

Sub-theme: Nurse Educators as Role Models: Students' Expectations

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A study to assess the students' expectations regarding the qualities of nurse educators among BSc Nursing students in a selected College of Nursing

The millennium has become the metaphor for the extraordinary challenges and opportunities available to the nursing profession. This has made it a very challenging field and the demand for competent nurses is rising. The student nurses usually enter into nursing education during their late adolescence and having to deal with a highly complex clinical environment along with a heavy study load can be overwhelming. Student Nurses are expected to take on the total responsibility of patient care even from the very first year of training itself. This can be a tremendous challenge to them. It is then when they look up to the Nurse Educators. The mentoring received from an Educator can go a long way, and sometimes it even becomes the sole deciding factor of the chances a Student Nurse stays in this profession.

Nurse educators are critical players in assuring quality educational experiences that prepare the Nursing workforce for a diverse, ever-changing health care environment. They are the leaders who document the outcomes of educational programmes and guide students through the learning process and it is highly recommended that they display astute interpersonal skills, clinical competency, professionalism and an understanding of the principles of adult learning.

In the current scenario, when the consumer satisfaction is becoming increasingly important in institutes of higher learning, this study was executed to assess the expectations of the student nurses about the qualities of a Nurse Educator.

Objectives

This study was conducted to identify the students' expectations about the qualities of a Nurse Educator among BSc Nursing students in a selected College of Nursing.

Operational Definition

Nurse Educator: Professionally qualified Nursing teacher who handles both theoretical classes and practical teaching including clinical supervision of Nursing students.

Student: Students who are undergoing BSc Nursing

course in a selected college of Nursing.

Review of Literature

Pennbrant et al (2012) conducted a study on 'Mastering the professional role as a newly graduated registered nurse' on 330 registered nurses of University West, Department of Nursing, Health and Culture, Sweden. The results showed that mastering the professional role was the result of an ongoing process building on the nurse's experiences and interactions with the surrounding environment. To facilitate this professional development, new nurses need support from their nursing-school educators and their healthcare employers.

Duffy (2012) conducted a study on 'Nurse to educator? Academic roles and formation of personal academic identities' to investigate the academic role of the nurse educator and its contribution to the formation of personal academic identity. Data was gathered using in-depth interviews (n=14) with experienced nurse educators employed within pre-1992 and post-1992 universities.

Wills (1997) conducted a study on 'the influence of the behaviour of nurse educators on the learning of students' to discover the views of third year RGN diploma level student nurses regarding the link teacher behaviours that help them to learn; 102 student nurses completed a written questionnaire seeking information about the number and length of link teacher visits, and ratings of the level of helpfulness of 5 categories of link teacher behaviours. Results showed that majority of students were dissatisfied with the amount of link teacher contact they receive.

Steele et al (2002) conducted a study on 'Learner-centred characteristics of nurse educators' were to describe the learner-centred teaching characteristics of nurse faculty who report using contemporary pedagogy. A secondary analysis of data collected by an international survey of nurse educators regarding pedagogical teaching approaches and strategies was used to answer the research questions. Themes and meaning units derived from the study helped to generate textual and structure statements that represent the

characterisations of learner-centred nurse educators.

Methods And Procedures

A non-experimental research design with a descriptive survey approach was used to achieve the objectives of the study. A structured closed-ended questionnaire

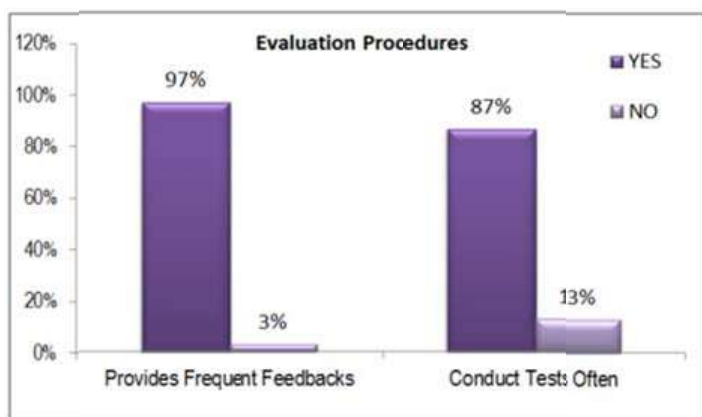
Table: 1: Expectations regarding the Interpersonal Skills of the Nurse Educator (n=100)

