

AN EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY TO IMPROVE CRITICAL THINKING IN BEGINNING NURSING STUDENTS

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Disclosures:

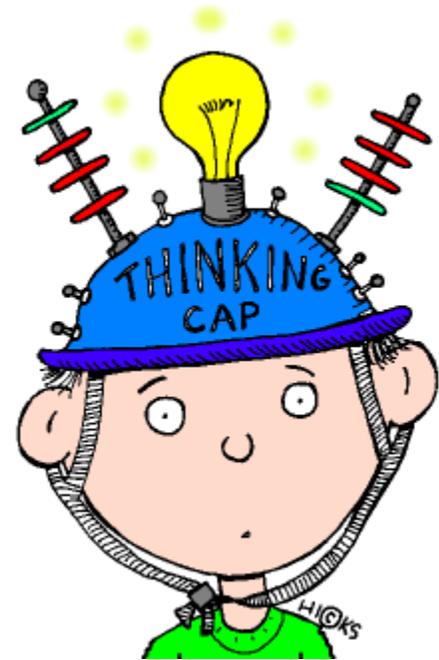
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Objectives:

- The learner will be able to:
 - ❑ Differentiate teaching-learning strategies to develop critical thinking processes in nursing students; and
 - ❑ Integrate teaching-learning strategies to develop critical thinking processes in beginning nursing students.

Purpose of the Study

- Conduct an exploratory case study
- Develop criteria of preferred practices
- Improve critical thinking development processes
- Disseminate action plan to improve critical thinking processes



Background

- Critical thinking...
 - Learned or inherent process
 - Clinical reasoning and judgment
 - Processes begin in early nursing curricula



Method

- Qualitative, Single-embedded, Exploratory Case Study
- Theoretical Framework: Constructivism
- Purposive Sampling
 - Current Nurse Educators
 - Recent Graduate Nurses
- Focus Group Interviews



Findings

Faculty Results

| Preferred practices | <i>n</i> | % |
|----------------------------|----------|------|
| Active learning | 3 | 42.9 |
| Peer evaluation | 3 | 42.9 |
| Flipped classroom | 2 | 28.6 |
| Case studies and scenarios | 1 | 14.3 |
| Chart review | 1 | 14.3 |
| Concept maps | 1 | 14.3 |
| Group activities | 1 | 14.3 |
| Simulation | 1 | 14.3 |

Graduate Results

| Current development practices | <i>n</i> | % |
|-------------------------------|----------|----|
| Simulations | 9 | 90 |
| Concept maps | 7 | 70 |
| Care plans | 4 | 40 |
| Case studies | 4 | 40 |
| Test-taking strategies | 2 | 20 |
| Discussion postings | 1 | 10 |
| Journaling | 1 | 10 |

Note. Faculty *N* = 7. Graduate *N* = 10.

Findings Continued

Comparative Responses of Practices Encouraging Critical Thinking

Note. Faculty $N = 7$. Graduate $N = 10$.

| <u>Current encouragement practices</u> | <u>Faculty %</u> | <u>Graduate %</u> |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Concept maps | 42.9 | 20 |
| Clinical experiences | 14.3 | 30 |
| Simulations | 14.3 | 10 |
| Care plans | 14.3 | 0 |
| Different perspectives | 0.0 | 20 |
| Testing | 0.0 | 20 |
| Skill lab experiences | 14.3 | 0 |
| Teaching styles | 14.3 | 0 |
| Case studies | 0.0 | 10 |
| Problem-solving techniques | 0.0 | 10 |
| Study techniques | 0.0 | 10 |

Findings Continued

Comparative Responses of Preferred Practices to Develop Critical Thinking

Note. Faculty $N = 7$. Graduate $N = 10$.

| Preferred practices | Faculty % | Graduate % |
|----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Case studies and scenarios | 14.3 | 40 |
| Simulations | 14.3 | 30 |
| Concept maps | 14.3 | 20 |
| Active learning | 42.9 | 0 |
| Peer evaluation | 42.9 | 0 |
| Flipped classroom | 28.6 | 0 |
| Practice exam questions | 0.0 | 20 |
| Test-taking strategies | 0.0 | 20 |
| Chart review | 14.3 | 0 |
| Group activities | 14.3 | 0 |
| Product resources | 0.0 | 10 |

Gap Analysis of Preferred and Current Practices

| Practices and strategies | Preferred practices | | Current practices |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| | Literature | Faculty and graduates | |
| Learner-centered, flipped classroom | x | x | x |
| Simulation | x | x | x |
| Case studies | x | x | x |
| Active learning | x | x | x |
| Concept maps | x | x | x |
| Reflection | x | | |
| Journals | x | | x ^a |
| Debriefing | x | | |
| Group activities | x | x ^a | x |
| Presentations | x | | x |
| Peer evaluation | | x | x ^a |
| Test-taking strategies | | x ^a | x |
| Questioning | x | | |
| Debates | x | | |
| Games | x | | x ^a |
| Clinical experiences | | | x |
| Chart review | | x ^a | |
| Different perspectives | | | x |
| Care plans | | | x |
| Discussion postings | | | x ^a |
| Practice exam questions | | x ^a | |
| Product resources | | x ^a | |
| Problem solving | | | x ^a |
| Teaching styles | | | x ^a |
| Role play | | | x ^a |
| Team building | | | x ^a |

^aMentioned by 2 or fewer of 17 total participants.

Recommendations for Program Improvement: An Action Plan

Gap Analysis: Though critical thinking is integrated at different levels in nursing education, the gap appears to relate to use and preference for specific types of teaching-learning strategies. The gap in teaching-learning strategies appears in the following: debates, gaming, group activities, presentations, questioning, and debriefing.

Action Plan: The recommendations for improvement include:

1. A faculty development seminar reviewing criteria (expected outcomes) of current practices at the School of Nursing.
2. A faculty development seminar reviewing criteria (expected outcomes) of preferred practices at the School of Nursing.
3. Introduction of innovative strategies involving moving to a learner-centered method.
4. Quarterly meetings to discuss new and innovative strategies
5. Yearly educational seminar for faculty

Learning Modules: The following is a list of criteria (expected outcomes) of preferred practices at the School of Nursing:

1. Active Learning
2. Flipped Classroom
3. Team-Based Learning

Recommendations for Future Research

- Conduct the study at other campuses/colleges/universities
- Qualitative study of currently enrolled students' perceptions on the value of critical thinking and test-taking skills
- Qualitative study of faculty perceptions on the value of critical thinking processes, clinical judgments, and test-taking strategies
- Exploring the use of peer evaluation in nursing education



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