

Abstract

Original Article

Nursing Students Participation and the Degree of Involvement in Essential Nursing Activities during Their Clinical Practice in Hospital Settings

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Abstract

Introduction: Clinical practice education is considered a vital component of the education of health science students. However, critical shortage of fieldwork placement experiences has led to unmet students' expectations and clinical learning objectives.

Aims: To evaluate the frequency of nursing students' involvement in nursing activities during their clinical practice and to assess the factors that may act as barriers or facilitators to their degree of involvement.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study was conducted in a sample of 205 nursing students with the use of a questionnaire including items covering routine basic nursing activities and examining the degree of student involvement (performance or observation). Eight particular nursing activities were selectively included considered as representative of the routine nursing work and the level of student clinical competence.

Results: Students were more actively involved in ECG performance (91%), pulse rate measurement (91%), subcutaneous drug injections (92.5%) and saline intravenous administration (91%). Interestingly, the year of studies was highly related to the degree of involvement in the main nursing activities; third and last year nursing students were found to be more actively involved in vital signs assessment, drug administration and injections' performance. Moreover, higher involvement rates were ascertained in students attending Emergency Nursing.

Conclusions: Clinical education during nursing studies is an ongoing process. The degree of nursing students' involvement in a wide range of nursing activities is related to the year and the discipline of nursing studies. The role of different educational models in student participation in clinical nursing procedures needs further research.

Key words: nursing education, nursing skills, practice placement