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Undergraduate Nursing Student Perceptions of Facilitators and Inhibitors of Clinical Learning With Q Methodology
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Purpose:
Prelicensure nursing students assume the clinical environment provided to them will be individualized, innovative, and supportive to meet their educational needs (Lienert-Brown, Taylor, Withington, & Lefebvre, 2018). The purpose of this study was to determine the facilitators and inhibitors to undergraduate nursing students' clinical learning in acute-care practice sites.

Methods:
Students were recruited via course email to participate in a Q methodology study on what facilitates and inhibits their clinical learning. Two 60-minute data collection sessions over two days were offered on each of the participating campus sites. Using a Q methodology mixed-methods design, quantitative measures of student's perceptions will be used to describe qualitative viewpoints. These participant profiles are correlated to each other to discover groups with common viewpoints (McKeown & Thomas, 2013). Students performed a rank order of their levels of agreement and disagreement on a -4 to +4 forced-distribution sorting sheet comprised of common statements about their clinical experiences that were gathered in open-ended class discussion. To protect confidentiality, no identifying information will appear on the data collection tool. Data will be analyzed using centroid factor extraction and varimax rotation with PQMethod for Windows Version 2.35 (GNU Public License). Data collection were facilitated by the principle investigator and/or a site coordinator with expertise in Q Methodology. Q methodology is a philosophical framework and set of techniques for conducting research focused on individuals' preferences (Hensel, 2016; McKeown & Thomas, 2013). Exposing students to Q methodology provides an opportunity to explore subjective attitudes and opinions (Akhtar-Danesh, 2017) for emerging themes from the data rather than resulting from the researcher's perspectives (Killam, Timmermans, & Raymond, 2013). Utilizing Q Methodology provided a more objective assessment of students' needs to optimize clinical learning.

Results:
This pilot study is vital to improving students' clinical learning and connecting clinical partners with the program outcomes. The evidence generated by this study informed participating nursing programs on what their students need to optimize clinical learning in the acute care setting with identified themes of coaching, trusting relationship, role model, and knowledge; and b) provided a foundation for study expansion to optimize clinical learning nationally in a time of workforce shortage which is consistent with the priorities for the National League for Nursing.

Conclusion:
The findings from this study suggest the relationship between clinical preceptor and student nurse can have a major impact on the student learning experience. The results provide insight into the viewpoints of the student and support the clinical preceptors to
improve their effectiveness which overall supports learning outcomes of nursing students.

Title:
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Keywords:
Clinical Learning, Q Methodology and Undergraduate Nursing

Abstract Summary:
The focus of this study was to determine the facilitators and inhibitors to undergraduate nursing students’ clinical learning in acute-care practice sites. The evidence generated helped to inform participating nursing programs on student identified needs to optimize clinical learning through a Q methodology mixed-methods design.

References:

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Author Summary: Dr. Opsahl has 29 years of experience as a registered nurse and is an Assistant Professor. She is currently serves as board member of Indiana Association for Healthcare Quality, Past-President. In her prior professional role, she was the Quality Data Manager for Franciscan St. Francis Health at the three area campus
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