

Perceptions Of Nursing Students On Clinical Teaching Behaviors Of Teaching Faculty: Correlational Survey Design

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Abstract

Background: Learning in the clinical environment is an indispensable component of nursing curricula as it provides with real life experiences involving actual patients. The quality of clinical learning considerably depends on the extent of faculty engagement in clinical teaching which predominantly rests on the clinical teaching behaviors of teaching faculty.

Objective: to understand the actual and expected clinical teaching behavior of the faculty from the student's perceptions and correlate the influence of actual teaching behavior on clinical learning of students. Design: A non-experimental survey, correlational design was used.

Setting: Nursing colleges of Maharashtra. Participants: 257 B.Sc Nursing students studying in second to final year course participated in the study.

Method: Nursing Clinical Teacher Effectiveness Inventory (NCTEI) was the tool for data collection. Results: Majority of the participants were females (97.04 %) in the age group of 18 -27 years. The analysis of five subscales indicated evaluation as highest ranked clinical teaching behavior of teaching faculty which influenced clinical learning among students. Interpersonal relationships and nursing competency were rated lowest. The expected behavior identified were competency and personality of teacher as an important component of effective clinical learning by senior students while all other students expressed teaching ability as equally important. Conclusion: The nursing teacher's role necessitates the maintenance of a climate of mutual trust and respect to support student learning and growth.

Keywords: Nursing students' perceptions, clinical teaching behaviors, clinical learning.

I. Introduction

Most countries of the world face acute shortage of nurses which creates a major challenge for hospitals because it impacts not only their ability to provide nurses for patient care, but also to provide adequate nursing resources for quality improvement. The hospitals are being forced to curtail services despite increasing patient demand.¹ WHO Bulletin 2010 highlights accentuate that in India, nurse shortages occur at every level of the health-care system and about 2.4 million nurses are required to provide a nurse-patient ratio of one nurse per 500 patients.² Due to the increasing demand of nurses in national and international market a dramatic increase in nursing educational institutions has been taken place in recent years, although there is still an overall shortage. Nursing education encompasses the three domains of learning, the cognitive, the affective, and the psychomotor domain. It aims to motivate the student nurses to acquire appropriate skills in delivering quality patient care. The curriculum incorporates theoretical instructions and clinical practice in variety of hospital settings to prepare the students faces the challenges of complex health care settings. Teacher's inadequate knowledge of educational aims, goals and objectives can hinder their vision of expected learning outcomes and decisions. These teachers may be unable to adequately facilitate transfer of theory to practice in students learning. As students are the direct recipients of clinical instruction they are in a good position to observe their clinical teachers. Hence it is very important for nursing teachers to demonstrate effective clinical teaching behaviors while preparing students to practice in a complex health care system.

Clinical experience is an indispensable component of nursing curricula as it provides with real life experiences involving actual patients.³ Clinical learning is considered as heart of professional practice⁴ bridging the theory practice divide. Integration of theoretical knowledge with clinical practice is of vital importance for development of efficient professional nurses⁵ Both quality classroom teaching and ability in demonstrating clinical competence greatly influence the success of graduates of a nursing program.

Teaching can be described as an interrelated process between teacher and learner. It is considered as relational practice which must be constructed from a need for learning. A more extended view of the concept describes teaching as everything that teacher must do to support the learning of their students³. In practice, teaching is often taken for granted as expected classroom activities of different qualities performed by teachers, closely connected to the content or subjects. Teaching and learning are social and communicative processes in which teacher can create and maintain good relationships with students, show commitment and respect for students and their families, have knowledge of child and adolescent development, and cultures⁶.

Teachers in nursing educational institutions are appointed based on their qualifications and experience as stipulated by the governing bodies. They are expected to liaison between nursing education and clinical practice in supporting and monitoring the progress of students and facilitating theoretical and clinical teaching. The faculty are expected to supervise the students in the wards every day and then return to the college to carry out classroom teaching.⁷ Although the ability to teach in the class room is generally considered sufficient preparation for clinical teaching, the reality can be surprisingly different in a multidimensional role. The teachers in clinical field need to provide their students with hands on experience and practice techniques while ensuring that patients receive high-quality, safe nursing care. The quality of clinical learning depends on the actions and activities of teachers transmitted through verbal and nonverbal interactions to facilitate student learning in clinical settings. It has been postulated that clinical teacher must possess effective clinical teacher characteristics if they want to facilitate students' entry and learning in a multifaceted world of clinical practice⁸. The quality of clinical teaching behaviours can either facilitate or hinder the students' integration of theory in to practice⁸.

