Teaching Test Taking Strategies: An Option or Ethical Requirement for Undergraduate Nursing Students?

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Title: Teaching Test Taking Strategies- An Option or Ethical Requirement for Undergraduate Nursing Students?

Purpose: In undergraduate nursing students, how does learning test-taking strategies affect the emotions and thoughts during the preparation and exams, and how they perceive tests?

Design: The qualitative design implemented was an intrinsic exploratory multiple case study.

Methodology: Purposeful sampling was utilized to identify student nurses who had graduated a Baccalaureate nursing program but had yet to successfully pass the NCLEX exam, after more than a single attempt. A semi-structured interview was held, audio-recorded, and transcribed. Systematic coding and analysis of the yielded data was then completed.

Major Findings: Before learning test-taking strategies, the students expressed they perceived tests to be designed to ensure students chose the “wrong answer”. They attributes this to the nursing programs not teaching test-taking strategies but providing test plans or study guides instead. They explains the emphasis was on content and subjects. As a result, the themes emerged of confusion, inability to focus, and test anxiety during nursing exams prior to learning test-taking strategies. As a result of test taking strategies, the students voiced they are better able to identify their strengths and weakness in nursing theory. They also expressed increased confidence, renewed determination, and decreased anxiety during preparation for and during test-taking. After learning test-taking strategies, they explains perceiving tests as measuring their competency as a registered nurse instead of ensuring she choose incorrect items. They conclude that test taking strategies should be taught “from the door” of a baccalaureate nursing program to ensure student test taking success.

Conclusion: These students describe their abilities without test-taking strategies as being set up to fail as the faculty focused more on “subjects” and “content”. Nurse faculty have an ethical responsibility to the public and their pupils, in the wake of nursing shortage, to ensure that students are taught test-taking strategies so they can successfully take formative tests throughout their nursing edification and , cumulatively, by ensuring students have the ability to pass the NCLEX-RN. By upholding this responsibility the ethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice and the ethical theories of deontology, utilitarianism, casuist, rights, and virtue are fulfilled by nursing academia.

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Keywords:
ethics, nursing tests and test-taking
References:


Abstract Summary:

When a student takes a test, it is an expectation of the nurse faculty that the student will uphold ethical standards. The student is not allowed to cheat or plagiarize. However, what standards must the nurse professor uphold when administering a test? This presentation will share the findings of a case study of a nursing student who has yet to pass the NCLEX exam. It will explore her unique perception of nursing exams before and after taking a test-taking strategy course post-graduation. The research question that will be discussed is: In a nursing student, how does learning test-taking strategies affect the emotions and thoughts before, during, and after exams, and how she perceives tests? Be prepared to explore the perspective of the nursing student and the viewpoint they often may not share with their professors. The participant will explain how a test-taking strategy course affected her perception of tests and how to approach them. Is it an ethical responsibility of nursing faculty to prepare students to take tests? Anticipate a comprehensive exploration of the ethical principles the nurse faculty must uphold in the administration of tests.

Learning Activity:

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<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss ethical and unethical test administration practices.</td>
<td>A. Ethical Standards to Test Administration i. Tests should give an accurate picture of students’ knowledge and skills in the subject area or domain being tested. B. Unethical Testing Practices C. Ethical Test Practices</td>
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<td>Explain the code of ethics of nurse educators.</td>
<td>D. A Code of Ethics for Nurse Educators (2010) i. As nurse educators, we must stand up to the following ethical standards: ii. Assumes responsibility and accountability for personal action and for maintaining competence in the practice of nursing education iii. Have an obligation to function as an advocate for students, as well as for patients, the greater community, and for the discipline iv. As nurse educators, we must stand up to the following ethical standards: v. Strive to promote academic and professional values, including critical thinking, effective decision making, caring and respect, and excellence in education research and practice vi. Facilitates and guides the learning of students in order to ensure quality nursing education and to</td>
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<td>Understand the ethical responsibility regarding test preparation of nurse educators to undergraduate nursing students.</td>
<td>As educators, we must uphold our ethical responsibility to provide..... i. Distributive justice ii. Procedural justice iii. Beneficence and Non-Maleficence</td>
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<td>Illustrate the importance of providing test-taking strategies to undergraduate nursing students.</td>
<td>E. Is Providing a Student Test-Taking Strategies All that Important? i. Giving a student a test without instructing them on test-taking strategies is like....</td>
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<td>Recount the case studies of 3 undergraduate students who did pass the NCLEX-RN on the first attempt regarding test taking strategies and perceptions of tests.</td>
<td>F. Case Study Research Question: In graduate nursing students who did not pass the NCLEX-RN on their initial attempt, how did learning test-taking strategies post-graduation/initial testing affect the emotions and thoughts before, during, and after exams, and how they perceive tests? i. Test-Taking Strategies during Undergraduate Career ii. When taking test previously to learning test taking strategy what emotions and thoughts would arise? iii. Side effects of test taking strategy iv. Advantages and disadvantages of test taking strategy v. Post-Test Taking Strategy Course Perception of Tests vi. When would you find a test taking strategy course to be most valuable during the education of a nurse?</td>
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