

ATTRIBUTES OF AN EFFECTIVE NURSING TEACHER: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To identify characteristics/attributes of a quality nursing teacher using survey instrument: attributes of quality health educator⁷.

Material & Methods: This is a cross-sectional study conducted at Begum Bilqees Sultana, Institute of Nursing, Peoples University of Medical & Health Sciences, Shaheed Benazirabad during January-March, 2022. A structured 15-item, ranking-based 'Survey instrument: attributes of an effective health educator scale' was used to collect the data from four-year Bachelor' of Science in Nursing students of study year 2nd, 3rd, & 4th year. First-year students were excluded because of their less than 06 months of educational experience.

Results: Participants ranked clarity, knowledge base, well-prepared, respects students' autonomy & independence, and enthusiastic attributes at 1st m 2nd, 3rd, 4th, & 5th slot, respectively. The 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, & 10th priority positions were by 'grabbed feedback, organization skills, listening skills & availability, role model, and sincerity' as teachers' attributes. The scholarly activity and utilization of evidence-based practice attributes failed to gain students' due attention.

Conclusion: The failure of students to provide scholarly activity and utilization of evidence-based practice attributes is another area for future research. In-depth studies are warranted to drill the factors that inhibit students' due attention in this regard.

Key Words: Class, Clinical, Educator, Health, Teaching.

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INTRODUCTION

Good teachers are not fixed but equipped with a variety of demonstrable qualities. Quality teachers are valued resource persons for their students; they smooth, evaluate, appraise and graft the knowledge rather than a traditional one, who merely transfer it. That's the reason that educators are professionally groomed. Quality teachers' focus on student-based expectations.¹ A shift over the emphasis to convert teacher centered to student centered teaching and learning process, a good teacher's expected to develop and hone a willingness to struggle for the advancement of professional nursing education. This is an important ground because traditional teaching- learning process (teacher-centered) is

now has become an outdated activity. Now, the focus has shifted towards student-centered approaches. This shift has placed a crucial emphasis on the shoulders of teachers to play a pivotal role in the advancement of nursing education during its all-important stages.² Teachers are required to enter in the agreement of an understanding concerning students' expectations in this context.¹ This agreement requires teachers to possess, develop and sustain specific competencies and attributes to ensure students' related desired outcomes in the context of their teaching-learning experiences.² Discussions about attributes of quality teachers don't one-size fit for. There is wide diversity. There are multifactorial sides to this coin. There is a piece of evidence that those qualities can be

honed through lifelong experiences and efforts. According to Niederriter, et. al.,(2017); the qualities of an effective teacher are possessing an ability to develop a trusting relationship, having a grip on the knowledge related to the subject matter, couch, and role model. A teacher having the aforementioned qualities can build students' confidence, enhanced knowledge, and critical thinking ability.³ Nursing teachers can improve students learning outcomes by effective communication skills and professional competencies.⁴ Effective teachers know their students and their level of achievement. This knowing assists them to intervene properly to motivate low-level students to improvise. A good teacher encourages learning rather than focusing on reading the slides. This is carried out by utilizing multiple teaching strategies to keep students alive during and after study sessions.⁵ This will improve demotivated students' retention in the academic process. Demotivated students may withdraw from their studies. Therefore, nursing teachers must provide a caring and facilitative milieu conducive to students' improved learning. This will discourage students' attrition rate. The students receiving psychological support from their teachers grow strong and develop a sense of competency and self-worth. Moreover, teachers need to facilitate students to get scholarships. This will help students to avert the financial barriers and reach the goals of persistent academic success.⁶ This demonstrated that attributes of effective quality teachers are closely linked with students' academic success/failure. This warrants examining students' perceptions regarding effective teachers. To fill the gap of knowledge, this study was conducted. Therefore, the objective of this study is 'to identify characteristics/attributes of a quality nursing teacher using survey instrument: attributes of quality health educator'. The results of the current study are beneficial for both teachers and the human resources department. The teachers can improve their qualities in the light of the current study and policymakers will utilize the results by evaluating relevant qualities of teachers at the time of new induction.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was presented to the Ethical Review Committee, Peoples University of Medical & Health Sciences for Women (PUMHSW), Shaheed Benazirabad (SBA) for ethical clearance. They approved. The study center was a female nursing-affiliated college with PUMHSW, SBA. This cross-sectional study was carried out among 02nd, 03rd & 04th nursing students during January- March 2022. First-year students were omitted from the study population because they haven't experienced 06 months of the teaching-learning process at the university level. The study sample was selected through the convenience sampling method. Before data collection, all the study participants were informed about the goal of the study and written informed consent was signed. The participants were assured about the anonymity of their data. They were also knowledgeable to use data for research purposes only. After completing data collection, it was put into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20 to be analyzed. The mean and standard deviation for nominal data (age) were calculated. For every attribute-related statement, frequencies and percentages were calculated to place the attributes in ranking order.