Interpersonal Skills	Percentage of respondents
Friendly	99
Receptive to Students & their Ideas	97
Mentor	96
Respects the individuality of the students	93
Good sense of humour	92
Unbiased	90
Strict	79
Not too strict towards every mistake	58
Not interested in general welfare of students	30

was used for the present study which consisted of 6 sections with a total number of 32 items. Content validity of the tool was ascertained in consultation with experts in the field of Nursing and reliability of the tool was established using test-retest method ($r=0.85$). A pilot study was conducted among 10 students to check the feasibility and practicability of the study.

The study was conducted among 100 BSc Nursing students using convenient sampling technique from a selected college of Nursing. The data was collected after explaining the procedure and getting their consent using self-administered structured questionnaire. The

Figure 1: Expectations regarding the Evaluation Procedures of Nurse Educators (n=100)



collected data was tabulated and analysed using descriptive statistics.

This figure shows that most students want the Nurse Educator to provide frequent feedback and to conduct tests often.

Findings and Interpretations

The study showed that the Student Nurses had a high level of expectations connected to varied aspects, such as, instructional and communication abilities, teaching skills, interpersonal skills, personality skills, accessibility, Nursing competency and professionalism and evaluation procedures from the Nurse educators.

Regarding the Instructional and Communication Abilities of a Nurse Educator, majority of the students expected the Nurse Educator to be interactive (100%), knowledgeable (99%), creative (98%), encouraging extracurricular participation (97%) and to have a good level of general knowledge (93%). Comparatively a lower proportion wanted the Educator use vernacular language (70%), to promote self-learning through assignments (67%) and to be proficient in English (60%). The least preference is for the Educator to use the class time exclusively for instructional purpose (46%).

Regarding teaching styles, 85 percent of students expect the Nurse Educator to adopt a democratic style and 10 percent to adopt a laissez-faire style. Only 5 percent expected an authoritarian style.

Table 1 showed that the interpersonal skills highly desirable among students are for the Nurse Educator to be friendly, receptive, to act as a mentor and the least desired is the Nurse Educator not to be interested in the general welfare of the students including personal problems.

Among the respondents, with regard to the Nursing competency and professionalism, majority of the students wanted the Nurse Educator to be highly skilled in clinics (100%), to integrate classroom and clinical experience (99%), to perceive the problems from the student's viewpoint (99%), to be a role model (98%) and to thoroughly enjoy Nursing (96%).

As far as Accessibility is concerned, 97 percent of students wanted the Educator to be available during their designated office hours and 88 percent wanted them to be available throughout their clinical posting hours.

Conclusion

This study was intended to assess the students' expectations regarding the qualities of a Nurse Educator. Some of the most expected qualities from a Nurse Educator are good interaction (100%), knowledge abil-

ity (99%), friendliness (99%), receptiveness to students and their ideas (97%), eliciting periodic student feedback (96%), clinically skilled (100%), integrating classroom and clinical experience (99%), availability during their designated office hours (97%) and throughout clinical hours (88%) and provision of frequent student feedbacks (97%). However the least desirable qualities include adoption of an authoritarian style of teaching (5%), adoption of a laissez-faire style of teaching (10%), not wanting tests to be conducted often (13%), being too strict as far as discipline is concerned (42%) and being interested in general welfare including their personal problems (70%).

The study highlighted the increasing demand for consumer satisfaction in Nursing academies as well as the need for Educators in the field of Nursing who will be able to inspire the aspiring Nurses.

Implications

Nursing Education: This study can be utilized to better understand the desired qualities of Nurse Educator from a student's viewpoint.

Nursing Practice: This study can be utilised by Nurse Educators to modify approach which will in turn improve the attitude of student towards the profession and also to improve their skills and quality of the service rendered.

Nursing Research: This study can be kept as a reference and may help to conduct an elaborative study in future.

Recommendations

Similar study can be replicated by taking a large sample. A comparative study can be conducted to assess the expectations of student nurses (i) from several colleges, or (ii) according to the type of Nursing program they are enrolled in such as Diploma in Nursing, Bachelors or Masters degree in Nursing

A qualitative study can be conducted to assess students' expectations about the qualities of a Nurse Educator

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