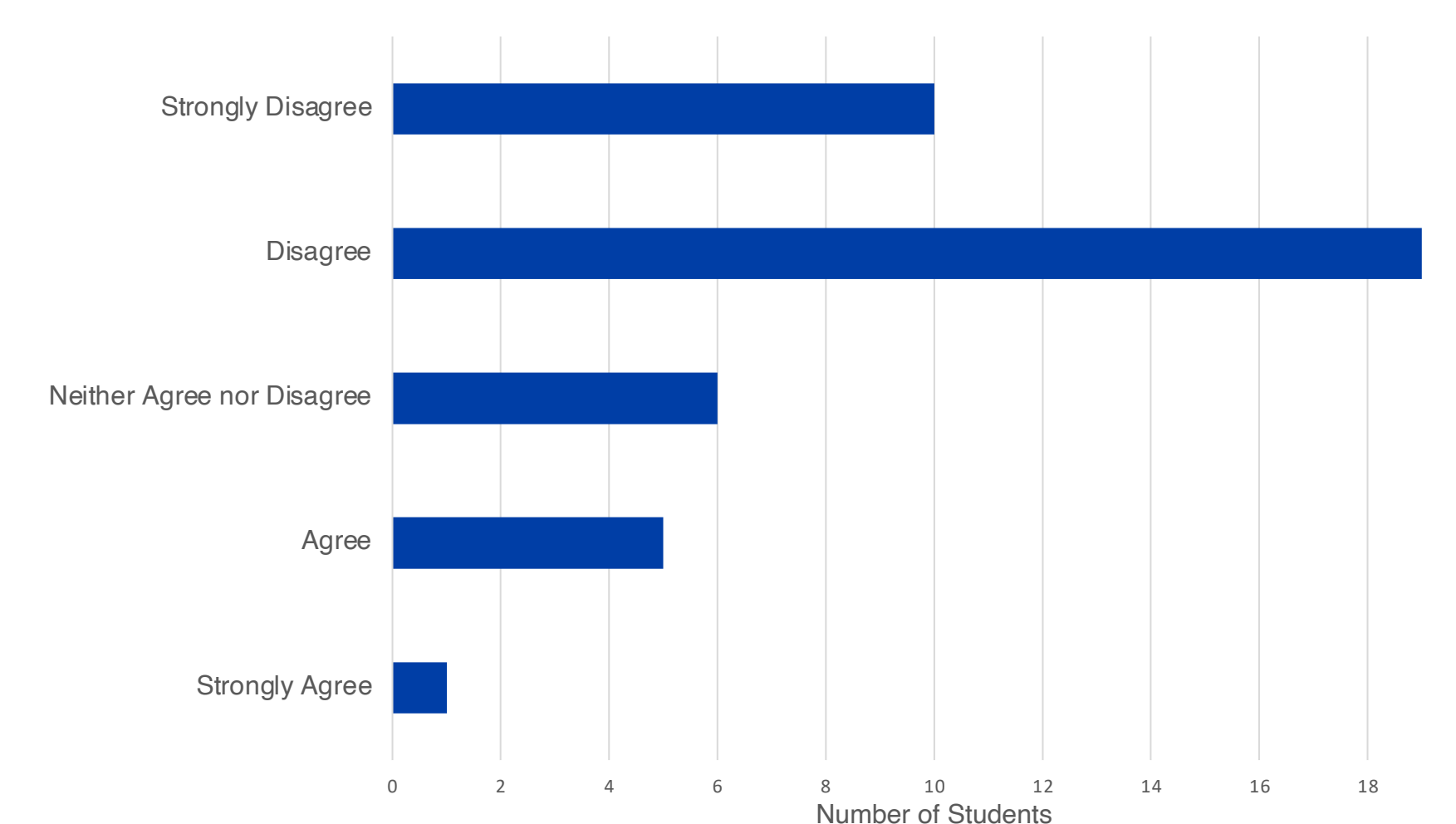


Results Cont.

