

Original Research Article

Evaluation of Nursing Students' Perceptions about Learning Environment

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Abstract

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The objective of this study is to evaluate the students' perceptions about educational environment. Education is a process of learning or of acquiring knowledge, skills, principles, beliefs and habits. The educational environment is necessary for students to achieve desired learning outcomes most likely. Evaluation of learning environment in a professional school promotes quality improvement and creativity. Educational environment is a platform in which the learner learns within the organization and gain knowledge. A quantitative descriptive cross sectional design used in this study. Total population size of BSN and Post-RN BS Nursing students was 200 and 110 population was under study. An adopted Dundee Ready Educational Environment Measurements (DREEM) questionnaire was used for data collection. The data was analysis by SPSS version 21. Statistical computer software for data analysis. The descriptive study statistics was obtained through SPSS software. The results indicating overall mean score for DREEM is 126.97 out of 200 with standard deviation of 43.703 and overall 62.3 % which means students think more positive and feel good overall about their learning environment. The male students score 130.72 was higher than female 126.05 ($p < 0.05$). The educational environment is necessary for students to achieve desired learning outcomes most likely. The total mean score was 126.97/200 for the nursing students which indicating that students have more positive perceptions about their learning environment.

Keywords: Perception, Learning environment, Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Education is a process of learning or of acquiring knowledge, skills, principles, beliefs and habits (Bailey, 2018). It is a conscious and thoughtful effort to create an environment of education and learning in order to better cultivate the capacity for learner to have the spiritual strength of faith, discipline, temperament, moral character which require for them and society as a whole (Quay et al., 2018).

Education is affected significantly by the current

educational environment and system which fosters the understanding and acquisition of knowledge. The education environment is refers to the various surroundings, backgrounds, cultures and settings where students learning starts (Shah et al., 2019).

The educational environment is necessary for students to achieve desired learning outcomes most likely (Fatima et al., 2019).

The competence level of the students in their learning

institution represents their educational environment. Evaluation of learning environment in a professional school promotes quality improvement and creativity (Jnaneswar et al., 2016).

Educational environment is a platform in which the learner learns within the organization and gain knowledge (Shaheen et al., 2019).

A study found that using a blended learning approach or hybrid method study would lead nursing students to improve professional skills and excellence in education (Afzal et al., 2019).

Medical education climate assessment systematically measures what's going on or how things are. It is a way to evaluate the nature of the school's educational practice. It also offers a thorough, inclusive, systematic and detailed picture of the overall situation in the education process (Gilani et al., 2016).

Positive understanding of the learning environment means students are going to learn good implementations and accomplish their learning outcomes. There are many factors that affect students' perceptions such as social, cultural, economic and past experiences (Irum et al., 2018).

Students with respect for good results should provide feedback. Methods of teaching should be more clinically oriented and interactive. During didactic seminars, the use of black-board and power point should be encouraged (Fajar et al., 2019).

Assessment of the influence of the learning environment on academic success of students and satisfaction with the current learning environment and experiences. Since the educational environment has a strong impact on the achievements, satisfaction and success of students, it is important to collect feedback from students about their learning environment experience (Ahmed et al., 2018).

The environment of the medical school is often modest and sometimes hostile. Working thoroughly with the teachers both positive and negative role models influence on the students (Veerapen and McAleer, 2010).

Several studies of medical students have found a link between education and environment (Bierer and Dannefer, 2016). Positive perceptions of the students about learning environment related to good psychological domain and quality of life (Enns et al., 2016).

Question of the Research

What are the nursing students' perceptions about learning environment?

Significance

The main focus of my study is primarily based on nursing students. Learning environment is an important topic that every student and teacher should know about because these are issues that take place in every institution. Current study will evaluate the nursing students' perception about learning environment as it play an important role in student success. The finding of this study would facilitate students to have an understanding about their learning environment. It will open the door for HOD (Head of Department) to hold seminars and workshops to improve teaching strategies so, students will be benefited regarding learning environment.

Research Objective

The objective of this study was to evaluate the students' perceptions about educational environment.

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

Study design

The design of this study was quantitative descriptive cross sectional which was used to evaluate nursing students' perception about learning environment.

