



Undergraduate student nurses' lived experiences of anxiety during their first clinical practicum: A phenomenological study



Fan-Ko Sun^{a,1}, Ann Long^{b,2}, Yun Shan Tseng^{a,3}, Hui-Man Huang^{c,4}, Jia-Hui You^{d,5}, Chun-Ying Chiang^{a,*}

^a Department of Nursing, I-Shou University, No. 8, Yida Rd., Jiaosu Village, Yanchao District, Kaohsiung City 82445, Taiwan, ROC

^b School of Nursing, Ulster University, 41, North Parade, Ormeau Road, Belfast BT 72GH, Northern Ireland, UK

^c Department of Nursing, Chang Jung Christian University, No. 1, Changda Rd., Gueiren District, Tainan City 71101, Taiwan, ROC

^d Department of Nursing, E-Da Hospital, No. 61, Xintang Rd., Neipu Township, Pingtung County 912, Taiwan, ROC

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Accepted 2 November 2015

Keywords:

Anxiety
Nursing clinical practicum
Nursing students
Clinical lecturers

SUMMARY

Background: The Fundamental Nursing clinical practicum is an essential module for nursing students. Some feel stress or anxiety about attending this first placement; however, evidence demonstrates that it is rare to explore the feelings of anxiety felt by the nursing students concerning their first clinical practicum.

Objective: This study was designed to explore student nurses' experiences of anxiety felt regarding their initial clinical practicum while studying for their University degree.

Design: A phenomenological approach was used.

Settings: A university in Southern Taiwan.

Participants: A purposive sampling of fifteen student nurses with anxiety reactions who had completed their first clinical practicum.

Methods: Data were collected using a semi-structured guide and deep interview. Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's seven-step phenomenological method.

Results: Three themes surfaced in the findings. The first theme was anxiety around their first clinical practicum, which stirred up anxiety about: self-doubt, worry and fear; difficulty coping with the learning process; worry hampered establishing therapeutic relationships with patients; the progress of the patients' illness could not be predicted; and anxiety felt about lecturer-student interactions. The second theme was three phases of anxiety reactions, which included increasing anxiety before clinical practicum; exacerbated anxiety during clinical practicum, and relief of anxiety after clinical practicum. The third theme was coping behaviors. This comprised: self-reflection in preparation for clinical practicum; finding ways to release emotions; distractions from the anxiety; and, also facing their difficulties head-on.

Conclusion: The findings could help raise the awareness of lecturers and students by understanding student nurses' anxiety experiences and facilitating a healthy preparation for their initial clinical practicum, consequently proactively helping reduce potential anxiety experiences.

© 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction

The education and training of nurses became professional after Florence Nightingale established a nursing school in 1860. Nightingale considered that the axiom of nursing was patient care.

Subsequently, this led to nurses being educated in the classroom and trained in the clinical settings (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2014). Contemporary nurse education comprises theoretical courses and practical training where student nurses are holistically prepared to be healthcare professionals (Nasrin et al., 2012). The practical training allows students to develop a better understanding of the nursing research, principles and theories, and strengthen their professional nursing skills.

Nursing shortage is a global issue and this includes Taiwan. Approximately 10 thousand nursing students graduate every year in Taiwan. However, only 59% of them are practicing in different clinical settings (Executive Yuan, Department of Health, 2012; Teng, 2014). They learn their nursing scholarship and research at the university. For some, their first reality shock is the Fundamental Nursing practicum, which is especially important as some students decide to

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +886 7 6151100e7724; fax: +886 07 6155150.

E-mail addresses: sunfanko@isu.edu.tw (F.-K. Sun), drannlong1@hotmail.com (A. Long), ytsen01@isu.edu.tw (Y.S. Tseng), x2156@mail.cjcu.edu.tw (H.-M. Huang), sky19911024@hotmail.com.tw (J.-H. You), chunying@isu.edu.tw (C.-Y. Chiang).

¹ Tel.: +886 7 6151100e7731; fax: +886 07 6155150.

² Tel.: +353 02890225663.

³ Tel.: +886 7 6151100e7716; fax: +886 07 6155150.

⁴ Tel.: +886 6 2785123e3171; fax: +886 08 7222702.

⁵ Tel.: +886 8 7797813.

drop out either before, or after, they graduate. Further research is required on this topic.

Many students feel stress or anxiety during their clinical practice. For example, studies have investigated nursing students' levels of stress during their clinical practice (Hsieh et al., 2013; Lee and Yeh, 2010; Li and Luk, 2013). However, only a few studies have explored nursing students' anxiety experiences during the initial clinical practicum (Yang and Hsu, 1993). Chen (2010) found that when student nurses experience excessive anxiety, their motivation to study as well as their efficacy, and willingness to become a nurse were negatively influenced. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the anxiety experiences of undergraduate student nurse during their initial practicum at a university in Taiwan.