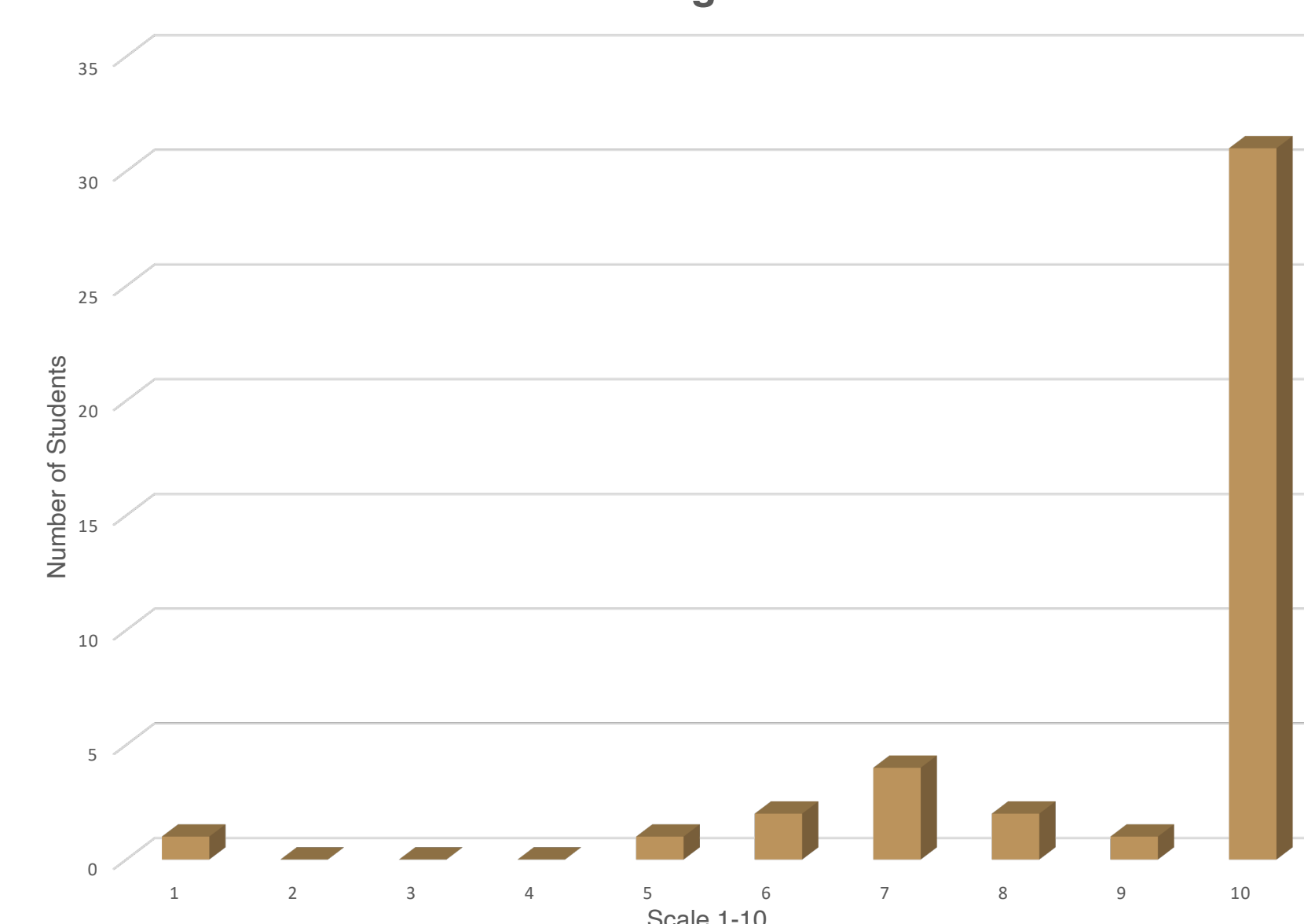
Student Perceptions Towards Encouraging Patients to Get Vaccinated Against HPV



Student Responses to "I have hesitations to recommend the vaccine to patients that are 11-12 years old."



Student Responses to "After taking this survey, how likely are you willing to recommend for patients to get vaccinated against HPV?"



Conclusions

The results display that there are some gaps in knowledge of nursing students towards the HPV vaccine, but after learning about the vaccine through educational materials, nursing students display positive attitudes and beliefs towards recommending the HPV vaccine to patients. Following this, the materials can be incorporated into the OU School of Nursing curriculum to promote better perceptions and knowledge towards HPV vaccination.

This study will improve both scientific and health-related knowledge and how clinical practice can be improved in regard to how nurses and nursing students can play a role in educating their patients on the importance of the HPV vaccine and encourage patients to receive the vaccination. It is of high importance to assess the current knowledge and perceptions of healthcare personnel on this vaccination because of the pivotal role they play when younger children and adults are considering receiving vaccinations.

A limitation faced in this study is participant recruitment, particularly during the pandemic and when in-person courses were moved online. Recruitment during this period was limited to emails and announcements during online lectures.

References

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3. Rosen BL, DiClemente R, Shepard AL, Wilson KL, Fehr SK. Factors associated with school nurses' HPV vaccine attitudes for school-aged youth. *Psychol Health Med*. 2017;22(5):535-545. doi:10.1080/13548506.2016.1173710.

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