Study Site

This study was conducted in the University of Lahore.

Setting of the Study

The study was conducted at Lahore school of Nursing, The University of Lahore.

Study population

The study population was nursing students. Nursing students of BSN and Post-RN BS Nursing were population of this research study. Total population size of BSN and Post-RN BS Nursing students was 200 and 110 population was under study.

Sampling Method

A convenient sampling method was used for this study. It is the easiest and the most convenient method of engaging the sources of the primary data for research.

Data Collection Plan

An adopted Dundee Ready Educational Environment Measurements (DREEM) questionnaire was used for data collection on Likert scale to evaluate nursing students' perception about learning environment. The questionnaire was distributed among nursing students of University Of Lahore.

Research tool

An adopted 50-item DREEM (Dundee Ready Educational Environment Measurements) questionnaire was used in this study which is developed at the University of Dundee in 1997 (Roff et al., 1997). It has been universally verified in, Africa, , Australia, Asia, Europe and America (Roff et al., 2001).

Data Analysis

The data was analysis by SPSS version 21. Statistical computer software for data analysis. The descriptive study statistics was obtained through SPSS software.

Ethical consideration

Consents was taken from all the participants and a free hand was given to the participants to take part in the study or refused to participate. The participants were provided enough information of research with help of full consent. Confidentiality was considered by informing participants. The right of participants was protected.

RESULTS

In table 1 there is a demographic frequency of the participants. 19 (17.3%) of the participants were male and 91 (82.7) were female. The (72.7%) n=80 of respondents were from BSN Post-RN and (27.3%) n=30 respondents were from BSN. The majority of the participants were between the age of 18 and 22 (59.1%)

n=65. The second highest proportion 26.4% of age of the participants was 22- 26. 13.6 % (n=15) of the respondents were at the age of 26-30 and 0.9 % (n=1) of respondents were at the age of 30 and above. 76.4 % (n=84) of the participants were unmarried and 23.6 % (n=26) were married. 27.3 % (n=30) of BSN students and 72.7% (n=80) of BSN Post-RN students participated in this study.

Table 2 shows the descriptive analysis of individual items in accordance with subscale given in appendix 1 (Subscale for Interpretation given by McAleer and Roff). The result of this study shows that students of Lahore school of Nursing believe that cheating is problem in this school (1.85) which indicating by interpretation of subscale scoring for SPoA that atmosphere is terrible there is problem in atmosphere which need to be change, last year's work has been a good preparation for this year's work (1.95) this shows that students feel about failure so, this is need to take action to enhance students positive thinking regarding their academic perceptions. There are items which show high mean score showing that students are clear about the learning objectives of the course (3.27) which indicates very poor perceptions about learning, teachers are good at providing feedback to students (3.08) revealing it is extremely bad, teachers give clear examples (3.29) this score shows that students are not providing clear examples, atmosphere is relaxed during lectures (3.11), students feel comfortable in class socially (3.04), they feel able to ask the questions (3.06), and there is a good support system for students who get stressed (3.05).

Table 3 shows the overall mean and percentages of 110 nursing students in reference to interpretation guide of subscale. In this table the results indicating overall mean score for DREEM is 126.97 out of 200 with standard deviation of 43.703 and overall 62.3 % which means students think more positive and feel good overall about their learning environment. The mean score of "students' perception of learning" was 31.62 out of 48 (65.8%) indicated a more positive thinking, "Students' perception of teachers" was 29.71 out of 44 max score (67.5%) indicated students moving in right way or direction, "Students' academic self-perception" was 16.42 out of 32 (51.31%) indicated that student feel more on positive side, "Students' perceptions of atmosphere" was 32.91 out of 48 (68.5%) indicated that highest good feeling overall and overall mean score for "Students' social self- perception" was 16.31 out 28 (58.3%) indicated that not too bad perceptions and thinking about social.

