

Faculty knowledge, attitudes and intent
to provide accommodation to nursing
students with disabilities:

Are faculty prepared to
meet the needs of diverse
populations?

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Case Study

- ❖ JT is a junior nursing student enrolled in her first medical surgical rotation.
- ❖ She sustained a concussion during a soccer game and later reported difficulty concentrating, studying and experiencing frequent headaches.
- ❖ She requested academic accommodations based on the documentation provided to the office of disability services



Should JT be given academic accommodations if her documentation supports this decision?

YES

NO





J.T requests extended time for exams,
copies of the PowerPoint and notes
from the class.

JT continues to play soccer during the
semester



Does JT returning to soccer alter her ability to receive academic accommodations?

YES

NO



How do you feel about JT returning to playing soccer while receiving academic accommodations?

- A. This is not a conflict
- B. If she can return to soccer she does not need accommodations
- C. This demonstrates poor judgment but does not affect the provision of accommodations



How long should JT receive academic accommodations?

- A. Until JT believes they are no longer necessary
- B. For as long as her documentation regarding the accommodation specifies.
- C. Until the end of the semester.



Significance

- ❖ The number of students who identify nursing as an intended major continues to increase as many states face nursing shortages and public media campaigns have promoted nursing as a career
- ❖ With increased enrollments, there is a potential for more students requesting accommodations
- ❖ Although nurse educators have received education in their clinical area of expertise, it is not known if they are knowledgeable about students with disabilities or the use and application of academic accommodations

Prior Research

Nurse researchers have provided a foundation for examining nursing students with disabilities; however, they have not examined the relationship between knowledge of disability-related legislation, faculty attitudes and intent to provide accommodations.

The Unique Role of the Nurse Educators

- ❖ Nurse educators have a unique opportunity to determine how students will receive accommodations in academic and clinical settings.
- ❖ These decisions must be based on empirical evidence and sound pedagogy.
- ❖ Little is known about the scope of disability-related knowledge of nursing educators.



Purpose

To investigate nurse educators'

- ✧ Knowledge of legal mandates relevant to nursing students with disabilities in higher education
- ✧ Knowledge about providing academic accommodation.
- ✧ Intent to provide accommodation
- ✧ Attitudes toward providing accommodation

Sample

- ❖ A convenience sample of nurse educators were recruited from the 34 colleges, departments or schools of nursing located in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- ❖ An email invitation was sent to 903 nursing faculty members.
- ❖ 231 agreed to participate in the study yielding a 26% response rate.



Instruments

- ❖ The Assessment of Faculty Knowledge of the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 Policies and Guidelines.
- ❖ Developed by Thompson and Bethea (1997).
- ❖ A Cronbach's coefficient alpha of 0.70 for internal consistency was obtained in this study



Instruments

- ❖ Assessment of Faculty Attitudes and Beliefs towards Accommodation for Students with Disabilities scales was utilized in this study.
- ❖ Developed by Bourque (2005)
- ❖ Cronbach's coefficient alpha of 0.67 for attitude and 0.68 for intent was obtained with this sample.



Data Analysis

- ❖ Bivariate statistical models were used to analyze the data.
- ❖ The assumptions including normality of sampling, mean distributions, outliers, linearity and homoscedasticity were tested.
- ❖ Knowledge data were collected to generate a score for each participant. Mean \pm SD were calculated and percentages correct for each question were noted.

Demographics

- ❖ 91.8% of respondents female and 6.9% male.
- ❖ Years of teaching experience ranged from 1 year to 42 years ($M = 14.5$, $SD 10.67$)
- ❖ 90% of faculty respondents reported working with nursing students with disabilities over the last three years.
- ❖ 53% of the respondents indicated that they had not received training from their institution regarding the provision of academic accommodations

Faculty title/rank and tenure

Rank	Percentage
❖ Instructor	32.1%
❖ Assistant professor	38.8
❖ Associate professor	21.0
❖ Professor	8.0

Tenure

❖ Tenured or tenure track	47.1
❖ Non tenured	52.9

RQ 1: What is nursing faculty members' level of knowledge of legislation related to students with disabilities

- ❖ *Assessment of Faculty Knowledge of the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 Policies and Guidelines.*
- ❖ 23-item scale mean was 14.53
($SD = 3.71, n = 211$).
- ❖ 21% of faculty respondents, answered 18 or more items correctly meeting the threshold to be considered knowledgeable by Dona and Edmister (2001)

Is there a relationship between nursing faculty members' level of knowledge of relevant disability legislation related to higher education and their self-reported intent to provide academic accommodations to students with disabilities?

- ❖ Assessment of Faculty Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Accommodation for Students with Disabilities.
- ❖ Intent subscale mean was 1.61, ($SD= 1.09$, $n = 219$).
- ❖ No statistically significant relationship was detected between knowledge and intent

Is there a relationship between nursing faculty members' level of knowledge about providing academic accommodations and their self-reported attitudes towards providing accommodations to students with disabilities?

- ❖ Attitude subscale mean was 1.25
($SD = 1.04, n = 225$).
- ❖ A small positive correlation was detected between level of knowledge and self-reported attitude toward providing accommodations
($r = .219, p = .001, n = 211$).

Is there a relationship between nursing faculty members' self-reported attitudes toward providing accommodations and their self-reported intent to provide these accommodations to students with disabilities ?

A moderate positive correlation was detected between faculty attitudes and intent to provide accommodations ($r = .378, p = .001, n = 219$).



Discussion

A small positive statistically significant correlation was detected between knowledge and attitude

A moderately positive correlation was detected between attitude and intent.

More years of teaching was associated with more positive attitudes.

Implications for Nursing Education

- ❖ Comprehensive assessment of faculty members' knowledge of disability-related legislation and provision of accommodations is needed for all faculty members
- ❖ Use of accommodations needs to be introduced as pedagogically sound and essential to students' success.
- ❖ Evidence-based best practices in teaching and learning are the foundation for development of effective strategies



Implications for Nursing Research

- ❖ Specific issues related to accommodation in the clinical setting versus the classroom setting.
- ❖ Validity of technical standards given the pervasive the culture of safety in clinical environments.
- ❖ The context of the social contact with people with disabilities



Implications for Nursing Research

- ❖ The manner in which people with disabilities are represented in the curriculum.
- ❖ Evidence-based professional development activities with the potential to better prepare faculty to identify their own learning needs related to students with disabilities



Resources

- ❖ **AHEAD** : Association on Higher Education and Disability:

<https://www.ahead.org>

- ❖ University of Connecticut Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability

<http://www.cped.uconn.edu/>

- ❖ Pennsylvania State University: Project Opportunity and Access

<http://www.ed.psu.edu/poa/poa.asp>

- ❖ National Organization of Nurses with Disabilities

<http://www.nond.org/>

