



Problem & PURPOSE

Problem:

- Nursing students experience significant academic, personal, and emotional stress.
- Despite available campus support services, many students do not seek help.

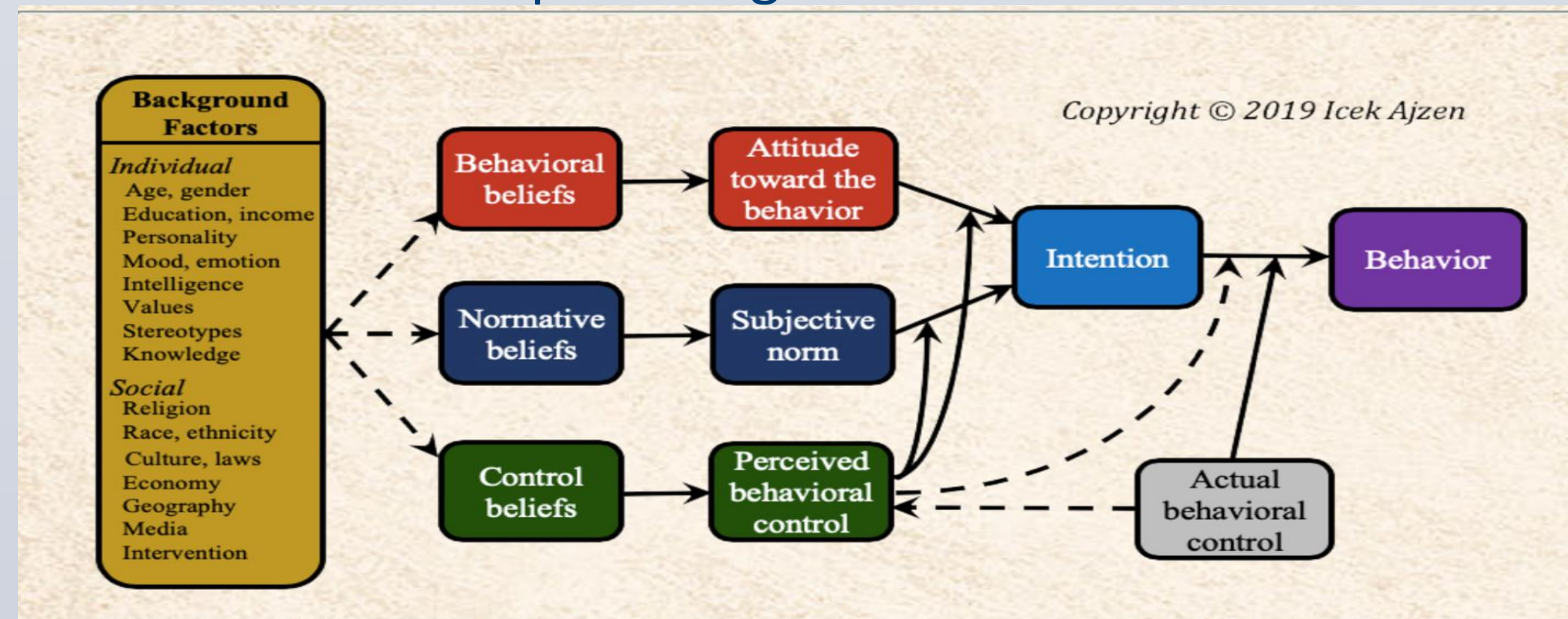
PURPOSE:

To provide an evidence-based educational intervention for first-level BSN students to:

- Increase knowledge of the importance of help-seeking.
- Enhance awareness of campus support services.
- Improve attitudes toward utilizing available resources.

Available Knowledge & Rationale

- Nursing students experience high levels of stress that may negatively affect academic success and well-being.
- Help-seeking behaviors are associated with improved academic performance, resilience, and retention.
- Students frequently underutilize support services because of stigma, limited awareness, self-reliance, and uncertainty about accessing resources.
- Faculty encouragement, peer support, and a sense of belonging promote help-seeking.
- The Theory of Planned Behavior suggests that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence help-seeking intentions.



Methods

Context: This quality improvement project was conducted at a private Midwestern healthcare college affiliated with a large healthcare system. Participants were first-level BSN students who attended a required nursing orientation. The project aligned with institutional priorities of promoting student retention, academic success, and student well-being.

Intervention: A 60-minute educational session was delivered during nursing orientation. The session included an evidence-based PowerPoint presentation, peer student testimonials, and guided navigation of available campus support services within the learning management system to promote help-seeking behaviors.

Study of Intervention: A one-group pretest-posttest design was used to evaluate the educational intervention. Anonymous paper surveys were administered immediately before the orientation session and again four weeks later. Pre- and post-survey responses were matched using participant-generated four-digit identification codes.

