

Original Article

Satisfaction Levels of Nursing Students about Summer Term Education

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Abstract

Objective: Nursing students who prefer to take courses during the summer term may find that the city, institution, educators, and training hospitals seem different from what they are accustomed to. These differences may affect them positively or negatively.

Aims: The research aims to evaluate the satisfaction levels of nursing students who take summer term education.

Methods: This descriptive and cross sectional research was performed between June and August 2015 with the 184 nursing students.

Results: In this research, the total mean score of the Student Satisfaction Scale - Short Form was determined to be 3.86 ± 0.69 , and of the teaching staff subscale was higher than other subscales. The satisfaction levels of 4th-class students and those taking the mental health nursing course were found to be significantly higher than other classes and courses.

Conclusion: As summer term education is an option among nursing education, students in this study were found to be satisfied about this. We recommend nursing programs in universities to provide summer term education course options to increase the student satisfaction.

Key words: Education, Nursing, Satisfaction, Student, Summer term

Introduction

Nursing education alters and improves according to changes in demographics, technology, economy, and the expectations of the public (Official Gazette of the Turkish Republic, 2015; Salminen et al., 2010). In order to ensure high quality and reliable nursing care today and in the future, the World Health Organization (WHO) has suggested that nursing education should be designed and delivered according to evidence based and skill-based standards that support lifelong learning and lead to high quality care results (WHO, 2009). The Accreditation

Committee for Education in Nursing (ACEN) suggests that bachelor degree programs in nursing should take into consideration both the professional nursing education courses and the regional, national, and global experiences that are related to those courses, as well as concepts such as culture, ethnicity, and society (ACEN, 2013). Thorne (2006) has stressed that for nursing education to be of the highest quality, subjects such as multidisciplinary studies, universality, use of technology, evidence based science, tolerance, ethics, and incentives for research should be given as special

considerations. However, in spite of the Bologna Declaration that aimed to contemporize higher learning systems by uniting countries with different structures and cultures on a common ground (Republic of Turkey Council of Higher Education, 2010). Salminen et al. (2010) mention that differences between countries still endure with respect to nursing education. Therefore, standardization, whether worldwide or within individual countries, can not be met in nursing education (WHO, 2009). Assessing education programs provides information on the positive and negative aspects of the programs and supports the learning experiences that are effective in the improvement of students (Ahmed, Touama & Rayan, 2015). Nurse tutors should assess the education programs and theoretical and practice education by taking feedback from students, clients, stakeholders, and partners (National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice, 2010; WHO, 2009).

Nursing education

The styles for nursing education differ between countries throughout the world. The lengths of the nursing programs vary between two and five years (WHO, 2009). WHO suggests that undergraduate education in nursing should last at least three years, teach evidence based care, and employ various occupational group professionals in theoretical and clinical education. Undergraduate education should also be performed in schools where tutors all have bachelor degrees and preferably masters degrees according to their fields of specialty, as well as enough resources to continue to improve themselves (WHO, 2009; WHO, 2013). In countries that are European Union members, nursing education programs encompass at least 4,600 hours of education (Willis Commission, 2012). Nursing programs take three years in Sweden, Austria, and France and three-to-four years in Germany, Canada, and the United Kingdom (Anell, Glenngard & Merkur, 2012; Willis Commission, 2012). In Spain, the mandatory clinical and theoretical education for nursing is three years and 4.797 hours (Mariscal Crespo et al., 2010). In Turkey, nursing education at the undergraduate level involves a minimum of four years and 4.600 hours of theoretical and applied education (Official Gazette of the Turkish Republic, 2008). In this undergraduate program, which includes four academic years, each year consists of two

semesters, in the fall and spring, with 16 weeks in each semester (Official Gazette of the Turkish Republic, 2015).

