



Student's Preference in Teaching And Learning Methods in Classroom: A Cross Sectional Survey

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ABSTRACT

Teaching without learning is just talking. Class room assessment focuses the primary attention of teachers and students on observing and learning rather than observing and improving teaching. A cross sectional study was conducted at Sree Gokulam Nursing College among nursing students with the aim to assess the most preferred method of teaching and learning. The study used a quantitative approach and descriptive research design. 243 nursing students were recruited using total enumeration sampling. A pilot study was conducted among 24 students to monitor the feasibility of tools and techniques. The findings of study revealed that majority of students prefer lecture method as method of teaching in first year (41.2%), second year (53.4%), third year (71.33%) and fourth year (53.1%). In learning, the most preferred method was self-study for first year (55.21%), second year (47.64) and third year (46.87%), fourth year students preferred group study (50.42%). The study revealed the fact that most preferred teaching method as lecture and self-study as the learning method.

KEYWORDS : Students; Teaching and Learning methods.

Introduction:

Teaching and learning are two sides of a coin. Hence forth, there is a strong correlation between the methods used in the delivery of information by lectures and the assimilation of that knowledge by students. Teachers and students probably have preferred ways of perceiving and processing new information. These preferred ways are called learning styles. Typically students and teachers like to know why we are learning something, like to have time to practice and time to integrate what we have learned into our lives. While schools may excel in delivering facts and overlook the importance of the three stages above we cannot dismiss the fact that individuals have preferred ways of learning. Individuals have preferred ways of learning throughout the different stages of learning.

Many people find a learning style or correction program which they believe reaches them. Most of these programs require a certain amount of input to determine ones individual learning style. After receiving the results of a learning style diagnostic test; people often believe that armed with knowledge of what type of learner they are, they can then go out into the world and soak up information like a sponge.

Students learn in many ways; by seeing and hearing; reflecting and acting; reasoning logically and intuitively; memorizing and visualizing. In 2003, The Learning and Skills development Agency of the British government published a study on several disciplines which concluded; There is little evidence that approaches based on learning styles and learning circles are valid, the study goes on to say that no matter the students preference it was possible to help them understand using techniques which were not in line with their preference.

Teaching and learning are two dimensions within the same learning process rather challenging and demanding. Nor assessing can stand alone neither teaching can be considered comprehensive if evaluation has not taken place. Personal characteristics of the assessor and successful management of the factors which interfere within this learning process in class room and in nursing clinical practices are essential for ensuring that learning takes place.

The teacher who acts as a facilitator of learning is seen by Rogers (1983), as a provider of learning resources and as a person who simultaneously shares his knowledge and his feelings with the learners. Quinn (1995) underlines the importance of the relationship between the learner and the facilitator characterizing it as a central element for meaningful learning.

Since 1970 educational researchers have attempted to explain and categorize different ways in which people learn and retain information and concepts. In the last decades nursing education as many other fields of nursing is undergoing many changes to meet the needs of changing society (Quinn 1995, Slevin and Lovery 1991). These changes entailed the adaptation of new roles for all those who were actively involved in nursing education; teachers, tutors, practitioners who act as mentors or preceptors for students in clinical practice. Significant influence on these changes has been the application of different teaching theories into nursing. In particular Carl Rogers Humanistic theory (1969) which initiated a new approach to teaching and learning; widely used by teachers has been adopted as a philosophy by many academic institutions worldwide.

Gregory (1979) believes that teachers who are able to match their learning style and teaching style are most comfortable. He cautions, however too much matching can lead to boredom. Dunn and Dunn (1979) strongly believe that both achievement and motivation improve when learning and teaching styles are matched. Teachers teach not as they were taught but as they learned, often feeling that there is only one right way to learn and hence only right one right way to teach.

Many studies have been conducted in various disciplines to assess student preferences in teaching and learning methods (Anastasia Rivkin Suzanna 2013, Salavani & Norris 2013, Atif Mahmood 2011, Thirunavukkarasu 2010, Ayesha Nuzhat 2002, Shankar 2003, Mary Wilson 2005) but there was a paucity in literature relating to nursing population; which spearheaded for this study.

Materials and Methods:

In-order to accomplish the aims of the study a quantitative approach with a descriptive cross sectional design was used. Study was conducted among 243 nursing students studying in first, second, third and fourth year BSc nursing course; who was recruited using total enumeration sampling from Sree Gokulam Nursing College, Trivandrum. Permission was obtained also ethical committee approval was obtained. A pilot study was conducted with 24 samples to ensure the feasibility of the study. Main study was conducted using two tools; one to collect the socio demographic details of the samples and a structured questionnaire to assess the preference of students regarding the teaching and learning methods. Questionnaire has been prepared according to the possible accessibility of teaching methods and commonly used learning methods. Test re test method was done to ensure the reliability of the tool, the r value 0.87 elicited the reliability of the same and validity of the tool was assessed by subject

experts. Questionnaire was distributed to samples after ensuring the confidentiality of data and obtaining informed consent.

Results:

Demographic data of samples

In this study; first year nursing students- majority of samples belonged to age group 18-19 years (95.3%) and were females (87.69%) who studied in higher secondary on English medium (64.34%). In second year majority belonged to age group 18-19 years (55.81%), were females (93.02%) and studied in past on Malayalam medium (51.16%). In third year 97.76% belongs to age group 20-21 years, 52.09% samples medium of past education was Malayalam and were females (95.3%). In fourth year majority of samples belonged to age group 20-21 years (51.78%), 78.57% were females and had English as medium (51.78%) of education in past.

Preference of teaching method

Table 1: Percentage distribution of students according to preference

Year of study	Preferred Teaching Methods			
	Discussion	Lecture	Peer teaching	Demonstration
First year	14%	41.2%	29.4%	15.4%
Second year	12.29%	53.42%	23.29%	11%
Third year	16.47%	71.33%	6%	6.2%
Fourth year	14.76%	53.16%	21.45%	10.63%

Table 1 shows majority of students prefers lecture method comparing to discussion, peer teaching and demonstration in first year (41.20%), second year (53.42%), third year (71.33%) and fourth year (53.16%).

Preference of learning method

The methods assessed were self-study; problem based learning (PBL), group study and hands on training. From the findings majority of students in first year (55.2%), second year (47.4%) and third year (46.87%) preferred self-study but group was the preferred method for fourth year students (50.42%).

Discussion:

The purpose of the study was to assess the students preferred method in teaching and learning process. The findings revealed that majority of students prefer lecture method for teaching. This finding was supported by an experimental study conducted by Jason M Carpenter (2005) on efficacy of teaching methods for large classes in University of California, which also stated that lecture method as the most preferred method.

Regarding the most preferred learning method self-study is found to be the most chosen method among majority of the subjects; this finding was in concordance with a study conducted in Nepal by Shankar et al in 2003 about the learning styles in pre-clinical students in a Medical College.

The findings of the study can present with a lot of implications in nursing education, research, administration and clinical practice. Nurses can be made aware about the best preferred method of teaching as well as learning by students in the nursing population. Nurse educators can act according the students expectations and preference so as to improve the knowledge and skills of student nurses. This study was descriptive in nature which may a limitation; experimental approaches can also be used to assess the effectiveness by implementing them upon students and evaluating so as to get a further clearer picture. The study clearly depicted the most preferred method of teaching and learning in nursing education scenario.

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