

Nursing Preceptors' Perspectives of Assessment Competency

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Abstract : Clinical nursing education allows nursing students to gain essential knowledge from practice experience and develop nursing skills in a variety of clinical environments. Integrating theoretical knowledge and practical skills is made easier for nursing students by providing opportunities for practice in a clinical environment. Nursing competency is an essential capability required to fulfill nursing responsibilities. Effective mentoring in clinical settings helps nursing students develop the necessary competence and promotes the integration of theory and practice. Preceptors play a considerable role in clinical nursing education, including the supervision of nursing students undergoing a rigorous clinical practicum. Preceptors are also involved in the clinical assessment of nursing students' competency. The assessment of nursing students' competence by professional practitioners is essential to investigate whether nurses have developed an adequate level of competence to deliver safe nursing care. Competency assessment remains challenging among nursing educators and preceptors, particularly owing to the complexity of the process. Consistency in terms of assessment methods and tools and valid and reliable assessment tools for measuring competence in clinical practice are lacking. Nurse preceptors must assess students' competencies to prepare them for future professional responsibilities. Preceptors encounter difficulties in the assessment of competency owing to the nature of the assessment process, lack of standardised assessment tools, and a demanding clinical environment. The purpose of the study is to examine nursing preceptors' experiences of assessing nursing interns' competency in Saudi Arabia. There are three objectives in this study; the first objective is to examine the preceptors' view of the Saudi assessment tool in relation to preceptorship, assessment, the assessment tool, the nursing curriculum, and the grading system. The second and third objectives are to examine preceptors' view of "competency" in nursing and their interpretations of the concept of competency and to assess the implications of the research in relation to the Saudi 2030 vision. The study uses an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design that involves a two-phase project: a qualitative focus group study is conducted in phase 1, and a quantitative study- a descriptive cross-sectional design (online survey) is conducted in phase 2. The results will inform the preceptors' view of the Saudi assessment tool in relation to specific areas, including preceptorship and how the preceptors are prepared to be assessors, and assessment and assessment tools through identifying the appropriateness of the instrument for clinical practice. The results will also inform the challenges and difficulties that face the preceptors. These results will be analysed thematically for the focus group interview data, and SPSS software will be used for the analysis of the online survey data.

Keywords : clinical assessment tools, clinical competence, competency assessment, mentor, nursing, nurses, preceptor

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