The data collecting instrument is named, "Survey Instrument: Attributes of Health Educators". This instrument was developed by Buchel & Edwards, (2005).⁷ In collecting the required data, a structured, "attributes of effective health educator scale" was used. The first part of the questionnaire documented very basic demographic information (such as name (optional), age, sex, degree program, year of the study) and the second part consisted of 15 statements related to attributes of an effective quality teacher Enthusiastic, availability, clarity, knowledge base, feedback skills, organizational skills, professionalism, well-prepared, scholarly activity, non-judgmental, respects the students' autonomy & independence, sincerity, listening skills, evidence-based practice (EBP) utilization, and role model). This scale is a Rank-order question from 0 to 14. Here, the 0 represents extremely not important, 1= being the most important, 2=being the second most important, 3= being third most important,.....14= being fourteenth most important.

RESULTS

In this cross-sectional study, 140 students were invited to take part in the study. Among the invited, 132 students agreed to participate turning the response rate at 98%. All the enrolled students were female. Age ranged between 18-26 years. The mean age of the research participants was 20.95 ± 2.074 and 14.8 (n=20), 24.4% (n=33) & 60.7(n=82) were 04th, 03rd, 2nd year students, respectively.

Ninety-six (96/71.1%) participants placed the clarity attribute of a faculty at the first position. The second most important attribute of the faculty was termed as the knowledge-based by 82(60.7%) participants. The third rating was received by well-prepared attribute from 80(59.3%) participants. The seventy-four (74/54.8%) participants valued respects students' autonomy and independence attributes of the faculty at fourth place. The seventy (70/51.9%) participants valued the enthusiastic attribute of the faculty at fifth place. The Sixty-seven (67/49.4%), Sixty-two (62/45.9%), fifty-five (55/40.7%), fifty-two (52/38.5%), and forty-seven (47/34.8%) participants positioned attributes of feedback at sixth place, Organizational Skills at seventh place, listening skills and availability at eighth place, role model at ninth place, and sincerity at tenth place, respectively. According to the analysis of the data, listening skills and availability attributes of an effective faculty share eighth place because 55 (40.7%) participants ranked those attributes.

The eleventh slot in the context of attributes priority was given to scholarly activity by 33 (24.4%) participants. Likewise, the professionalism and non-judgmental attributes at the twelfth and thirteenth positions by 28 (20.7%) and 23 (17%) participants, respectively. The last and fifteenth position was received by the utilization of Evidenced-based Practice attribute because 99 (73.7%) participants turned it as an extremely not important attribute of an effective faculty.

DISCUSSION

No single attribute brands a professional decent and effective teacher. The teachers must enjoy and grace (continuously) multiple attributes to have a grasp over teaching-learning practice.¹ In our study, the first attribute of an effective teacher

