

Perception of Educational Learning Environment among Undergraduate Nursing Students

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ABSTRACT

Background: Learning environment have both direct and indirect influence on learning of the students, their engagement in learning and motivation to learn. How teachers interact with students and how students interact with one another affects learning and can be phrased as positive or negative learning environment. This study aimed to find out students' perception on educational environment of the undergraduate nursing students.

Methods: A cross sectional descriptive design was adopted. Maharajgunj Nursing Campus was the study setting. Complete enumerative sampling method was applied. Total sample size was 218 undergraduate nursing students. Structured self-administered questionnaire Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) an international inventory tool was used to collect data. Analysis was done using descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, and percentage.

Results: Most of the respondents were above 20 years (91.7%) of age, female (98.2%), and followed Hindu religion (95%). More than half (54.6%) were studying B.Sc. Nursing, The total mean score of the respondents in Dundee Ready Education Environment Measures was 130.54 ± 17.44 with the score ranging from 75 to 186. The mean score on the subscales student's perception of learning was 32.22 ± 4.987 with the score ranging from 15-48, student's perception of teachers 28.26 ± 3.93 ranging from 11 to 41, academic self-perception 22.69 ± 3.709 with the score ranging from 13 to 43, perception of learning atmosphere 30.30 ± 5.196 with the score ranging from 11 to 45 and student's social self-perception 17.05 ± 3.735 with the score 8 to 51. Most of the respondents (85.3%) have positive perception towards educational learning environment.

Conclusion: The study concludes that most of the respondents have positive perception on learning environment as well as positive perception towards the teachers, followed by perception of learning atmosphere as positive.

Keywords: Educational Learning Environment, Perception, Students

INTRODUCTION

Education is the means of gaining knowledge, which helps us to open up our inner eyes & understand the ultimate truth of the universe. According to Ralph Tyler, "Education is the process of changing the behaviour pattern of people". Components of the educational environment includes the physical infrastructure; such as rooms for lectures, tutorial activities, facilitating an constraining factors for learning, the atmosphere created by fellow students and faculty including teaching and

administrative staff.¹Globally rapid and continuous changes in the educational system of health professions including new programme, curricula and strategies have increased the attention to improve the learning environment of all level of students under universities. The purpose of higher education is to provide learning environment that guides the students toward academic achievements which promote their professional and personal lives.²It is essential for managers to make effort to create an educational environment for students for proper learning. Supportive learning environment

are essential for medical education and will increase positive perception towards learning environment.³

A study done in two medical colleges stated that learning demands an ideal provision of academic environment, as well as a teacher equipped with virtues of sound knowledge, credibility, preparedness and effective communication skills. Moreover, the horizon is not only limited within classroom but is beyond that which encompasses other factors like student-teacher relationship, teaching-learning strategies, physical facilities as well as address to students' psychological and emotional needs.⁴ Similar study showed that most of the master level nursing students (81.7%) had positive level of perception on their educational environment and few had excellent perception. Student's positive and negative perception towards the academic environment determines the quality of education.² So the researchers conducted this study to find out students' perception on educational environment of the undergraduate nursing program in Maharajgunj Nursing Campus. The objective of the study was to find out perception of educational learning environment among undergraduate nursing students of Maharajgunj Nursing Campus.

METHODS

A cross-sectional descriptive study design was adopted to find out perception of educational learning environment among undergraduate nursing students studying in Maharajgunj Nursing Campus. Study population were all 218 students of all academic years (2nd, 3rd & 4th) of Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSc. Nursing) and all academic years (2nd, & 3rd) of Bachelor Nursing Science (BNS). Total enumerative sampling method was applied to select the sample for the study. All B.Sc. and BNS Nursing students who gave voluntary consent to participate in the study were included. Those who did not give voluntary consent and were absent during data collection period were excluded. A structured self-administered questionnaire containing Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) tool was used to collect the data from 30th January 2022 to 11th February 2022. DREEM consists of 50 items with five-point Likert scale where 0=Strongly Disagree, 1=Disagree, 2=Uncertain, 3=Agree and 4=Strongly agree.

