Clinical Learning Environment

Research has shown that the clinical learning environment can both facilitate and hinder students' learning. Students' perceptions need to be evaluated, preferably using nationally and internationally validated instruments. In Sweden, there is a lack of research about students' evaluation in acute care settings and from the perspectives of different levels of students.

Objectives: The aim was to explore and compare perceptions of the clinical learning environment of first- and second-cycle nursing students in an acute care setting using the Clinical Learning Environment, Supervision and Nurse Teacher scale (CLES+T).

Design: The design involves cross-sectional data collection with comparisons between groups.

Setting and participants: Data were collected from a convenience sample of first- and second-cycle students at the end of their clinical placements in an acute care setting at a university hospital.

Methods: A paper version and a web version of the culturally adapted version of CLES+T was filled out by the students. An independent t-test was used to explore the differences between CLES+T scores and distribution methods and educational level. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha.

Results: Overall, the students (N = 179) were satisfied with the clinical learning environment. There was no significant difference in the total score (m = 4.31, SD = 0.63) between first- and second-cycle students except for the subscale of "Premises of nursing on the ward" and the individual items "The ward's nursing philosophy was clearly defined" and "Patients received individual nursing care", showing that the first-cycle students were more satisfied compared to the second-cycle students. The scale demonstrated high internal consistency (α = 0.97 vs. 0.96) for the paper survey and the web survey, respectively.

Conclusions: Our findings provide initial support for the CLES+T as a useful instrument to evaluate the clinical learning environment at different levels of education and in different contexts regardless of distribution method [1].

[1]

Manninen K, Karlstedt M, Sandelin A, von Vogelsang AC, Pettersson S. First and second cycle nursing students' perceptions of the clinical learning environment in acute care settings - A comparative crosssectional study using the CLES+T scale. Nurse Educ Today. 2021 Nov 10;108:105211. doi: 10.1016/j.nedt.2021.105211. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 34784564.

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