

The transfer of theoretical knowledge to clinical practice by nursing students and the difficulties they experience: A qualitative study

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Background: Nursing education contains both theoretical and practical training processes. Clinical training is the basis of nursing education. The quality of clinical training is closely related to the quality of the clinical learning environment.

Objectives: This study aimed to determine the transfer of theoretical knowledge into clinical practice by nursing students and the difficulties they experience during this process.

Methods: A qualitative research design was used in the study. The study was conducted in 2015 with 30 nursing students in a

university located in the east of Turkey, constituting three focus groups. The questions directed to the students during the focus group interviews were as follows: What do you think about your clinical training? How do you evaluate yourself in the process of putting your theoretical knowledge into clinical practice? What kind of difficulties are you experiencing in clinical practices?

Results: The data were interpreted using the method of content analysis. Most of the students reported that theoretical information they received was excessive, their ability to put most of this information into practice was weak and they lacked the courage to touch patients for fear of implementing procedures incorrectly. As a result of the analysis of the data, five main themes were determined: clinical training, guidance and communication, hospital environment and expectations.

Conclusions: The results of this study showed that nursing students found their clinical knowledge and skills insufficient and usually failed to transfer their theoretical knowledge into clinical practices. The study observed that nursing students experienced various issues in clinical practices. In order to fix these issues and achieve an effective clinical training environment, collaboration should be achieved among nursing instructors, nurses, nursing school and hospital management. Additionally, the number of nursing educators should be increased and training programs should be provided regarding effective clinical training methods.

Biography

Gulsen Kilinc is a PhD student in the Psychiatric Nursing. She has more than 7 years of history in nursing profession. She is currently working research assistants at Inonu University Faculty of Nursing. She has his expertise in psychiatric nursing.

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