

PEDAGOGICAL CHALLENGES IN NURSE EDUCATION

- A Case Study Focusing on the Completion Rate in Theoretical Education at a Swedish University

Emilsson, M., Skyvell Nilsson, M., Johansson, K., Berndtsson, I., Pennbrant, S.
University West, Department of Nursing, Health and Culture

AIM

The aim of this survey was to map, based on admission background, admission points and examination results in the theoretical courses in nursing and medical science, the completion rate in a Swedish nursing programme.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, Swedish nurse education has undergone substantial changes in terms of content and admission criteria. Since 1993, Swedish nurse education is a three-year higher education programme, providing a professional qualification and a Bachelor's degree in nursing. Graduate nurses are required to attain a level of skills appropriate for current and future healthcare needs. To increase our understanding of how the contents and form of the education can support the students' learning within the programme's theoretical nursing- and medical science courses, we map a number of factors of importance, especially the students' educational background and their examination results.

METHOD

The research data were based on a quantitative case study of 286 nursing students (three admission classes) at one of Sweden's 25 nursing programmes. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and Mann-Whitney test.

CONCLUSIONS

The varied backgrounds and experiences of students admitted to the nursing education programme constitute a pedagogical challenge. Previous nursing experience by students can contribute positively, but can also lead to difficulties regarding programme content, entailing a need to early on in the programme promote understanding of the future professional role. The results indicate that courses in nursing science and medical science comprise different kinds of challenges/demands for students. Consequently, the findings underline the need for designing a more holistic nursing education programme, focusing on the strengths of the subjects' pedagogical approaches and exploring how they may inspire each other. Medical science course lectures should integrate more practical process-oriented learning and nursing science courses should integrate more theoretical knowledge applicable in the context of clinical practice periods.

RESULTS

Theoretical background and high grades increase the likelihood of success

The higher students' upper secondary school grades, the fewer examination attempts they needed to pass the theoretical nursing and medical courses ($p < 0.01$). Students with a theoretical upper secondary/high school education needed fewer attempts than those with a practical upper secondary/high school education to pass the examination in the nursing science courses (C6 and C7, courses focusing on pedagogics and learning processes).

Few attempts to pass theoretical nursing science courses

The number of passed examination was 1.05-1.38. The typical value indicated that most students only needed one attempt to pass two theoretical nursing science courses (C3 and C5, courses focusing on concepts and perspectives in nursing).

Significant association between two theoretical nursing science courses

A significant association ($p < 0.01$) was found between the examination results of two nursing science course (C3 and C5, courses focusing on concepts and perspectives in nursing). The association indicated that a failing grade in the first term's first nursing science course predicted a failing grade in the second term's first nursing science course.

More attempts to pass several medical science courses

The average value for the number of attempted examinations was 1.01-1.89. Students needing more than one attempt to pass the anatomy and physiology examination were more likely to need several attempts to pass the subsequent medical science course examinations (C2, C3, C4, C5, C6 and C8).

Significant association between results in medical science courses

A significant association was found between the examination results in the anatomy and physiology course and the examination results in several medical science courses (C2, C3, C4, C5, C6 and C8).

Course/ Term No.exam	C1/T1	C2/T3	C3/T3	C4/T3	C5/T4	C6/T3	C7/T4	C8/T6
1(%)	159(59.6)	266(98.1)	196(74.8)	132(50.7)	115(44.6)	199(77.1)	54(83.1)	147(82.6)
2(%)	63(23.6)	4(1.5)	44(16.8)	77(29.5)	96(37.2)	30(11.6)	10(15.4)	27(15.2)
3(%)	24(9.0)	0	14(5.4)	36(13.8)	23(8.9)	18(7.0)	1(1.5)	1(0.6)
4(%)	12(4.5)	0	3(1.1)	6(2.3)	12(4.7)	5(1.9)	0	0
5(%)	6(2.2)	0	1(0.4)	4(1.5)	9(3.5)	1(0.4)	0	0
6(%)	0	0	0	3(1.2)	1(0.4)	2(0.8)	0	0
7(%)	0	0	0	0	2(0.8)	0	0	0
Other(%)	3(1.1)	1(0.4)	4(1.5)	3(1.2)	0	3(1.2)	0	3(1.6)
	n=267	n=271	n=262	n=261	n=258	n=258	n=65	n=178

Course /Term No.exam	C1/T1	C2/T1	C3/T1	C4/T1	C5/T1	C6/T2	C7/T2	C8/T3	C9/T4	C10/T5
1(%)	64(74.4)	69(79.4)	149(78.1)	66(82.5)	125(65.1)	177(91.7)	58(80.5)	48(73.9)	156(82.5)	252(99.6)
2(%)	15(17.4)	8(9.2)	34(17.8)	9(11.2)	52(27.1)	10(5.2)	11(15.3)	16(24.6)	23(12.2)	1(0.4)
3(%)	4(4.7)	5(5.7)	2(1.0)	3(3.8)	10(5.2)	0	0	1(1.5)	7(3.7)	0
4(%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3(1.6)	0
Other(%)	3(3.5)	5(5.7)	6(3.1)	2(2.5)	5(2.6)	6(3.1)	3(4.2)	0	0	0
	n=86	n=87	n=191	n=80	n=192	n=193	n=72	n=65	n=189	n=253

C1= Nursing, Ethics and Profession
C2= Scientific Theory and Method
C3= Fundamental Principles of Caring, the Concepts of Nursing and Theory of Sciences I
C4= Health, Culture and Environment
C5= Fundamental Principles of Caring, the Concepts of Nursing and Theory of Sciences II
C6= Learning and Development of Individuals in a Dynamic Society
C7= Pedagogics
C8= Analyse and Perform Professional Nursing
C9= Caring for Elderly Patients with Multiple Diseases
C10= Scientific Theory

C1= Anatomy and Physiology
C2= Microbiology, Immunology and Hygiene
C3= Pharmacology
C4= Drug Calculation I
C5= Drug Calculation II
C6= Clinical Medicine in Physical Ill-Health
C7= Geriatric Care
C8= Palliative Care