



Perception of Undergraduate Nursing Students' regarding Their Learning Environment in Bangladesh



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Abstract

The learning environment plays a central role in determining students' educational experiences and outcomes. Nursing is a professional field where both theoretical knowledge and practical skills are important. Sometimes, nursing students' perceptions of their learning environment affect their learning. The main objective of this study was to describe the perception of Bangladeshi undergraduate nursing students about the learning environment. This is a descriptive cross-sectional study. The existing DREEM questionnaire was used to ask undergraduate nursing students of different years. A total of 172 respondents were purposively selected. This study explored the overall mean score of undergraduate nursing students' perception of learning environment was 124.65 indicating that undergraduate nursing students' perception of learning environment were more positive than negative. Also, it was revealed that the individual mean scores of undergraduate nursing students' perception of learning environment of five domains were as follows: 31.85±3.7/38, students' perception of teachers 27.25±3.7/42, students' academic self-perception 20.1±3.2, students' perception of atmosphere 28.30±4.2 and students' self-perception 17.10±2.3 respectively. This study will help to understand undergraduate nursing students' perception of learning environment, identify problematic areas and apply attention to improve those areas.

Keywords: Perception of Undergraduate Nursing Students'; Learning Environment; Nursing Students

Introduction

Creating a conducive environment is one of the most important parts of encouraging the success of a student's academic achievement [1]. It plays a significant role in enhancing students' knowledge, clinical skills, competence, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, independent work ability, and self-confidence and mental health promotion [2].

Environment refers to the arrangement of physical space with

appropriate support as well as connectivity of resources [3]. The learning environment is not limited to the physical space only; it also includes the library, clinical practice area, overall need for good teacher-student and peer relationships and appropriate attitude of senior and junior students [4]. The four main elements for a good learning environment are the effects of physical space; psychosocial and interaction factors; organizational culture, and teaching and learning elements [5].

The characteristics of the learning environment, affecting the curriculum; teaching and learning will be proficient as a result of the student [6]. A conducive learning environment is essential for making a student competent [7]. The learning environment also influences students' motivation, enjoyment, and life success. A healthy learning environment plays a crucial role in students' independence; positive coping, enjoyment, problem-solving ability, and curiosity about learning [8].

Healthcare is an important and challenging job, especially for nurses. The nursing profession is a major part in providing these essential services to the people. Adequate knowledge and experience are very necessary to enhance the skills in this nursing profession. Nursing colleges play a vital role in producing qualified and skilled nurses who will later contribute to the promotion and continuity of healthy healthcare services [9]. Most nursing colleges emphasize their curriculum, lecturers, lab practices, and clinical practice work. They do not pay attention to the impact of these activities on student learning [10]. Many factors influence students' perceptions of the learning environment. For example, the curriculum, teachers' teaching strategies, and other surrounding environments [11].

There are a total of 192 government, autonomous and private colleges in Bangladesh and 9835[12] are studying undergraduate nursing in different years, but very few studies have been conducted to describe the perception of undergraduate nursing students about the learning environment. The aim of the study was to describe the perception of undergraduate nursing students about their learning environment. The authors used the Dundee Ready Educational Environment Measure (DREEM) questionnaire developed by a team of researchers from the University of Dundee,

Scotland [13]. It is a recognized high reliability and applicable to various medical, dental and nursing fields. It is a commonly used tool for assessing the quality of the educational environment in healthcare profession education [14].

Materials and Methods

The DREEM questionnaire was administered to 172 undergraduate nursing students of Dhaka Nursing College.

The DREEM questionnaire consists of 50 statements that focus on different aspects of the educational environment, such as perception of learning, environment, social interaction, and academic self-perception. Each statement is rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Nine items (4, 8, 9, 18, 26, 36, 40, 49, 51) out of the 50 items were negatively correlated with the nine items, so higher scores on those nine items indicate positive feelings.

Scoring of the DREEM questionnaire involves adding the ratings of each statement to obtain a total score, which can range from 0 to 200. Higher scores indicate more positive perceptions of the educational environment. The DREEM questionnaire also includes five subscales: learning perceptions, teachers' perceptions, academic self-perceptions, atmosphere perceptions, and social self-perceptions.

The DREEM questionnaire has been back translated for cultural adaptation.

The consistency and reliability score of this internal study was 0.88 (Cronbach's alpha) (Tables 1-3). Vaughan et al. [15] found that interpretation of the DREEM [15].