Summer term education

Since 2014 Trakya University nursing department have started offering summer term education programs in addition to the fall and spring semesters. At the university, summer term education is run by a summer term education coordination committee consisting of three faculty members elected by the Senate under the chairmanship of a rector assistant appointed by the Rector. The purpose of the summer term education is: to ensure the efficient use of the university's capacity and to prevent the accumulation of students in the courses, to allow students who fail to attend some classes for various reasons, to enable university students to finish their education earlier. The summer term education for surgical nursing course includes 16 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) with seven weeks of courses and a week of tests. The theoretical and practical hours, ECTS credits, module titles, learning outcomes and teaching and learning strategies of this course are equal to the hours of the course in the fall and spring semesters (Trakya University Information Package, Course Catalog, 2017).

Students take 3 days (24 hours) training at the hospital at surgical departments and take 12 hours courses about surgical nursing among one week at the faculty. A student can take only one practical course among summer term education and their school accepts this success if they complete the summer term education successfully. The choice to take summer term education has been left up to the students from Trakya University and from all other universities (Official Gazette of the Turkish Republic, 2015).

Nursing education in Turkey is negatively affected by issues such as having nursing graduates of different levels, different processes for applying to programs and education techniques, insufficient access to the most up-to-date technology, theoretical education that is not keeping pace with rules for compliance in clinical education, and a lack of expert tutors (Baykal et al., 2005). For these reasons, assessment of quality is an important part of nursing education (Ahmed, Touama & Rayan, 2015). The quality of nursing education should be assessed with respect to regional, national, and international curricula, and to content,

process, learning strategies, and learning outcomes (Roux & Halstead, 2009; Salminen et al., 2010; Willis Commission, 2012). In addition, nursing education should be evaluated according to the benefits it offers in terms of technology and contemporary knowledge, multidisciplinary education, and the students being able to take on nursing roles in a competent manner after graduation in order to enhance the professionalization of the nursing profession (Herdman, 2010; Hirsch et al., 2015; Kim, 2012). One of the most important parameters for evaluating nursing education programs is student satisfaction.

Student satisfaction

Academic satisfaction is accepted as a subjective evaluation of whether the academic expectations and educational experiences of individuals are met (Gulcan, Kustepeli & Aldemir, 2002; Hirsch et al., 2015). Student satisfaction has been widely recognized as an indicator of the quality of the students' learning and teaching experiences (El Ansari & Oskrochi, 2004; Ramos et al., 2015). The first investigations into academic satisfaction were conducted in the 1960s and originated from studies on occupational satisfaction.

Students' satisfaction with the educational institution where they study is one of the most important factors affecting the success and quality of a university (Gulcan, Kustepeli & Aldemir, 2002). According to studies, structure of the curriculum, social interactions, learning environment and teaching strategies may effect the satisfaction with nursing education (Chen & Lo, 2012; Chen & Lo, 2015). The effectiveness, sufficiency, and quality of the services provided at the schools all affect the success, quality, and proficiency of nursing students, and how the students benefit from these services can be measured by their satisfaction (Langford & Barbara, 1999). Students' dissatisfaction with the undergraduate course process can negatively affect the education process. When students are dissatisfied with their education, their health, relationships, and interest in learning may decrease, and educational gaps can also form between students at different schools (Ramos et al., 2015). Studies that look at student satisfaction make it possible to understand the positive and negative aspects of the education process, to regulate tutors and programs in the best ways possible, and to produce high quality

graduates (Chen & Lo, 2012; Hirsch et al., 2015; Jaradeen et al., 2012).

For these reasons, it is important to take the views of students into consideration when evaluating the quality of their education (Hakim, 2014). In previous studies, Chen and Lo (2015) examined levels of satisfaction with faculty conditions, course programs, and social interaction, Kantek and Kazancı (2012) looked at measurement and evaluation, Eaton, Williams, and Green (2000) found that students were highly satisfied with teaching standards, personnel support, and nursing programs, and El Ansari and Oskrochi (2004) reported that demographic variables should be taken into consideration when evaluating the satisfaction of nursing students. However, there are no studies that have evaluated the satisfaction levels of students who take courses in summer term education.

The aim of this research is to evaluate the satisfaction levels of nursing students who take summer term education about surgical nursing course.

Research questions

What is the satisfaction level of nursing students taking courses in summer term education?

Does satisfaction level of students varied with characteristic variables?