As part of the learning environment, the clinical teaching behaviors of nursing faculty have significant potential to influence students' learning. Evidences suggest that student rating can be reliable and valid indicators of effective teaching⁹. Nursing student's perceptions on clinical teacher's behaviour is an important indicator to modify and facilitate effective clinical instructions¹⁰. Hence exploring nursing students' perceptions on actual clinical teaching behaviours used by teaching faculty and expected behaviours to enhance clinical learning will help to prepare appropriate faculty development programme to foster integration of theory into practice among nursing students pursuing undergraduate University nursing programme in Mumbai. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of actual clinical teaching behaviours used by teaching faculty in facilitating clinical learning and expected behaviours perceived important by the students.

II. Material& Methods

Study Design: A non-experimental survey, correlational design was used.

Setting: The study was conducted in nursing colleges offering baccalaureate programme in nursing.

Sample size: 257 B.Sc Nursing students studying in second to final year course, participated in the study. All students had prior exposure to clinical settings for more than 8 weeks.

Sampling: Non-probability convenience sampling was used for sample selection.

Data collection tool: Nursing Clinical Teacher Effectiveness Inventory (NCTEI) (Mogan & Knox, 1985)¹¹ was the tool for data collection. The NCTEI, a reliable and valid tool, used in various researches in North America, Hong Kong, Israel, Australia and found with mixed results. The reliability of each item ranged between .79 to .89. The NCTEI consists of 47 items describing important clinical teaching behavior grouped into 5 sub-scales; 1. Teaching ability is the process of transmission of skills and attitudes. It includes instructional skills, creating a positive learning environment, and promoting learning. 2. Nursing Competence - Nursing is a practice-based discipline and is measured in terms of clinical competence. 3. Evaluation - type and amount of feedback the student receives from the teacher regarding clinical performances and written assignments. 4. Interpersonal relationship - describes the state of reciprocal interest and communication between two or more people. 5. Personality traits include instructor attitudes, emotional tendencies, and character traits. The students were asked to rate the frequency of use of those behaviours by the faculty on a 7-point Likert scale. The students were also asked to rate the extent to which these behaviours have facilitated their learning, using a 5 point Likert scale.

III. Results

Majority of the participants were females (97.04 %) in the age group of 18 -27 years. The analysis of five subscales indicated that evaluation was highest ranked by the students for actual clinical teaching behaviour of faculty which influenced clinical learning whereas interpersonal relationships was rated lowest.

Section I: comparison of actual and expected clinical teaching behavior of teaching faculty as perceived by the nursing students.

Table 1. Rank Order of Clinical Teaching Behavior Based on Mean as perceived by the nursing students n=257

Rank	Clinical Teaching Behavior					
	Actual			Expected		
	Clinical Teaching Behavior	Mean Rank	SD	Clinical Teaching Behavior	Mean Rank	SD
1	Evaluation	5.11	0.23	Teaching ability	5.94	0.16
2	Teaching Ability	5.09	0.14	Personality	5.89	0.11
3	Personality	5.00	0.53	Evaluation	5.88	0.06
4	Nursing Competency	4.99	0.12	Nursing competency	5.83	0.12
5	Interpersonal Relationship	4.00	0.06	interpersonal Relation ship	5.82	0.21

Section II: Association between clinical teaching behavior of teaching faculty and influence on clinical learning of students.

Table 2: Association between actual clinical teaching behaviors practiced by teaching faculty and learning of students n=257

Category of Clinical teaching behavior Practiced	Perceived influence on learning				
	Teaching ability	Nursing competency	Evaluation	Interpersonal relationship	Personality
	Estimate (95% CI)	Estimate (95% CI)	Estimate (95% CI)	Estimate (95% CI)	Estimate (95% CI)
Teaching ability					
Highest Tertile	22.11 (16.94,27.27)	--	--	--	--
Middle Tertile	14.93 (1.09, 18.76)	--	--	--	--
Lowest Tertile	Reference	--	--	--	--
Nursing competency					
Highest Tertile	--	12.40 (9.32, 15.48)	--	--	--
Middle Tertile	--	7.76 (5.36, 10.15)	--	--	--
Lowest Tertile	--	Reference	--	--	--
Evaluation					
Highest Tertile	--	--	10.87 (8.21,13.52)	--	--
Middle Tertile	--	--	7.80 (5.68, 9.91)	--	--
Lowest Tertile	--	--	Reference	--	--
Interpersonal relationship					
Highest Tertile	--	--	--	10.05 (7.64, 12.47)	--
Middle Tertile	--	--	--	6.34 (4.42, 8.27)	--
Lowest Tertile	--	--	--	Reference	--
Personality					
Highest Tertile	--	--	--	--	9.51 (7.01, 12.00)
Middle Tertile	--	--	--	--	5.44 (3.54, 7.45)
Lowest Tertile	--	--	--	--	Reference
Year of study					
4 th year	-11.37(-15.78,- 6.96)	-5.08 (-7.17,-2.42)	-4.29 (-6.59, - 1.99)	-2.76 (-4.79, - 0.73)	-4.57 (-6.69, - 2.45)
3 rd year	-1.92 (-6.06, 2.22)	0.38 (-2.14,2.92)	0.002 (-2.24, 2.24)	0.12 (-1.73, 1.97)	0.05 (-1.95, 2.06)
2 nd year	Reference	Reference	Reference	Reference	Reference
Constant	49.30 (44.47, 54.13)	24.35 (21.46,27.24)	21.98 (19.50, 24.47)	15.05 (12.81 , 17.30)	19.64 (17.29, 21.98)