Measure: A project-specific survey consisting of 15 Likert-scale items and two check-all-that-apply questions was used to evaluate the intervention. The survey measured students' knowledge of the importance of help-seeking, awareness of campus support services, attitudes toward utilizing available resources, and perceived barriers and facilitators to help-seeking.

Data Analysis

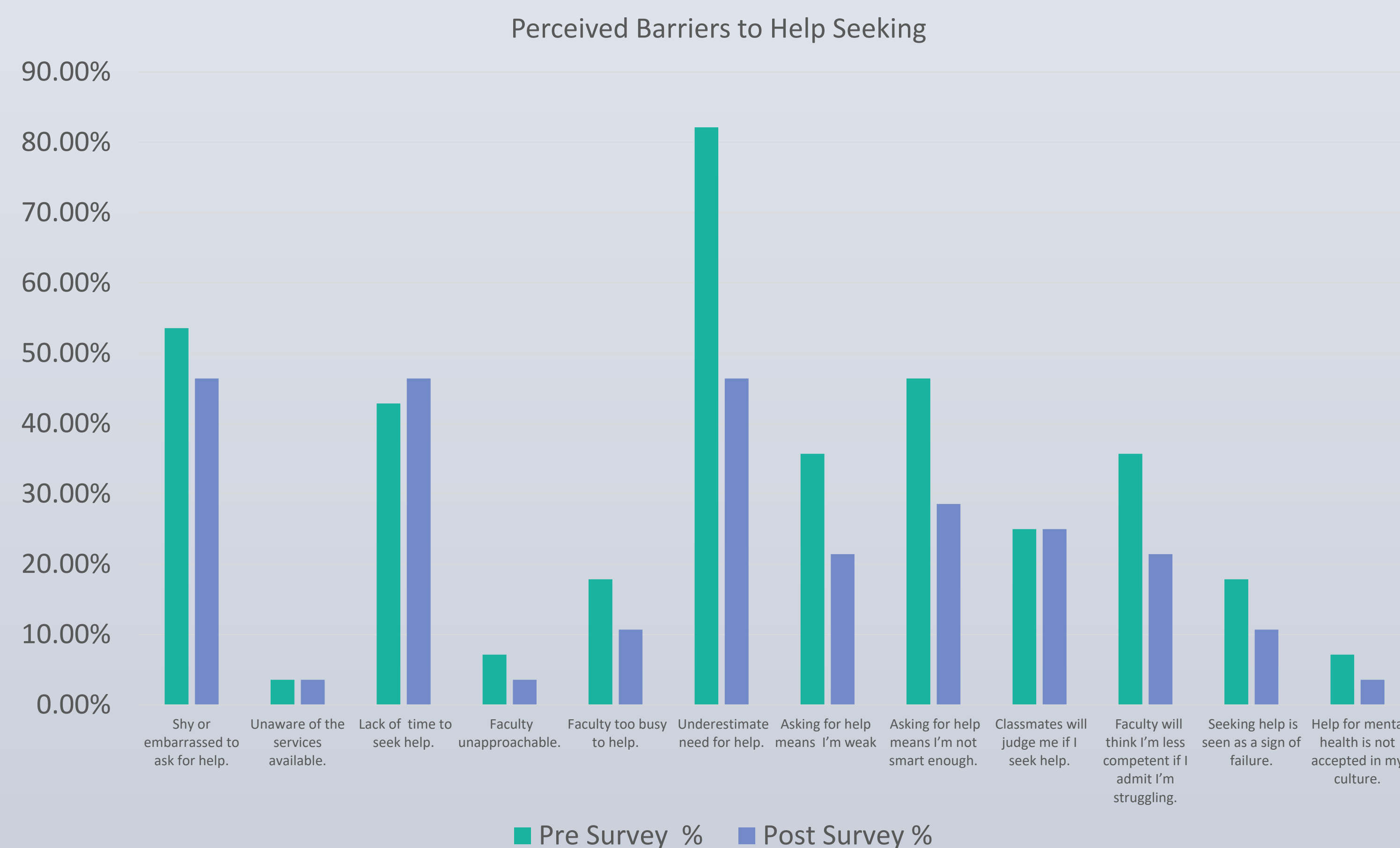
Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages) were calculated to summarize survey responses. Paired samples *t*-tests were used to compare matched pre- and post-intervention scores, with statistical significance established at $p < .05$.