Methods

This descriptive and cross sectional research was performed between June and August 2015 with the voluntary participation of 184 summer term education students who were studying in the nursing department of a faculty of health sciences in Western Turkey. Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the institution and nursing students before the research began. Written consent from the nursing department of the faculty and verbal consent from the nursing students. Students were informed about the research before the application of the forms and told that the information they provided would only be used for research purposes and protected confidentially. A "Personal Information Form" that the researchers prepared to ask about personal characteristics and the "Student Satisfaction Scale - Short Form" evaluating student satisfaction levels were used for the data

collection. Filling out the forms took approximately 10 minutes.

Personal information form

This form included 5 questions to collect data about age, sex, class, the students' schools, and additional information on taking lessons in nursing and thoughts about recommending summer term education to their peers.

The Student Satisfaction Scale - Short Form

The "Student Satisfaction Scale - Short Form" is developed by Baykal et al. (2011). The scale consists of five sub-dimensions, including "teaching staff," "school management," "participation in decisions," "scientific, social, and technical conditions," and "quality of education," as well as 53 items. A five-way Likert-type evaluation was used for the items, with the values corresponding to 5-absolutely agree, 4-agree, 3-undecided, 2-don't agree, and 1-absolutely don't agree. The total scale score average and the averages of the sub-dimension scores vary between 1 and 5. When the average score approaches 1 in the scale total and sub-dimensions, it is inferred that students are unsatisfied, and when the scores approach 5, it is inferred that the students are satisfied. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale was reported to be 0.97 (Baykal et al., 2011).

Statistical analysis

The data were assessed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) statistics programme for Windows version 20.0 (IBM, Armonk, NY, USA) with descriptive analysis, Mann Whitney U, Kruskal-Wallis and Friedman chi-square tests. The value of $p < 0.05$ was accepted as the statistical significance.

Results

The average age of nursing students who took summer term education was 22.05 ± 1.95 , with 51.6% being female, 35.9% being 4th-class students, 85.3% studying at state universities, 38.6% taking the internal diseases nursing course, and 69% recommending summer term education to their peers (Table 1).

The satisfaction score average of the students was determined to be 3.86 ± 0.69 . The satisfaction levels of nursing students taking summer term education are as follows: for teaching staff, 4.10 ± 0.78 ; for quality of education, 3.88 ± 0.83 ; for school management,

3.84 ± 0.73 ; for participation in decisions, 3.76 ± 0.90 ; and for scientific, social, and technical conditions, 3.67 ± 0.82 . These were all found to be high in a statistically significant manner ($p < 0.05$). The statistical significance for the students' satisfaction level with teaching staff was higher than for the other aspects (quality of education, school management, participation in decisions, and scientific, social and technical conditions) ($p < 0.05$) (Table 2). The satisfaction levels of the 4th-class students and those who took the mental health nursing course were found to be higher than other classes ($p < 0.05$) and courses ($p < 0.05$). The Cronbach Alpha was found to be 0.95 for this research.

Discussion

In this research, the satisfaction level of the summer term education students (3.86 ± 0.69) was determined to be slightly higher than the average score. The research found the satisfaction level that the students reported for the summer term education program to be 77.2%. A similar satisfaction level (88%) was found in a research done by Norman et al. (2005). In addition, Chen and Lo (2015) indicated that students' satisfaction rate with the nursing program was as close to "satisfied". Ramos et al. (2015) also determined that students obtained the highest mean score with respect to "satisfaction with the course." On the other hand, Espeland and Indrehus (2003) found that 82 students were dissatisfied with the quality of the nursing program but 70% satisfied with clinical practice. In Hakim's research (2014), most students indicated little satisfaction with their educational environment. Overall, the results show that nursing students are generally satisfied with the summer term education and nursing schools, although some students express less satisfaction.

