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RESEARCH ARTICLE

BEDSIDE LEARNING: VITAL FOR NURSING EDUCATION - CREATING COMPETENT, EMPATHETIC HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

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Abstract

This comprehensive review explores the vital role of bedside learning in nursing education, focusing on its impact on clinical skill development and empathy among students. By bridging theoretical knowledge with practical application, bedside teaching allows nursing students to apply classroom concepts directly to patient care, enhancing understanding and retention. The review highlights evidence-based practice (EBP) teaching strategies and emphasizes the need for improved interactive and clinically integrated approaches. It cultivates empathy and compassion as students interact with patients personally, witnessing their struggles and hopes. Furthermore, bedside learning enhances communication skills, enabling students to establish meaningful connections with patients and healthcare teams. Finally, this method promotes critical thinking by challenging students to analyze patient cases and make informed decisions.

Conclusion: In conclusion, research highlights the pivotal role of bedside teaching in clinical education, especially in nursing. Hands-on experiences and patient interactions are essential for developing clinical reasoning skills, fostering patient-centered care, and nurturing professional growth.

Conflict of Interest: There is no conflict of interest.

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Introduction:-

In this research article, we emphasize the vital role of bedside learning in nursing education, promoting the development of clinical skills and empathy in students. While classroom knowledge is essential, bedside learning enables direct application in real patient scenarios, enhancing understanding of healthcare delivery. As qualitative researchers, we investigate students' views on bedside teaching, identify barriers, and suggest improvement strategies. We also advocate for Case-Based Learning in health professional training and standardized teaching methods for Evidence-Based Practice in European nursing programs. Our research highlights the impact of expert-patient teaching on empathy development, emphasizing empathy's significance in healthcare. Through transparency and reflection, we contribute to advancing nursing education and improving patient care.

Bedside teaching (BST) constitutes a foundational element of clinical training, playing a vital role in shaping competent physicians. Sir William Osler (1849-1919), a renowned Canadian physician, introduced BST to medical education in 1892. He advocated that contemporary medical instruction should occur beside the patient rather than solely within the classroom, famously stating, "Medicine is acquired at the patient's bedside, not in the lecture hall."

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BST facilitates direct interaction between the physician and patient at the bedside. This interaction process concurrently provides medical students and residents with the opportunity to acquire clinical skills, develop clinical reasoning, enhance physician-patient communication, foster empathy, and instill professionalism.^[1]

A qualitative study aimed to explore medical students' perception of bedside teaching and identify barriers hindering its effective implementation at the Faculty of Medicine, Northern Border University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Through audio-recorded focus group discussions with 75 fourth and fifth-year MBBS students, key themes were extracted using thematic analysis. The results revealed that students recognized the value of bedside teaching for acquiring essential clinical skills, but identified challenges including limited patient availability and faculty attitudes. To overcome these barriers, the students proposed strategies such as raising public awareness of the significance of students' learning, providing free medical treatment for expatriates, and establishing a university hospital. These insights can inform the development of effective bedside teaching programs in medical education.^[2]

This review aimed to explore, analyze, and synthesize the evidence regarding the effectiveness of Case-Based Learning (CBL) in achieving defined learning outcomes in health professional prequalification training programs. The review focused on CBL in medicine, dentistry, nursing, veterinary science, social care, and allied health professions. A thorough search of relevant databases yielded 104 papers meeting the inclusion criteria. The analysis revealed a wide diversity in CBL interventions, including variations in timing, group sizes, and student participation. Despite this diversity, the review provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of CBL as a teaching method for health professional training, encouraging further discussion and research on its impact on learning outcomes.^[3]

EBP: Theoretical Knowledge&Practical Application:

Bedside learning offers nursing students an unparalleled opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge acquired in classrooms directly to patient care. By witnessing medical conditions and treatment plans in real-time, students gain practical insights into the complexities of healthcare delivery. This hands-on approach enhances their understanding and retention of vital nursing concepts.

The literature review examines the current state of evidence-based practice (EBP) teaching strategies in undergraduate nursing education, with a focus on interactive and clinically integrated approaches. The study identifies four main teaching strategy themes: interactive teaching strategies, interactive and clinically integrated teaching strategies, learning outcomes, and barriers. While interactive teaching strategies were found to be commonly used, the primary focus often centered on searching for and critically appraising research rather than applying EBP principles in practice. Reported learning outcomes included improved analytical and critical skills and the utilization of research for patient safety. Identified barriers included challenging collaborations, limited awareness of EBP principles, and poor information literacy skills. The review underscores the need for further qualitative research to explore and enhance interactive and clinically integrated teaching strategies to better equip undergraduate nursing students with EBP knowledge and skills.^[4]

A descriptive study explored the presence and characteristics of Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) courses in nursing programs across six European countries. Conducted as part of the EBP e-Toolkit Project under the Erasmus+ Programme, the study involved 225 participants from Spain, Italy, the Czech Republic, Poland, Greece, and Slovenia. Among the surveyed faculties (72% response rate), 29.2% of bachelor's programs, 28% of master's programs, and 40% of PhD programs included courses on "EBP in Nursing or Health Care." These courses typically spanned 180 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits in bachelor's programs, with an average of 134 hours dedicated to teaching EBP steps. Master's programs allocated around 127 hours to EBP instruction, while PhD programs spent approximately 52 hours. The content of these EBP courses focused on various aspects, including EBP fundamentals, research development, understanding evidence-based clinical practice, and recognizing the profession's needs. Despite the presence of such courses, the study indicates a need for better integration of EBP into nursing curricula, suggesting the development of standardized teaching approaches and content across all three levels of higher education and advocating for further research on EBP implementation in master's and Ph.D. nursing programs.^[5]

Development of Clinical Skills:

In the controlled environment of a healthcare facility, nursing students can develop and refine their clinical skills under the guidance of experienced mentors. From conducting patient assessments to administering treatments, this

experiential learning helps students build confidence and competence, ultimately contributing to improved patient outcomes.

