Student and Faculty Perceptions of Civility in a Baccalaureate Nursing Program

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Background: Incivility is a current issue in nursing education. The literature supports nursing programs are struggling with civility and student-faculty relationships. These struggling student-faculty relationships influence the culture of the nursing program and the learning environment (Clark, Nguyen, & Barbosa-Leiker, 2014; Clark, Barbosa-Leiker, Gill, & Nguyen, 2015; Clark, 2017; Jenkins, Kerber, & Woith, 2013). Often, student views of uncivil behaviors differ from faculty views. This incongruency contributes to the problem of incivility. Holtz, Rawl, & Draucker (2018) examined student perspectives of incivility and identified faculty behaviors in which students associated with incivility. Findings indicated students believe faculty behaviors representing incivility include judging or labeling, impeding student progress, picking on students, putting students on the spot, withholding instruction, and forcing students into no-win situations. Clark (2011) developed a survey, the Incivility in Nursing Education (INE) Survey to examine student and faculty views regarding uncivil behaviors. The survey results identified behaviors of incivility from student and faculty perspectives. Clark (2015) revised the instrument (INE-R) and conducted further psychometric testing to confirm the validity and reliability of the revised instrument.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of civility in an undergraduate nursing program. Exploring student and faculty views of civil and uncivil behaviors will assist faculty in communicating and interacting with students. Awareness and understanding of perceptions specific to this program will assist faculty to create a more civil culture and productive learning environment. Research questions for this study were:

RQ1: How do student and faculty views regarding uncivil behaviors differ?

RQ2: How are student and faculty views regarding uncivil behaviors similar?

Methods: This mixed methods study utilized The Incivility in Nursing Education-Revised (INE-R) instrument. The INE-R has established reliability and validity. The instrument includes 48 questions for response on a Likert-like scale and four open-ended questions. Participants were asked to rate their perception of behaviors as civil or uncivil, and to respond to the open-ended questions regarding their opinion about potential factors that contribute to a civil academic environment and ways to address incivility. The survey was administered electronically via Qualtrics, an online survey software. IRB approval was obtained.

Participants: Participants were students and faculty of an undergraduate baccalaureate-nursing program. An invitation for participation with informed consent was sent via e-mail. Participation in the study was voluntary for students and faculty. No personal identifying information was included in the demographic data component for students. The only identifier for faculty was that they are in the faculty role.

Data Analysis: After composite scores were calculated, a t-test was used to determine differences between groups on composite scores. Chi square was used to determine differences in subscale scores of low-level incivility factors and high-level incivility factors.

Results: Student and faculty views are statistically significantly different (p = .02, alpha = .05) in what they consider high-level uncivil student behaviors. Students and faculty have no statistically significant difference in their views of low-level uncivil student behaviors. Students and faculty have no statistically significant difference in their views of high-level uncivil faculty behaviors. Students and faculty have no statistically significant difference in their views of low-level uncivil faculty behaviors.
Discussion: Although students and faculty generally agree on student and faculty behaviors that
demonstrate low-levels of incivility, there is a significant difference in student vs. faculty views of what
student behaviors demonstrate high levels of incivility. Student behaviors defined as high-level uncivil
behaviors on the INE-R includes cheating on exams, demanding a passing grade, sending rude e-mails,
making discriminating comments, using profanity, threats of physical harm, property damage, and
threatening statements about weapons. Findings from this study indicate that students consider these
behaviors significantly less uncivil compared to faculty. Careful review of the data indicates that up to
one-third of students do not consider these behaviors uncivil.

Recommendations: Early in the educational process, there is a need to transmit to the students the
cultural values and beliefs regarding civility held by the faculty. By educating the students about faculty
expectations, the students will be better equipped to fully engage in the educational process in a mutually
agreed upon collegial manner. In addition, expectations regarding civility should be reinforced throughout
the nursing curriculum. Developing professional values and behaviors is an important step in the nursing
student’s journey towards professional nursing practice.

Conclusion: Awareness and understanding of similarities and differences in student and faculty views of
uncivil behavior assists faculty and academic leaders to take steps to develop shared language,
professional behaviors and expectations, and create a civil culture, which will contribute to a positive
learning environment.

References:


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Keywords:
Civility, Nursing Education and Student-Faculty Relationships

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**Conclusion:** Awareness and understanding of similarities and differences in student and faculty views of uncivil behavior assists faculty and academic leaders to take steps to develop shared language, professional behaviors and expectations, and create a civil culture, which will contribute to a positive learning environment.

**References:**


**Abstract Summary:**
Civility and student-faculty relationships influence the culture of the nursing program and the learning environment. The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of civility in a Baccalaureate nursing program. Findings indicated student and faculty views are statistically significantly different in what they consider high-level uncivil student behaviors.

**Content Outline:**
Background of incivility in nursing education

- Incivility in nursing education
- Instrument reliability and validity

Purpose of study
The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of civility in a Baccalaureate nursing program.

Methods

- Mixed methods study utilizing the Incivility in Nursing Education-Revised (INE-R) Instrument.
- Participants - students and faculty in a Baccalaureate nursing program
- IRB approval obtained

Findings

- Data analysis
- Quantitative findings

Discussion

Recommendations

Conclusion

First Primary Presenting Author

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**Professional Experience:** Twenty-seven years of nursing experience; 12 years as an academic nurse educator. Teaching experience in undergraduate & graduate nursing courses, including classroom and clinical. Courses taught include: Community/Public Health Nursing, Global Health Perspectives, Contemporary Issues in Healthcare, Teaching Strategies, and Curriculum Development. Currently working with student-faculty council in the College of Nursing to facilitate opportunities for student/faculty interaction outside of class/clinical to facilitate relationship building.

**Author Summary:** Dr. Booth has twenty-seven years of nursing experience, 12 of which are in academic nursing education. She has taught undergraduate and graduate nursing courses. Dr. Booth holds a Bachelor of Science in Community Health from Texas A&M University, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, a Master of Science in Education from Baylor University, and a Doctorate of Education in Nursing Education Leadership from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.