In the present research, the statistical significance of the students' satisfaction level with teaching staff was higher than other aspects (quality of education, school management, participation in decisions, and scientific, social and technical conditions) ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, a research by Yangin and Kirca (2013) showed that students were most satisfied with the academics and with the quality of the education. Another research work by Ahmed, Touama, and Rayan (2015) examined students' perspectives about nursing education and found that according to students the teaching methods were clear, the teachers showed positive attitudes toward supervision,

and the content of the courses was comprehensive. A research by Roh, Lee, and Mennenga (2014) reported that students were satisfied with team-based learning and learner satisfaction was significantly affected by the

learning process. Hirsch et al. (2015) found that according to students the most important factors for satisfaction were curriculum and teaching dimensions, followed by the social/professional interaction dimensions.

Table 1. Characteristics and scale scores of nursing students ($n = 184$)

Characteristics		<i>n</i>	%	<i>M ± SD</i>	<i>p</i>
Age				22.05 ± 1.95	
Gender	Female	95	51.6	3.80 ± 0.73	* <i>Z</i> = -1.502
	Male	89	48.4	3.93 ± 0.66	<i>p</i> = 0.13
Education year	2nd year	38	20.7	3.74 ± 0.60	** <i>X</i> ² = 12.169
	3rd year	80	43.5	3.73 ± 0.72	<i>p</i> = 0.02
	4th year	66	35.9	4.09 ± 0.66	
Summer term education course	Internal medicine nursing	71	38.6	3.59 ± 0.62	
	Children's health and nursing	48	26.1	4.05 ± 0.66	** <i>X</i> ² = 20.280
	Surgical nursing	30	16.3	3.90 ± 0.66	<i>p</i> = 0.00
	Mental health nursing	35	19	4.13 ± 0.75	

*Mann Whitney U ** Kruskal-Wallis tests

Table 2. Mean scores of subscales

Subscales	<i>M ± SD</i>	<i>p</i>
Teaching staff	4.10 ± 0.78	
School management	3.84 ± 0.73	
Participation in decisions	3.76 ± 0.90	* <i>X</i> ² = 68.428
Scientific, social, and technical conditions	3.67 ± 0.82	<i>p</i> = 0.00
Quality of education	3.88 ± 0.83	
Total mean scale score	3.86 ± 0.69	

**X*²=Friedman chi-square test

In contrast, Jaradeen et al. (2012) reported that the major predictor of student satisfaction was the climate in the faculty of nursing. Espeland and Indrehus (2003) also found students to be satisfied with the quality of the nursing program.

According to Kaynar et al. (2006), the satisfaction level of students was low and the reason for this was the low quality of education.

In Hakim's research (2014), 83.3% of the students had little satisfaction with the educational environment and 41.7% had little satisfaction with the educational methods of the professors. A research that was done in Turkey presented a low satisfaction score for the quality of education and teaching staff among students (Egelioglu, Arslan & Bakan, 2011).

The results of these studies have indicated that nursing students were satisfied with the teaching staff, but far less agreement was found in terms of their satisfaction with the teaching facilities.

The results of the present research show that students in the 4th class who were taking psychiatric nursing had a significantly higher satisfaction level than those in the other classes and courses. Similarly, according to the results of a research in Turkey, the statistical significance of the mean satisfaction level of 4th-class students was higher than for the 1st-class students (Egelioglu, Arslan & Bakan, 2011). However, dramatically different results were obtained in various studies that investigated student satisfaction with nursing programs. According to the results of Elasan and Keskin's research (2014), the level of student satisfaction decreased as the education year increased and this was explained by the higher unrealized expectations of those in advanced classes. Ulusoy et al. (2010) also reported that 4th-class students had the lowest level of satisfaction, as did Baykal et al. (2005). We think that the main reason why nursing students are satisfied with summer term education could be that they want to start their career lives earlier and prefer to go to summer term education so they can graduate sooner than they would by adhering to the normal amount of time for their education.

Conclusion

This research has shown that the satisfaction level of summer term education students was higher than the mean scale score. We recommend nursing programs in universities to provide summer term education course options to increase the student satisfaction.

The place where the work was carried out: Trakya University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Nursing Trakya University, Balkan Campus, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Nursing, 22030, Edirne, Turkey. <http://sbf.trakya.edu.tr/>

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