Clinical Experiences of Nursing Students: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

Clinical learning is a vital component of nursing education that takes place in a complex environment and has challenges that are not present in the classroom setting. Research studies have been done to determine strategies that promote students’ learning in the classroom; however, student nurses’ experiences to explore the factors that promote and inhibit their learning in the clinical area have rarely been studied. A qualitative-phenomenological research design was used and data were collected from 23 Filipino nursing students selected through purposive sampling. A semi-structured interview guide was used in conducting the one-on-one face-to-face interview. Data gathered were analyzed and interpreted following Collaizi’s method using a thematic framework approach. Seven main themes emerged from the data. From the participants’ experiences, support (support from the clinical instructors, staff nurses, and doctors), hands-on experience (performance of skills in the classroom and actual performance of skills in the clinical area), and classroom concepts, were considered as the factors that promote their learning in the clinical area. On the other hand, lack of information (lack of orientation and lack of knowledge), lack of self-confidence (mistakes, anxiety, and nervousness), lack of support (doctors/clinical instructors’ attitude and clinical instructors competence), academic overload (insufficient time and too much requirements) were considered as the factors that inhibit their learning in the clinical area.

Key word: clinical learning, hands-on experience, classroom concepts