was branded as clarity. The construct clarity stands for a teacher's capability to answer the students' posed questions clearly and definitely. She/he can define confusing and difficult points and recapitulate the main points of the lecture.¹ The results are in congruence with a qualitative study conducted Niederriter et al., (2017).³ The study aimed to identify the characteristics of an effective clinical instructor. The investigators unearthed the 'couch' is an attribute of instructors. The qualities of a couch were described as calm, soft, students' advocate, critical thinker, and answers students' questions positively.³ The clarity attribute of effective teachers expedite students' critical thinking skills, clinical reasoning and judgment, and mastering advanced clinical skills.⁸ In our study, research participants valued knowledge-based attributes at the second spot. The knowledge-based attribute marks the teacher as capable across health problems. She/he is familiar with relevant literature and engaged with ongoing education.¹ Knowledge-based teachers' have a knack for their explicit specialty. The competency, debriefing, and validated/standardized assessment techniques nurture and ripe students' learning experiences.³ The third attribute of the effective teacher was explored as well-prepared. The attribute well-prepared stands for a teacher's readiness to deliver assigned lectures, presentations, or/and clinical rounds on time.¹ The findings were well supported by a mixed-method (online survey+ focus group discussion) study conducted by Matthew-Maich (2015).⁹ According to the results, effective nurse faculty was calculated as nurturing positive experiences, motivation, meaningful learning, and success. The faculty, able to produce the aforementioned qualities among students was well-prepared for their assigned tasks. They hated excuses from both sides of the table. They used person-centered, professional, passionate, and positive strategies to enhance students' motivation towards effective learning outcomes.⁹

The results of our study place the respect for students' autonomy and independence attribute at the fourth slot. The attribute defines the qualities of a teacher as treating students equally and as adults.¹ The constructs autonomy and independence (in the context of students' learning) are crucial for creating a conducive

learning arena.¹⁰ Students autonomy is defined as a teacher's belief in the centrality of the student when making a discretionary decision, both independently and/or interdependently, that reflects students' advocacy. The teacher who respects students' autonomy and independence own the attributes of caring, affiliate (in relationships), responsible discretionary decision-makers, and proactive advocates for the students.¹¹ The enthusiastic attribute of an effective teacher received the fifth position in our study results. The enthusiastic teachers were energetic and interested in teaching. They enjoy their job and complain rarely.¹ The attributes of enthusiastic teachers are their level of positive interest in the academic process. They are alert, thrilled, and ready to give welcome feelings to students, right from the first day.¹⁰ Enthusiastic teachers harness students' intrinsic motivation. This helps students to be self-directed learners. Moreover, enthusiastic teachers tend to mobilize students to space them away from academic cheating. A teacher's enthusiastic approach is a potential cure for students' academic cheating.¹² According to the results of our study, feedback, organizational skills, listening skills & availability, role model, and sincerity attributes of an effective teacher were placed at sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth rank. The attribute at the sixth position is feedback. The feedback attribute enables teachers to encourage two-way communication. They provide negative or positive feedback, on time.¹ According to Reising, James & Morse (2018) effective teachers are hard workers, punctual, and keep track of students' learning outcomes. They provide clinical-based and professional feedback to sustain students' learning efforts. This earns them students' respect.¹³ The attribute placed at the seventh slot is organizational skills. This attribute elucidates teacher's time management skills. The teachers turn for their assigned tasks/classes on time and have the capability to deal with time pressures accordingly.¹ The organizational skills construct is further explored as having consistency in managing time pressures efficiently. They have flexibility and willingness to work with difficult colleagues. The investigators were in consensus that being organized is necessary to learning smoothly. Whereas being unorganized inhabit learning

opportunities.¹³ At the eighth spot, there were two attributes, listening skills, and availability, in our study. Listening skills encompass the attributes of attentive listening, don't interpose, and being interested in listening and resolving students' issues at hand. This is a necessary attribute because a teacher knows his/her student's level of achievement and respects his/her right to ask questions if there is any doubt in the mind of the students. This augments the teacher's respectable attitude for a student's autonomy and independence.¹¹ Good listening skills of an effective teacher demonstrates that she/he has a close eye on the student's ultimate goal and is interested in keeping the track of student's progress towards learning.¹³ Availability attribute is disclosed as teacher's easy accessibility, having enough time to answer students' quires, not hurried, not rushed or/and distracted.¹ The availability attribute of the faculty is closely associated with developing a trusting relationship between a teacher and student. It is further amplified that availability and approachability of nursing teacher enhances feelings of comfortableness among nursing students. Students' comfortableness encourages students to ask more questions and get direction for learning. Therefore, a teacher's easy availability and approachability enhance the attribute of the couch.³ The attribute placed at ninth position is 'role model'. 'Role model' attribute fosters physical, psychological, social, and spiritual balance during teaching encounters.¹ Role model attribute enhances teacher's intrinsic motivation and is portrayed as an effective teaching behaviors. It is further explored that the role model attribute promotes active teaching engagement and is closely linked to teacher's competency. Therefore, the 'role model' attribute cements the enthusiastic' attribute. Finally, it is concluded that enthusiastic faculties are the cure for students' academic dishonesty.¹² The attribute 'sincerity' is placed at tenth slot. The 'sincerity' attribute enhances the fairness and honesty of a teacher. She/he is open and admits when wrong or doesn't know the answer.¹ Sincerity is a necessary attribute because it remedies incivility in the educational process. Sincere teachers are passionate and truly focus on students' learning outcomes.¹³