Table 1: Scores of Overall Perception of Learning Environment and its subscales (n = 172).

| Variable | Score Range | Maximum Score | Mean and SD |
|------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| Students' Perception of learning | 0-48 | 38 | 31.85(3.79) |
| Students' Perception of teacher | 0-44 | 42 | 27.25(3.76) |
| Students' academic self-perception | 0-32 | 25 | 20.01(3.22) |
| Students' Perception of atmosphere | 0-48 | 35 | 28.30(4.22) |
| Students' Self perception | 0-26 | 21 | 17.10(2.35) |
| Overall | 200 | 144 | 124.65(14.47) |

Table 2: Interpretation of the DREEM.

| Section | Interpretation |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Total DREEM score (out of 200) | |
| 0-50 | Very poor |
| 51-100 | Plenty of problems |
| 101-150 | More positive than negative |
| 151-200 | Excellent |
| DREEM subscales | |
| 1.Students' perception of learning | |
| 0-12 | Very poor |

| | |
|--|--|
| 13-24 | Teaching is viewed negatively |
| 25-36 | A more positive approach |
| 37-48 | Teaching highly thought of |
| 2.Students' perception of teachers | |
| 0-11 | Abysmal |
| 12-22 | In need of some retraining |
| 23-33 | Moving in the right direction |
| 34-44 | Model teachers |
| 3.Students' academic self-perceptions | |
| 0-8 | Feeling of total failure |
| 9-16 | Many negative aspects |
| 17-24 | Feeling more on the positive side |
| 25-32 | Confident |
| 4.Students of atmosphere | |
| 0-12 | A terrible environment |
| 13-24 | There are many issues that need changing |
| 25-36 | A more positive atmosphere |
| 37-48 | A good feeling overall |
| 5.Students' social self-perceptions | |
| 0-7 | Miserable |
| 8-14 | Not a nice place |
| 15-21 | Not too bad |
| 22-28 | Very good socially |

Table 3: Mean score of individual items of the DREEM.

| S.no | Items | Mean | SD |
|---|--|------|-------|
| 1.Student' perception of learning | | | |
| 1 | I am encouraged to participate in class | 2.64 | 0.699 |
| 2 | The course organisers are knowledgeable | 2.27 | 0.817 |
| 3 | There is a good support system for students who get stressed | 2.16 | 0.814 |
| 4 | I am too tired to enjoy this course (***) | 2.84 | 0.646 |
| 5 | Learning strategies which worked for me before continuing to work for me now | 2.74 | 0.596 |
| 6 | The clinicians are patient with patients | 2.22 | 0.882 |
| 7 | The teaching is often stimulating | 2.49 | 0.791 |
| 8 | The teachers ridicule the students (***) | 3.3 | 0.743 |
| 9 | The teachers are authoritarian (***) | 2.98 | 0.151 |
| 10 | I am confident about passing this year | 2.69 | 0.596 |
| 11 | The atmosphere is relaxed during clinic teaching | 2.72 | 0.575 |
| 12 | This course is well timetabled | 2.8 | 0.54 |
| 2.Students' Perception of teaching | | | |
| 13 | The teaching is student-centred | 2.56 | 0.702 |
| 14 | I am rarely bored during this course | 2.59 | 0.647 |
| 15 | I have good friends in this course | 2.62 | 0.727 |
| 16 | The teaching helps to develop my confidence | 2.56 | 0.735 |