The items are categorized into five subscales as: Perception of Learning (SPL) - 12 items, Perception of Teachers (SPT) - 11 items, Academic Self Perception (SASP) - 8 items, Perception of Atmosphere (SPA) - 12 items and Social Self Perception (SSSP) - 7 items. There are nine negative items (items 4,8,9,17,25,35,39,48 and 50) for which reverse scoring was done while entering the data. The maximum score obtained is 200 which is interpreted as: 0-50=very poor, 51-100= plenty of problems, 101-150= more positive than negative and 151-200= excellent. However, 9 of the 50 items (numbers 4, 8, 9, 17, 25, 35, 39, 48, and 50) are negative statements and should be scored: 0 Strongly Agree, 1 Agree, 2 Uncertain, 3 Disagree, 4 Strongly Disagree. Data collection was done after getting administrative approval from Maharajgunj Nursing Campus. Ethical approval was obtained from Institutional Review Committee (IRC) of Institute of Medicine, Tribhuvan University IRC No. 213/(6-11)E2-078/079. The objectives of the study was explained and made sure that the collected information will be used only for the study purpose to the respondents and informed consent was taken prior to data collection. They were given full right to withdraw from the study if they were not willing to take part at any time. The questionnaire was distributed to all the students in the classroom, total of 45 minutes to 1 hour was given to fill the questionnaire, and researchers were present at the time of data collection to clarify any queries. After completing the questionnaire the researcher collected all the forms and checked for completeness. Privacy and confidentiality was maintained throughout the study. Collected data were entered into SPSS version 16.0. Coding and recoding was done as required. Analysis of the data was done using descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, and percentage and presented in the tables.

FINDINGS

Table 1: Socio- demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n=218)

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Age	Below 20	18	8.3
	20 and Above 20	200	91.7
Sex	Male	3	1.4
	Female	215	98.6
Program	BNS	99	45.4
	BSc. Nursing	119	54.6
BSc. Nursing	Second year	39	17.9
	Third year	40	18.3
	Fourth year	40	18.3
BNS	Second year	49	22.5
	Third year	50	22.9
Ethnicity	Brahmin/Chhetri	164	75.2
	Newar	21	9.6
	Other Janajati	22	10.1
	Dalit	4	1.8
	Madhesi	7	3.2
Religion	Hinduism	207	95.0
	Buddhism	9	4.1
	Islam	2	0.9
Marital status	Married	48	22.0
	Unmarried	170	78.0
Work experience	Yes	99	45.4
	No	119	54.6

Table 1 showed that most of the respondents were 20 years and above age (91.7%) and female (98.2%). More than half (54.6%) were studying in B. Sc. Nursing and majority (75.2%) belonged to Brahmin and Chhetri ethnicity. Among them almost all 95% followed Hindu religion. Most of the respondents (78%) were unmarried and more than half of the respondents had experienced working as a nursing staff.

Table 2: Score of Respondents in Educational Learning Environment (n=218)

Subscales of Educational Learning Environment	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Mean Score	SD
Students Perception of learning	15.00	48.00	32.22	4.987
Perception of teachers	11.00	41.00	28.26	3.932
Academic self-perception	13.00	43.00	22.69	3.709
Perception on atmosphere	11.00	45.00	30.30	5.196
Social self-perception	8.00	51.00	17.05	3.735
Total Score	75.00	186.00	130.54	17.44

Table 2 showed the total score of the respondents in educational learning environment along with five subscales of Dundee Ready Education Environment Measures. The total mean score is found to be 130.54 ± 17.44.

Table 3: Level of Perception of Educational Learning Environment of Respondents (n=218)

Level of Perception	Frequency	Percentage
Plenty of problem (Score <100)	10	4.6
More positive than negative (Score 101-150)	186	85.3
Excellent (Score 151-200)	22	10.1

Table 3 depicted the level of perception of educational learning environment of the respondents. It showed that most of the respondents (85.3%) have positive than negative perception towards educational learning environment and very few, (4.6%) perceived that there are plenty of problems.

Table 4: Perception of Educational Learning Environment in Five Subscales (n=218)

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Students Learning Perception	Teaching is viewed negatively	15	6.9
	More positive perception	165	75.7
	Teaching highly thought of	38	17.4
Students' Perception of Teachers	Abysmal	1	0.5
	Need of some training	11	5.0
	Moving in right direction	194	89.0
	Model course organizer	12	5.5
Students' Academic Self-Perception	Many negative aspects	11	5.0
	Feeling more on the positive side	152	69.7
	Confident	55	25.3
Students' Perception of Atmosphere	A terrible environment	1	0.5
	There are many issue that need changing	25	11.5
	A more positive attitude	176	80.7
Students' Social Self-Perception	A good feeling over all	16	7.3
	Not a nice place	45	20.7
	Not too bad	163	74.8
	Very good socially	9	4.1

Table 4 showed the perception of educational learning environment in five different subscales. Regarding students learning perception more than half (75.7%) have more positive perception, most of all (89%) perceived that teachers are moving in right direction. Similarly more than half (69.7%) have feeling of more on positive side regarding academic self-perception. Most of the students (80.7%) have more positive attitude towards educational learning atmosphere and more than half of the respondents (74.8%) perceived that the social environment is not too bad.

DISCUSSION

In this study the mean score for perception of respondents on their learning environment was 130.54 ± 17.44 . Respondents' level of perception of educational learning environment was more positive than negative (85.3%). Most of the students (75.7%)

agreed to a more positive approach regarding their learning moving in the right direction (89.0%). For their teachers, feeling more on the positive side (69.7%) for their academic self-perception, feeling more on the positive side for their learning atmosphere (80.7%), they also reported that their social self-perceptions were "not too bad (74.8%).