The above model shows the association between actual clinical teaching behavior practiced by teachers and learning of students. For the analysis, the score of clinical teaching behavior was divided into three tertiles; ie highest, middle and lowest. Teaching ability was rated highest in terms of influence on learning. Average score in higher tertile was 22.11 units more (95 % CI 16.94, 27.27) as compared to the students in lowest tertiles. It also shows that when teaching abilities were practiced more its influence on learning also increased. Although evaluation ranked highest for actual practiced clinical teaching behavior, teaching ability had highest association in learning

IV. Discussion

Teaching and learning are casually tight bound activities. Clinical teaching is the heart of nursing educational program and remains the single most important resource in the development of competent, capable and caring nurses. Identifying clinical teaching behaviours of teaching faculty is essential in order to improve clinical skills of nursing students. The discussion of this study is in three parts; 1) Actual clinical teaching

behaviour of faculty 2) Association of actual teaching behaviour and clinical learning 3) Expected clinical teaching behaviour of faculty. The actual clinical teaching behavior practiced by faculty as perceived by nursing students has been illustrated in table 1. From amongst the five sub category of clinical teaching behaviours, evaluation was ranked highest by the students. This finding is in line with other research studies. Many authors have stressed the importance of being honest with students and providing constructive feedback for effective clinical teaching.²³ Next to evaluation the student's ranked teaching ability and personality while interpersonal relationship and nursing competence of teacher was ranked lowest actual teaching behaviour. Interpersonal relations were perceived least important by the students in a study by Gangadharan P¹³.

Okoronkwo JL *et al*¹⁵ found process of becoming an excellent teacher involved "change from 'instiller' to 'facilitator' and laid the foundation for continued development of my teaching self." Those beginning to teach or seeking to improve their teaching may find the results enlightening. Levy *et al*¹⁶ in a literature review found out potential solutions for effective supervisors proposing several characteristics like present clear, well-organized information; enthusiastic, dynamic, energetic, competent, and knowledgeable; have group instructional skill; and model professionalism. Nelson¹⁷ stated that learning in the clinical setting required knowledgeable and experienced clinical instructors with the ability to teach adult learners effectively. In the present study the nursing students perceived teaching ability of the clinical teacher as the second ranked behavior. Similar results¹⁸ were also found in another study conducted to find out students' perceptions of effective classroom and clinical teaching in dental and dental hygiene education in which the categories of effective teaching qualities were identified as: individual rapport, organization, enthusiasm, learning, group interaction, exams assignments, and breadth.

In the present study students were asked to mark the clinical teaching behavior expected from their teachers which would enhance their clinical learning table. The perception of students at different academic level showed difference. The expected behaviour identified were competency and personality of teacher by senior students as an important component of effective clinical learning while all other students expressed teaching ability as equally important as these elements. These findings are supported by a recent study¹⁹ in which senior dental students identified professional competence, approachable personality, punctuality, availability, consistency, practicality, understanding of the limits of student knowledge, and respect for the student/patient relationship as desirable clinical teaching behaviors. Similar results were highlighted by Finnos RV *et al*²⁰ in which professional competencies of clinical teacher was valued as most important characteristics by students of all academic levels. Findings also showed that this kind of supportive relationship lead to decrease stress, increase self-confidence and sense of calm and consequently improve the clinical performance of the student.

The association of actual clinical teaching behavior practiced and expected behaviour of teacher which would influence learning is shown in table 7 based on perception of students. It indicated that the behavior ranked higher for actual practiced has higher ranking for influence on learning too. It also highlights that the senior students identified teaching ability and evaluation by faculty influencing learning whereas interpersonal relationship and personality of teachers was recognized by junior students. Kube²¹ (2010), emphasizes one of the proper behaviours of teachers was correcting the students' mistakes without belittling them. Croxon's and Maginnis study²², revealed the most important aspect of students' experiences was receiving support from teachers in relationship with them.

V. Conclusion

Clinical experience have been identified as one of the most anxiety producing components among nursing students therefore nursing teachers need to establish their unique role for integrating theory to practice. Effective teaching in nursing requires flexibility, enthusiasm and dedication amidst a busy clinical care setting. The nursing teacher's role necessitates the maintenance of a climate of mutual trust and respect to support student learning and growth. To achieve this, the teacher requires professional competence, interpersonal relationship skills, appropriate personality characteristics, and teaching ability. Critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, specialized psychomotor, technological skills, and a professional value system are some of the important ingredient of teacher competence for transfer of knowledge to practical situations allowing nursing students to do more important than what they can demonstrate in a classroom.

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