| | | | |
|---|---|------|-------|
| 17 | Cheating is a problem in this course (***) | 1.12 | 0.694 |
| 18 | The clinicians have good communication skills with patients | 2.48 | 0.852 |
| 19 | My Social life is good | 2.63 | 0.685 |
| 20 | The teaching is well-focused | 2.8 | 0.503 |
| 21 | I feel I am being well prepared for my profession | 2.62 | 0.642 |
| 22 | The teaching helps to develop my confidence | 2.62 | 0.677 |
| 23 | The atmosphere is relaxed during lectures | 2.63 | 1.67 |
| 3.Student' Academic self-perception | | | |
| 24 | The teaching time is put to good use | 2.6 | 0.706 |
| 25 | The teaching over-emphasises factual learning (***) | 2.64 | 0.786 |
| 26 | Last year work has been good preparation for this year work | 2.74 | 0.545 |
| 27 | I am able to memorise all I need | 2.16 | 0.85 |
| 28 | I seldom feel lonely | 2.16 | 0.892 |
| 29 | The teachers are good at providing feedback to students | 2.29 | 0.87 |
| 30 | There are opportunities for me to develop interpersonal skills | 2.6 | 0.714 |
| 31 | I have learned a lot about empathy in my profession | 2.79 | 0.543 |
| 4.Students' Perception of the atmosphere | | | |
| 32 | The teachers provide constructive criticism here | 2.38 | 0.796 |
| 33 | I feel comfortable in class socially | 2.51 | 0.776 |
| 34 | The atmosphere is relaxed during tutorials and practical session | 2.72 | 0.595 |
| 35 | I find the experience disappointing (***) | 2.07 | 0.746 |
| 36 | I am able to concentrate well | 2.42 | 0.772 |
| 37 | The teachers give clear examples | 2.45 | 0.751 |
| 38 | I am clear about the learning objectives of the program | 2.64 | 0.656 |
| 39 | The teachers get angry in class (***) | 2.15 | 0.757 |
| 40 | The teachers are well prepared for their classes | 2.36 | 0.815 |
| 41 | My problem-solving skills are being well developed here | 2.35 | 0.82 |
| 42 | The enjoyment outweighs the stress of the program | 1.86 | 0.926 |
| 43 | The atmosphere motivates me as a learner | 2.4 | 0.828 |
| 5.Students' Social self-perception | | | |
| 44 | The teaching encourages me to be an active learner | 2.5 | 0.745 |
| 45 | Much of what I learn seems to be relevant to a career in osteopathy | 2.82 | 0.538 |
| 46 | My accommodation is pleasant | 2.27 | 0.891 |
| 47 | Long-term learning is emphasised over short learning | 2.47 | 0.688 |
| 48 | The teaching is too teacher-centred (***) | 2.6 | 0.597 |
| 49 | I feel able to ask the questions I want | 2.5 | 0.706 |
| 50 | The students irritate the teachers (***) | 1.84 | 0.596 |

***Reserve Scoring.

Results

DREEM Items Mean score of 3.5 or greater Positive Mean score between 2 and 3 could be enhanced or improved Mean score of 2 or less Problematic area.

Discussion

Learning environment is an important portion of undergraduate nursing to acquired knowledge and skilled to applied nursing care. Nursing college is basic area most important to make the future of undergraduate nursing students [16].

Perception about learning environment is very important issue to students gather knowledge and development skill.

In this current study, the authors find overall score 144 that indicates undergraduate nursing students' perception of learning environment more positive than negative. In Nepal Health Profession Institution, a Study conducted. [17] Showed overall DREEM score of 130. Alike to this study, perception of learning environment was conduct in various countries to find out undergraduate nursing students such as nursing colleges of Iran [18], Malaysia [19] and Egypt [20]. Another studies was conducted by Arab [21], Imani pour [22], Bakshi [23] and Victor [24] that found the overall DREEM score of 103.54, 104.39, 114.3 and 119 respectively.

Similar study was conducted Malaysia [25], Saudi Arabia [26], Egypt [27], Iran [28], Brazil [29] Sweden [30], Egypt [31], Pakistan [32], Saudi Arabia [33], Iran [34], Egypt [35], Iran [36],[37] Malaysia and [38] Egypt those findings were same of this study.

In contrast a study from Iran medical students found overall score 98/200 that indicates perception regarding learning environment is poor [39].

In this, five domains of DREEM questionnaire were used to identify undergraduate nursing students' perception about learning environment. This study revealed that highest mean score was students' perception of learning (31.85), and lowest score was students' self-perception (17.10) The lowest score suggest need attention and improvement of this domain, this findings different findings found [37-38] their found that students' academic self-perceptions highest score and lowest score students' perception of atmosphere.

The DREEM questionnaire 50 items. Most of items mean score more than 2 that indicates most of students have positive perception about their learning environment that results similar like other study findings. [35-38] [21][40]. This finding suggest if students' get proper support and guidance than students perceive excellent perception about their learning environment.

First domain Students' perception of learning reverse item number 8 the teachers ridicule the students mean score 3.30* indicates teachers need to improvement in this area, 2nd domain students perception of teaching 17 reverse item cheating is a problem in this course mean score 1.12 suggest that is good point of nursing college that students perception about their learning environment. Other items from last domain from students' social self-perception 50 numbers reverse item mean score 1.84 indicate that the students are not irritate to their teachers.

Conclusion

The present study revealed that perception of undergraduate nursing students more positive than negative. This study also find some areas need to improvement to achieve excellent perception of undergraduate nursing students. That will be help to prepare

knowable and skilled nurses so that country people will be get best care and government will be benefit by export nurse abroad and earn more remittance.

The research is conduct only one college and small amount of undergraduate nursing students. This is a very few amount of sample for generality of the results, so further researchers are need.

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