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Communication approach adopted by nursing students during clinical practicum

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Statement of the Problem: Effective communication facilitates nurses providing holistic care to patients, therefore; learning of how to communicate with patients is one of the important topics in nursing education. It is worthwhile to evaluate how the nursing students applied different communication approach in the real practice.

Purpose: To identify the communication approach that was used by the nursing students with patients during clinical practicum.

Methodology: 11 descriptive qualitative individual interviews were conducted. All of the participants were recruited through purposive sampling method from the year four students of the Bachelor of Nursing program from a local university of Hong Kong, who had completed the courses of basic communication theory and with previous clinical practicum experience. Content analysis was adopted for data analysis after each interview.

Findings: This study found that most nursing students tended to communicate with patients using the task-centered communication approach, which is the style of communication that focuses on completing the assigned tasks and focus on tasks completion only. In order to fulfill the expectation from other nurses of the ward, nursing students are required to finish the assigned tasks on time that makes nursing students considered communication with patients as a way to facilitate nursing care procedures. Only a few of students had adopted patient-centered communication approach, which refers to involving patient participation in decision-making, emphasizing on the respect of patients' values, preferences, and individual needs. However, nursing students adopted different communication approaches according to different ward nature. For example, task-centered communication was mainly adopted in surgical and medical ward while patient-centered communication was adopted in obstetric ward and community nursing services.

Conclusion: This study revealed that both task-centered and patient-centered communication approach were used by nursing students which was depended on the workload and ward nature.

Biography

Charm Yee Chong is a Lecturer in the Division of Nursing and Health Studies, University of Hong Kong, China. She is skilled in patient caring and healthcare management.

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