Similarly, study done among 122 nursing students studying at B.P. Koirala Institute of Health Science, Dharan reported that first year students were found to be more satisfied (68.23%) with the educational environment (136.45 ± 16.93) compared to student of other years. Academic self-perception (21.94 ± 3.42) was the highest scoring subscale (68.57%) while the social self-perception (16.43 ± 2.96) was the lowest (58.66%). The overall DREEM score (131.25 ± 15.82 out of 200) indicated that perception of learning environment among the students was positive. Despite overall positive perception, students

perceived that the teachers were authoritative and there is lack of good support system for the students at the time of stress. The total DREEM score varied significantly between the years of enrolment ($p < 0.05$). This study concluded that positive perception of learning environment which varied significantly according to the year of enrolment. However improvements are required across all the five domains for the high quality educational environment.⁵

Likewise, another study carried out to find out perception of clinical learning environment among 75 nursing students of Sanjeevani College of Medical Sciences and Lumbini Nursing College of Butwal Sub-metropolitan city revealed that majority of the respondents (88%) were satisfied with the clinical learning environment and agreed with the criteria that 'they do not think their clinical placement was just waste of time' because maximum respondents (91%) agreed to the criteria that student nurses learn more from nursing staffs by observing how they carry out their roles in the hospital. Similarly, majority of the respondents (87%) agreed to the criteria whereby patient receives individual care, and (95%) agreed to the criteria whereby the nurse teachers regard them as a learner rather than as a worker. In the same way (80%) of the respondents agreed to the criteria - 'I am able to reach equipment adequately for providing nursing care to the patients' and 81% agreed to the criteria - 'I am not compelled to perform the task beyond my clinical course'. Majority of the respondents (93%) have been found agreed with the criteria that their supervisor encourages them to be innovative in their work. Findings of this study concluded that the overall perception of all the respondents regarding different variables on the clinical learning environment has been found positive.⁶

Another cross-sectional study done to compare of undergraduate educational environment in medical and nursing program among 884 students of Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan revealed that the mean±SD DREEM score was measured as 126±20.3 with 84.1% average response rate. Nursing students regarded more positive perception about their EE (127.3±19.3) as compared to medical students (124.6±21.3) and was found to be statistically significant ($P=0.027$). Medical students scored higher in the domain of perception of atmosphere

whereas, nursing students scored higher in academic self-perception. Both of the groups have rated lower scores on the domain of Perception of Teaching. Both medical and nursing students appreciated the Educational environment pertaining to Perception of Learning, Academic Self- Perception, and Perception of learning and Social Self-perception. The study showed that nursing students' perception on their educational environment was relatively more satisfactory than medical students. However, both medical and nursing students identified areas of improvement in the domain of Perception of Teaching.⁷

Similar study was carried out to compare students' perceptions of the academic learning environment in Paediatric and Maternity courses among 511 nursing students of Egypt reported that total mean score for paediatric and maternity nursing students' perception of their learning environment were 115.0±23.02 and 110.3±17.4; respectively. Students' belief in their gaining knowledge of environment in both specialties were "more positive than negative" with a significant difference between both groups ($t=2.6$, $p=0.01$). All students agreed to a more positive approach regarding their learning "moving in the right direction" for their teachers, feeling "more on the positive side" for their academic self-perception, feeling "more on the positive side" for their learning atmosphere "a more positive attitude" they also reported that their social self-perceptions were "not too bad."⁸

Another study conducted to investigate the viewpoints of 493 undergraduate medical sciences students on the learning environment at Rafsanjan University of Medical Sciences (RUMS) of Iran reported that mean scores in the five domains was 113.5 out of 200 (56.74%), which was considered to be more positive than negative. The total mean scores for perception of learning, teaching, and atmosphere were 27.4/48 (57.24%), 24.60/44 (55.91%), and 26.8/48 (55.89%), respectively. Academic and social self-perceptions were 20.5/32 (64.11%) and 15.7/28 (56.36%), respectively. The total DREEM scores varied significantly between courses ($P<0.01$). The total scores of the students of operating room nursing, anaesthesia, and laboratory sciences, first year students, and females were significantly higher than the other students ($P<0.01$).⁹

CONCLUSION

Most of the undergraduate nursing students have positive perception towards learning environment. The perception of educational learning environment in five different subscales showed; students learning perception have more positive perception, most of all perceived that teachers are moving in right direction. Similarly more than half have feeling of more on positive side regarding academic self-perception. Most of the students have more positive attitude towards educational learning atmosphere and more than half of the respondents perceived that the social environment is not too bad.

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