Table 4 revealed overall mean score for females and males separately. The male score were higher than female students. There was not a prominent difference between male and female perceptions. The total mean

Table 1. Demographic data of the BSN and BSN Post-RN Students

Demographic data		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	19	17.3
	Female	91	82.7
Age group	18-22	65	59.1
	22-26	29	26.4
	26-30	15	13.6
	30 and above	1	0.9
Marital status	Married	26	23.6
	Unmarried	84	76.4
Academic program	BSN	80	72.7
	BSN Post-RN	30	27.3
Academic year	1 st year	27	24.5
	2 nd year	53	48.2
	3 rd year	18	16.4
	4 th year	12	10.9
Semester	2 nd	27	24.5
	3 rd	30	27.3
	4 th	23	20.9
	6 th	18	16.4
	8 th	12	10.9

Table 2. Analysis of individual items by subscales

Students' perception of learning (SPoL)	Mean	S.D
1. I am encouraged to participate during teaching sessions	2.83	1.012
2. The teaching is often stimulating	2.78	.980
3. The teaching is student-centered	2.90	1.022
4. The teaching helps to develop my competence	2.64	0.974
5. The teaching is well-focused	2.42	0.817
6. The teaching helps to develop my confidence	2.35	0.861
7. The teaching time is put to good use	2.35	0.749
8. The teaching over-emphasizes factual learning	2.40	0.792
9. I'm clear about the learning objectives of the course	3.27	1.241
10. The teaching encourages me to be an active learner	2.64	1.064
11. Long-term learning is emphasized over short-term learning	2.55	1.028
12. The teaching is too teacher-centered	2.49	0.965
Total mean score	31.62	Max subscale score
48		
Students' perception of teachers (SPoT)		
13. The teachers are knowledgeable	2.45	0.842
14. The teachers adopt a patient-centered approach to consulting	2.55	0.842
15. The teachers ridicule the students	2.53	0.738
16. The teachers are authoritarian	2.39	0.755
17. The teachers have good communication skills with patients	2.63	0.956
18. The teachers are good at providing feedback to students	3.08	1.150
19. The teachers provide constructive criticism here	2.77	0.853
20. The teachers give clear examples	3.29	1.078
21. The teachers get angry in teaching	2.76	1.157
22. The teachers are well-prepared for their teaching sessions	2.77	1.155
23. The students irritate the teachers	2.49	1.073
Total mean score	29.71	Max subscale score
44		
Students' academic self-perception (SASP)		
24. Learning strategies that worked for me before continue to work for me now	2.25	0.706
25. I am confident about my passing this year	2.07	0.483
26. I feel I am being well prepared for my profession	2.01	0.479

Table 2. Continue

27. Last year's work has been a good preparation for this year's work	1.95	0.446
28. I am able to memorize all I need	2.00	0.469
29. I have learnt a lot about empathy in my profession	2.02	0.488
30. My problem-solving skills are being well developed here	2.05	0.626
31. Much of what I have to learn seems relevant to a career in healthcare	2.07	0.554
Total mean score	16.42	Max subscale score
		32
Students' perceptions of atmosphere (SPoA)		
32. The atmosphere is relaxed during ward teaching	2.87	1.150
33. This school is well time-tabled	2.12	0.586
34. Cheating is a problem in this school	1.85	0.764
35. The atmosphere is relaxed during lectures	3.11	1.152
36. There are opportunities for me to develop my interpersonal skills	2.97	1.079
37. I feel comfortable in class socially	3.04	1.100
38. The atmosphere is relaxed during class/seminars/tutorials	2.93	1.081
39. I find the experience disappointing	2.83	1.140
40. I am able to concentrate well	2.73	1.074
41. The enjoyment outweighs the stress of the course	2.68	1.083
42. The atmosphere motivates me as a learner	2.72	1.059
43. I feel able to ask the questions I want	3.06	1.094
Total mean score	32.91	Max subscale score
		48
Students' social self-perception (SSSP)		
44. There is a good support system for students who get stressed	3.05	1.053
45. I am too tired to enjoy the course	2.43	0.851
46. I am rarely bored in this course	2.42	0.892
47. I have good friends in this course	2.11	0.580
48. My social life is good	2.04	0.487
49. I seldom feel lonely	2.09	0.567
50. My accommodation is pleasant	2.17	0.556
Total mean score	16.31	Max subscale score
		28

