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Learning communication skills-positive and negative attitudes of nursing students

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Introduction & Aim: During the nursing study students have to recognize the importance of communication skills to be effective in practice. Communication skills training can improve patient-centered communication, enhance empathy, provide reassurance and assist discussion of psychosocial needs. The aim of the study was to explore the attitudes of nursing students toward learning communication skills at one of the Slovenian faculties.

Methods: Research was used a quantitative research methodology. Data were collected with structured questionnaire. Attitudes of nursing students towards learning communication skills were assessed by the communication skills attitudes scale (CSAS). For testing the reliability of the questionnaire was used Cronbach's alpha (0.722). The data were analyzed using the descriptive statistics and One-way ANOVA. The statistical significance was tested on a 5% risk level.

Results: The mean scores for positive attitudes scale (PAS) was 52.8 ± 6.7 out of 65 and the mean scores for negative attitudes scale (NAS) was 32.7 ± 6.3 out of 65. There were identified statistically significant differences when examining the positive attitude scale according to the year of the study ($F=10.950$; $p<0.001$), but there were no statistically significant differences according to previous education ($t=1.434$; $p=0.155$) and mode of the study ($t=1.566$; $p=0.120$). Three factors extracted from the principal component analysis explained 74% of communication skills attitudes identified.

Conclusion: Effective communication skills training programs point to the importance of students taking an active role in the learning process. Our findings indicate that CSAS measurement may be helpful for monitoring the effect of different teaching strategies on students' attitudes about communication skills during nursing education. Teachers need to continue to develop and implement the use of effective communication skills to nursing students to exemplify the need for the critical skills and the importance of their part in nursing education for practice.

Biography

Klavdija Cucek Trifkovic is a Senior Lecturer, Researcher and Vice Dean for education at the University of Maribor, Faculty of Health Sciences (UM FHS). She has completed her BSc degree at the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Education MSc and PhD degree in the Faculty of Education at University of Ljubljana. Her Doctoral dissertation is focused on alcohol-related problems. In the past she worked some years as a Registered Nurse at the clinic for internal diseases and for the last fifteen years she has been working as a Lecturer at the UM FHS. She has actively participated in different conferences and congresses in nursing. Her research interests are related to the field of quality and satisfaction with life and mental disorders. Her main research interest is focused on the problems in the psychiatric field, such as alcoholism, depression and the quality of life. Also, an important area of her professional and research interest is supervision.

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