

Using Photo Journaling to Develop Affective Outcomes in Nursing Education

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Background

Ways of knowing may be approached from various epistemological paradigms. Where the realist may define knowing as a cognitive function, the non-realist will expand ways of knowing to include the affective components of feelings and socially constructed meanings (Garrett & Cutting, 2015). To develop and utilize strategies and methods that cultivate feelings and give meaning to experiences of nursing students which enhance affective learning has been difficult in nursing curriculums that necessitate large amounts of cognitive knowledge. Photo journaling provides faculty an opportunity to bridge cognitive aspects of learning in diverse clinical settings with affective development of self awareness.

Using this teaching strategy, students are guided through a process of self awareness as they visually capture the disconnect between socially constructed meanings of healthy environments and challenges encounter during a study abroad experience in Nicaragua.



Objectives

Affective objectives focusing on the use of photo journaling as an instructional method during the nursing student's study abroad included:

Students will:

- ~ Identify feelings related to a study abroad clinical experience
- ~ Develop self awareness as an adjunct to learning
- ~ Implement affective learning in a different cultural setting



Activity Description

Eighteen nursing students were given a photo journal assignment as part of a service learning study abroad experience in Nicaragua. Each day of the ten-day trip, students were provided a journaling prompt requiring them to take a photograph and write about their chosen picture. Two weeks after returning from the trip, students presented their completed photo journals. Focus groups were utilized to explore the student's experiences and the effectiveness of photo journaling on their affective learning.

Examples of photo journaling prompts:

- ~ Day 3: Submit a picture of something that surprises you and title it. Write and reflect on what you learned about yourself today.
- ~ Day 6: Submit a picture that reminds you of your family and your own community and title it. Write and reflect on what is at stake for these patients, their families, and their community.
- ~ Day 10: Submit a picture that reflects how you are feeling and title it. Write and reflect on *any changes in attitude or perspective* as a result of the trip and how it might impact your professional practice.

Outcome Evaluation

A general script for focus groups was developed for the purpose of eliciting information from the students on photo journaling as an instructional method to increase affective learning, increasing student awareness of their personal feelings, attitudes, and values.

Three faculty members each led a focus group comprised of 6 students. Recordings of the focus groups were reviewed and summarized individually by each of the faculty. General patterns and themes that reflected affective learning were identified and consensus of findings occurred between these faculty.

The following patterns emerged related to the effectiveness of photo journaling in supporting affective learning.

- Pictures gave me more to reflect on
- Helped me explore how I felt
- Provided memories of feelings
- Caused me to open up and share
- Made me think a little deeper
- Identified difficult feelings
- Helped recognize differences (culture, social expectations of people, etc.)

Impact

Students produced meaningful photographs during clinical experiences that were combined with journaling. This helped develop personal awareness as students came to know more about themselves and the practice of nursing.

Required Resources

- ~ Personal cell phones
- ~ Personal computers
- ~ Software of choice to create photo journal (Power Point, etc.)



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References

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- Ondrejka, D. (2014). *Affective Teaching in Nursing: Connecting to feelings, values, and inner awareness*. New York, NY: Springer.