Results

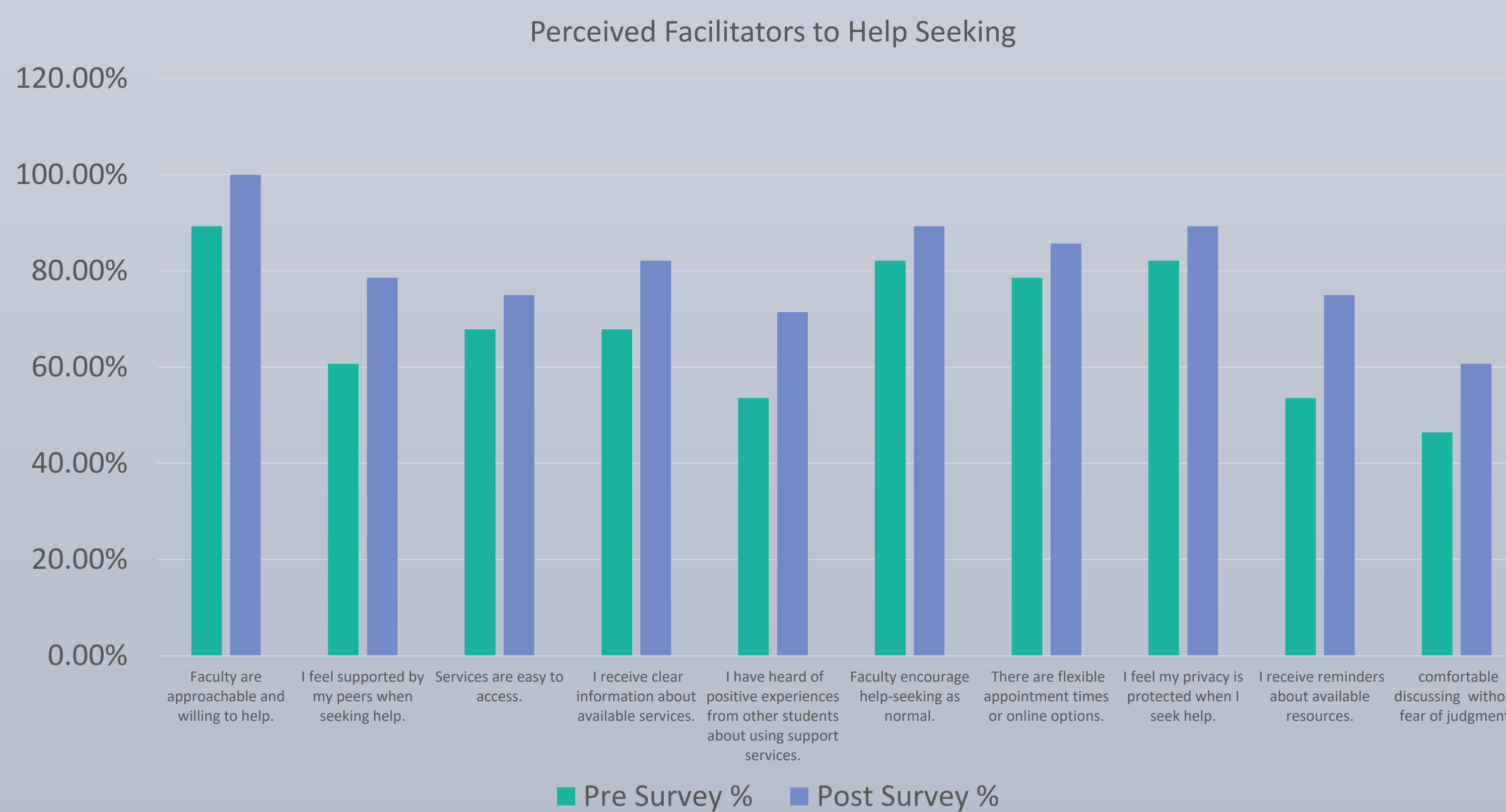
Comparison of Mean Scores by Outcome Measure

Outcome Measure	Pre Mean $\pm$ SD	Post Mean $\pm$	t(df)	p
Knowledge	M = 3.58, SD = 0.42	M = 3.8, SD = 0.32	t(28) = -3.10	p = .004
Awareness	M = 3.26, SD = 0.46	M = 3.67, SD = 0.42	t(28) = -4.61	p < .001
Attitudes	M = 3.28, SD = 0.46	M = 3.68, SD = 0.40	t(28) = -4.42	p < .001

Significant improvements were observed across all three outcome measures.



Overall barriers decreased following the intervention. Time constraints increased slightly.



All facilitators increased following the intervention

Discussion

- Students demonstrated significant improvements in knowledge, awareness, and attitudes toward help-seeking.
- Students reported fewer perceived barriers and more facilitators to help-seeking following the intervention.
- The results reinforce previous research showing that awareness of available resources, positive peer and faculty support, and reducing stigma are important factors influencing students' help-seeking behaviors.
- The findings support the Theory of Planned Behavior by suggesting that improving attitudes, increasing awareness of resources, and reinforcing positive social norms may strengthen students' willingness to seek help.



Conclusions

- A brief educational intervention was associated with significant improvements in nursing students' understanding of help-seeking, awareness of campus resources, and attitudes toward utilizing support services.
- Integrating help-seeking education into orientation is feasible, sustainable, and may promote student success.
- Findings support continued reinforcement of help-seeking throughout the nursing curriculum.
- The identified barriers and facilitators provide valuable direction for refining future student support initiatives.

References

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