According to the analysis of the results, the eleventh slot was gained by scholarly activity as an attribute of an effective teacher. Scholarly activity attribute is defined as a teacher's efforts in engaging in research activities.¹ The results are in support of a cross-sectional survey. The survey demonstrated that 72% of participants of the study termed Scholarly activity as a non-important attribute for effective teachers in the nursing field. This was a shocking revelation. The reason behind this finding was explained as the students' inability to appreciate the importance of researching professional advancement. They were unable to accept the teachers' dual role as researchers and teachers. The students have confined this role only to direct teaching.¹³ The twelfth slot in the context of attribute priority was received by professionalism. The professionalism attribute is conceptualized as respect for staff and students' decorum and dress.¹⁴ In a study conducted by Niederriter et al., (2017) related the attribute of professionalism as a subtheme of role model. The researchers defined a professional as a person with an attitude of integrity. Professionals do what they say. They are not discouraging but are continuously supporting and hold on to students with high expectations. They lead students by example.³ The attribute non-judgmental was placed at the thirteenth position, in our study. The attribute non-judgmental stands for faculty's ability to provide a non-threatening, and safe learning environment.¹⁵ Learning is an amalgamation of knowledge attainment and its solicitation in practice. A safe and non-judgmental environment for learning is exemplified as creating Teaching-moments. Here, a faculty is accountable to ascertain the unstructured isolates to discover glitches and circumstances, and escort students to learn in their stride. This needs critical thinking skills for both teachers-learners to challenge traditional assumptions through effective communication and reflective discussion to avenue hidden angles of contemporary learning.¹⁴ The evidence-based practice (EBP) in nursing attribute received the last slot in the priority list for this research. EBP stands for teachers' confidence in finding and utilization research-based findings in teaching practice.¹ The results are in support of findings in a study³ that identified that 52% of participants termed the attribute as non-important for

effective faculties.³ EMP is a fundamental element for health education. There is a need to incorporate EMP principles in the curriculum to make it viable. Teachers must be trained to utilize different EBP strategies to enhance students' learning outcomes. Lastly, the assessment and evolution steps must be incorporated in the educational process to get maximum benefits.¹⁵ Although, it is a complex process, effort should be taken in this regard. Because quality education warrants ensuring the nurse faculty is competent enough to provide high standard education to nurses based on the principles of EBP. This process must validate that nursing faculties be able to perform tasks according to the defined context of professional practice.¹⁶

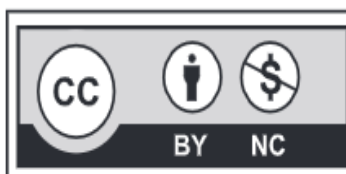
CONCLUSION

This study utilized a structured survey instrument: attributes of effective health educator to identify nursing students' views about attributes of quality teachers. It is encouraging that students' priorities for effective teachers are comparatively the same as examined in other studies. Students prioritized clarity, knowledge base, well-prepared, respect for students' autonomy and independence, and enthusiasm as top five attributes for the effective nursing teacher. The two important attributes (scholarly activity & utilization of EBP) of the contemporary age failed to gain students' due considerations. This opens further research to examine the reasons for students' inattention towards those valued and emphasized attributes. This will clear the factors that are inhibitory to promote scholarly activity and EBP environment in teaching institutes of the nursing field. This will be a great effort for the promotion of professional endeavors in this part of the world.

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