Bedside teaching, a crucial method for imparting essential medical skills, is experiencing a decline in usage. To investigate its strengths, causes for the decline, and future prospects, a comprehensive literature review was conducted. PubMed, Embase, and the Cochrane library were systematically searched using relevant terms. The findings highlight that bedside teaching enhances certain clinical diagnostic skills in medical students and residents, and is favored by patients, students, and teachers for diverse reasons. Despite this positive feedback, the practice of bedside teaching is diminishing due to factors such as increased patient turnover, perceived privacy concerns, and growing reliance on technology for diagnosis. Addressing this issue requires innovative approaches, including involving residents and interns as bedside teachers and educating staff about the importance of this method. Overcoming obstacles to bedside teaching is essential for preserving its effectiveness as a lasting educational tool for clinical skills.^[6]

Nurturing Empathy and Compassion:

Bedside learning enables nursing students to interact with patients at a personal level, witnessing their struggles, fears and hopes. This direct patient contact fosters empathy and compassion, transforming students into healthcare professionals who genuinely care for their patient's physical and emotional well-being.

A randomized controlled trial was done to investigate the impact of expert-patient teaching on empathy development among first-year undergraduate nursing students. The experimental group participated in a seminar on empathy, a presentation about expert-patient function, and interactive meetings with an expert patient. The control group attended a similar empathy seminar and had interactive meetings with a nursing teacher. Empathy levels were assessed using the Balanced Emotional Empathy Scale and Jefferson Scale of Empathy — Health Professions Students before (T0) and after (T1) the intervention. Statistical analysis revealed a significant increase in empathy scores at T1 compared to T0 in the experimental group, while no significant change was observed in the control group.^[7]

Enhancing Communication Skills:

Effective communication is the foundation of successful nursing care. Bedside learning provides nursing students with opportunities to practice clear and empathetic communication with patients, families, and the healthcare team. These interactions enhance students' ability to establish meaningful connections with patients and deliver information in a manner that promotes understanding and trust.

Clinical learning holds a central position in medical education, encompassing the acquisition of practical skills and essential communication with patients and healthcare providers, which are indispensable competencies as students transition into the professional world (Spencer, 2003). Among various methods employed in clinical learning, bedside teaching stands out as an effective approach, involving a group of students, teachers, and patients. This study aimed to observe the bedside teaching process and elicit responses from students, teachers, and patients involved. Through observation and interviews, it was evident that both students and teachers perceived bedside teaching as highly effective, facilitating the attainment of clinical competencies and honing communication skills. Teachers, in particular, found it beneficial as it allowed them to serve as role models for students. Patients, too, derived advantages from the process, receiving relevant information about their cases, although time constraints were noted. Each component of bedside teaching fulfilled its roles diligently during the preparation, process, and evaluation phases.^[8]

The study aimed to assess the impact of bedside teaching on the self-efficacy of therapeutic communication in midwifery students during clinical practice. Twenty-fifth-semester students participated in the quantitative descriptive research conducted at PKU Muhammadiyah Hospital of Gamping and Queen Latifa Hospital. The students were divided into certified and non-certified preceptor groups. After bedside teaching, the certified group showed a significant increase in self-efficacy, with a mean difference of 19.50, compared to the non-certified group's mean difference of 5.13, though not statistically significant (p-value of 0.153). The findings suggest that bedside teaching led by certified preceptors positively influenced midwifery students' communication self-efficacy, highlighting the importance of preceptor competence and certification for enhancing knowledge in clinical practice.^[9]

Cultivating Critical Thinking:

Observing patient cases at the bedside encourages nursing students to think critically and make informed decisions. They learn to analyze situations, interpret clinical data, and devise appropriate care plans. This heightened critical thinking ability equips them to handle complex medical scenarios confidently.

Recent advancements in medical education and policies implemented by the UK government regarding the training and service obligations of junior doctors have sparked interest in assessing the effectiveness of clinical teaching approaches. Evidence increasingly supports the efficacy of structured patient-centered approaches encompassing knowledge, skills, and attitudes, going beyond patient assessment to include the doctor-patient relationship. As training becomes more outcome-based, transitioning from an apprenticeship model to a systematic, trainee-centered, and competency-based approach, the emphasis is on skill development and continuous professional development (CPD). Accreditation of skills and competencies will determine doctors' service commitment during training, leading to stronger structured training programs with defined curricula and quality assurance processes across various learning environments. These changes mark the growing professionalization of medical teaching, with accompanying accreditation for all involved, including educational supervisors and program directors.^[10]

Conclusion:-

In conclusion, many research studies highlight the crucial role of bedside teaching-learning in clinical education for the health professions, particularly from a nursing perspective. Through hands-on experiences and patient interactions, students can develop essential clinical reasoning skills, embrace patient-centered care, and nurture their professional growth. Nurse educators play a vital role in creating supportive learning environments that foster experiential learning. Although specific research findings emphasize the undeniable benefits of bedside teaching in bridging the gap between theory and practice, ultimately shaping competent and compassionate healthcare practitioners. This valuable insight underscores the importance of integrating experiential learning approaches into nursing education curricula to better prepare future professionals for delivering high-quality patient care in an evolving healthcare landscape.

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