Table 3. Global and overall mean score from 110 students

DREEM domain	Maximum score	Mean+S.D	Perception percentage
Students' perception of learning (SPoL)	48	31.62±11.505	65.8%
Students' perception of teachers (SpoT)	44	29.71±10.599	67.5%
Students' academic self-perception (SASP)	32	16.42±4.251	51.31%
Students' perceptions of atmosphere (SpoA)	48	32.91±12.362	68.5%
Students' social self-perception (SSSP)	28	16.31±4.986	58.3%
Global DREEM score	200	126.97±43.703	62.3%

DREEM (Dundee Ready Educational Environment Measure)

Table 4. Global and overall mean score regarding gender

	Max subscale score	Males (n=19) Mean±S.D	Females (n=91) Mean±S.D	Perception percentage	
				Male	Female
Students' perception of learning (SPoL)	48	31.78±10.335	31.62±11.729	66.2%	65.8%
Students' perception of teachers (SPoT)	44	31.04±11.667	29.38±10.376	70.5%	66.8%
Students' academic self-perception (SASP)	32	17.16±4.467	16.25±4.156	53.6%	50.8%
Students' perceptions of atmosphere (SPoA)	48	34.52±12.773	32.47±12.472	71.9%	67.6%
Students' social self-perception (SSSP)	28	16.22±5.631	16.33±4.748	57.9%	58.3%
Global DREEM score	200	130.72±44.873	126.05±43.481	64.02%	61.9%

score for male was 130.72±44.873 and for female was 126.05±43.481. The percentage of perception of male was 64.02% and female was 61.9%.

Perceptions of students in relation to CGPAs

All the 110 students are divided into three categories according to their CGPAs. Students gaining greater than 3.5 CGPA named as High achiever, between 3.0 and 3.5 named as Medium achiever and gaining CGPA less than 3.0 named as Low achiever (Sumera et al., 2015).

In this study 7/110 (6.4%) were higher achievers, 46/110 (41.8%) were medium achievers and 57/110 (51.8%) were low achievers. But there was no significant difference in their perceptions with different CGPAs.

DISCUSSION

Ugusman et al. (2015) conducted a study which specified that the perception of medical students regarding educational atmosphere was more positive. The results showed the scores of the students were 33.04/48, 29.68/44, 22.16/32, 33.11/48 and 17.62/28. The learning or educational environment which need a change in future have also been identified.

A study suggested that self-perceptions of the students about social were good and positive which lower two contributory subscales. Perception about physical environment (63%) and perceptions about social (63.5%), was no more different from other three DREEM (Dundee Ready Educational Environment Measurements) factors. It was clear that they had reached higher levels of intelligence because the highest scoring contributory area

was educational self-perception (72.5%) (Odole et al., 2014).

Nosair et al. (2015) conducted a study which showed that the overall score was 113.4/200 (56.7%). Students of first year reported a higher overall significant level of perceptions (119.4/200) than students of second-year (107.4/200) and third-year students (112.7/200), which concluded that students of first-year considered their learning, academic and teaching environment to be more important than other students.

The percentage score for learning perception (47.26±14.85) that was substantially lower than for teachers (52.28±9.91; $P<0.001$), academic self-perception was (52.14±15.21; $P<0.001$), atmospheric perception was (51.21±13.60; $P=0.001$) and social self-perception was (50.63±13.90; $P=0.010$).which concluded that this institution needs change across all fields of the educational environment (Kohli and Dhaliwal, 2013).

Learning environment has an important role to play in assessing the academic achievement and learning of students. There were 20.5/32 (64.11 percent) and 15.7/28 (56.36 percent), respectively, educational and social self-perceptions. The results suggest that medical science students generally have positive views of their learning environment, which revealed that it is necessary for course managers and teachers to make greater struggles to observe the concepts of instructional design to establish a suitable educational environment (Bakhshialiabad et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION

The education environment is refers to the various surroundings, backgrounds, cultures and settings where

students learning starts. The educational environment is necessary for students to achieve desired learning outcomes most likely. The total mean score was 126.97/200 for the nursing students which indicating that students have more positive perceptions about their learning environment. The male students score 130.72 was higher than female 126.05 ($p < 0.05$). There was no prominent relation of students' CGPAs and their perceptions about learning environment.

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