Background

The American Psychiatric Association (2013) defined anxiety as associated with autonomic responses such as vague, uneasy feelings where individuals may deal with perceived threats and/or anticipates dangerous, chaotic events. Sieber et al. (2009) defined anxiety as a subjective perception of inexplicable fear and concern. Anxiety also is feelings of fear, uneasiness and uncertainty. It is usually accompanied with negative emotions, such as feeling uncomfortable or unhappy. Moreover, anxiety is a behavioral reaction of restlessness or helplessness. In summary, anxiety is a subjective feeling where individuals feel uncomfortable or nervous and may worry about something that might, or might not, happen in the future.

The feeling of anxiety has been categorized into four levels: mild, moderate, severe, and panic (Awuah-Peasah et al., 2013; Sieber et al., 2009). Heightened levels of anxiety during practical training not only affect the students' physical health, but also impede attention, decision-making and cognitive ability (Unal et al., 2012). Findings illustrated that high levels of anxiety negatively affect nursing students' clinical performance (Ganzer and Zauderer, 2013; Moscaritolo, 2009). Taking these things into consideration, one aim of clinical lectures could be facilitating nursing students to reduce their anxiety during their clinical practicum.

In Taiwan, the Fundamental Nursing practicum is the initial skills learning experience for nursing students and some may be prone to becoming anxious. Yang and Hsu (1993) used a quantitative study to investigate factors relating to anxiety in 44 nursing student during their initial clinical practice. Results demonstrated that the factors that contributed to their anxiety included; their lack of expertise, fear of making mistakes, first time application of their nursing skills together with the changing condition of patients, communicating with patients, families and healthcare professionals coupled with how they perceived preceptors' attitudes.

Some studies explored if intervention strategies decreased student nurses' anxiety during their clinical practicum. Moscaritolo (2009) reported three successful strategies that could be used to decrease student anxiety. The first strategy is humor which promote several benefits, such as having a lighthearted attitude to learning, making learning fun, facilitating learning and fostering clinical lecturers and students' relationships. The second strategy is the use of peer instructors and mentors who could help students identify the need for skill remediation and facilitate students to advance their skills and performance by practicing in a setting such as a clinical skills laboratory and giving them support. The third strategy is mindfulness training, which is based on fostering self-awareness and living in the here-and-now thus enabling students focus on the job-at-hand. Later, Ganzer and Zauderer (2013) found two strategies that helped decrease anxiety. First is structured learning, which helped novice nursing students to feel comfortable and become familiar with the clinical practicum the outcome of which was that students increased their skills learning and developed confidence. Secondly, self-reflection and reflective practice, which enabled students to

better understand their anxiety and gain self-awareness, which helped them to modify their skill behaviors and enhance problem-solving. In addition, Khalaila (2014) reported that simulation of a real-life event is a useful learning strategy and nurse educators could design different simulation methods (such as clinical scenarios, role plays, case studies) to reduce students' anxiety during their first clinical practicum.

Some students that experience prolonged negative emotional reactions develop ineffective coping mechanisms to help them deal with emotions such as insecurity, helplessness and a sense of powerlessness (Unal et al., 2012). These factors impact the success of the student's clinical performance. It seems reasonable to try to understand nursing students' levels of anxiety during the initial practicum and discover their coping strategies. However, to date, it has been atypical to explore nursing students' anxiety experiences during the initial clinical practicum in Taiwan. Therefore, the aim of this study was to explore the anxiety experiences of baccalaureate nursing students during the Fundamental Nursing practicum.

Methods

Design

Phenomenology is a research method and it is a way of returning to, experiencing and exploring the reality of life and living (Tuohy et al., 2013). A phenomenological study aims to understand the 'life-world' or 'lived experience' of human-beings in the context of their world. It is particularly relevant when trying to understand the learning process (Dupin et al., 2015; Patton, 1990; Tuohy et al., 2013). In this study, the purpose was to explore the lived experiences of anxiety among undergraduate nursing students during the initial Fundamental Nursing practicum and endeavor to understand how anxiety impacted on their practicum learning processes. Thus, a qualitative phenomenological approach was considered being the most appropriate to use in this study.

Participants

A purposive sampling was used because it would provide rich information data (Patton, 1990). Participants were undergraduate nursing students at a university in Southern Taiwan. The inclusion criteria included the age of the nursing students had to be at least 20 years old and had completed the Fundamental Nursing practicum. Furthermore, nursing students had to have experienced physiological and psychological reactions around their anxiety experience during the Foundational Nursing practicum. The exclusion criterion was students who did not complete the Fundamental Nursing practicum.

Data Collection

Data were collected using a semi-structured interview from September to December 2013 following completion of the practicum. The interview guideline included the students' overall experience, anxiety reactions experienced, daily difficulties, and coping mechanisms. The researcher arranged three informal interviews before the formal interview to establish a trusting relationship with the participants. Each participant accepted a one-time formal interview lasting about 45–60 min on campus. Data reached saturation after interviewing 15 nursing students.

Ethical Considerations

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained from one university (No: ISU-IRB-102-005). The consent letter was signed by the participants before the interview. However, the participants could

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/367996>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/367996>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)