

# Characteristics of a Good Clinical Teacher as Perceived by Nursing Students and Faculty Members in a Philippine University College of Nursing

Gil P. Soriano\*, Ma. Gladys B. Aquino

School of Medical Technology, Centro Escolar University, Manila, Philippines

**Abstract** This study was conducted to identify the perceptions of the nursing students and clinical instructors of the characteristics of a good clinical teacher that are most beneficial in facilitating an effective teaching-learning process and whether differences and commonalities exist between these two groups. It aimed to identify the characteristics of good clinical instructor to serve as a basis for improvement program and to be included in the current teacher's evaluation form. The data were gathered from 4th year nursing students (n=80) and faculty members (n=10) from a City-Subsidized University College of Nursing using the Nursing Clinical Teacher Effectiveness Inventory (NCTEI) survey instrument developed by Knox and Morgan (1987). Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and Mann Whitney U Test. Results showed that teaching ability and nursing competence were the teacher characteristics that have the highest ratings by the faculties. In contrast, teaching ability was the teacher characteristic with the lowest rating by the students and personality was the characteristic most favored. A difference in the perceptions of students and faculties for the characteristics of a good clinical teacher when categories of clinical teacher characteristics were compared.

**Keywords** Characteristics, Clinical Teacher, Nursing Students, Faculty Members

## 1. Introduction

According to Aiken et al. [1] over 150, 000 of Philippine-trained nurses are employed overseas or about one fourth of the total nurses employed in the hospitals in the Philippines. This phenomenon was fuelled by the continuous demand of nursing workforce in several developed countries. Thus, making the nursing education sector a centre of economic activity in recent years. The number of nursing schools during the 1980s was 40, however, the number has grown to 470 in 2006 [2]. Most of the nursing schools were privately owned and the nursing education was privately-financed [3, 4].

The rapid growth of nursing education has raised concerns about declining quality due to shortage of instructors and clinical training venues [5] brought about by the increase number of nursing enrollees in different nursing schools. However, moratorium was imposed by the government's Commission on Higher Education (CHED) on new nursing schools in 2004 [6] in attempt to close down poorly performing schools which caused an oversupply of clinical nursing instructors.

In order to ensure quality of clinical instruction, competent clinical instructors who can assist students to integrate theory with practice and improve clinical decision-making skills are needed. Karuhije [7] recognized that clinical instruction is a major responsibility of many nursing faculty, representing nearly 50 percent of all instructional activities. In the clinical area, the teacher of nursing is in a different position than teachers in other disciplines [8]. The clinical teacher stands as the focal point in the student-teacher-patient relationship and must be able to instruct the student, while maintaining a safe environment for the patient, and facilitating the relationship and interactions between the student, patient, and staff [9]. Clinical instruction environments require the application of classroom theory to concrete clinical situations which represents real risks for students, the patients they care for and the instructors who work with them. For these reasons, it is imperative that clinical instructors possess the skills and strategies to create clinical experiences conducive to learning and patient safety [10].

A clear definition of a competent clinical instructor is needed in order to guide nursing schools in hiring one. However, there are disagreements as to the qualities of a good clinical instructor. Hence, the study was conducted in order to identify the characteristics of good clinical instructor to serve as a basis for quality improvement. The

\* Corresponding author:

gil.p.soriano@gmail.com (Gil P. Soriano)

Published online at <http://journal.sapub.org/nursing>

Copyright © 2017 Scientific & Academic Publishing. All Rights Reserved

information gathered may also be used for teacher's performance evaluation. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics of good clinical instructor as perceived by the students and faculty?
2. Is there a significant difference in the perception of a good clinical instructor between the students and faculty members?

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Study Participants

In undertaking this descriptive-survey research, faculty members (n=10) and the 4th year nursing students (n=80) in a city-subsidized College of Nursing were given questionnaires. The 4th year students were chosen because of their extensive exposure to certain clinical teachers in different clinical settings. Specifically, faculty members who are currently handling students in the clinical area were included in the study.

### 2.2. Sampling Technique

The study participants were selected through judgmental or purposive sampling in undertaking the study. The respondents who were selected are all Level IV nursing students and all clinical instructors who are currently handling students in clinical area.

### 2.3. Instrumentation

In gathering the necessary data, a questionnaire was utilized in determining the characteristics of a good clinical teacher. Clinical Teacher characteristics were measured using the Nursing Clinical Teacher Effectiveness Inventory (NCTEI) developed by Knox and Mogan (1985) with reliability coefficient of 0.9786. The NCTEI consists of 48 important instructor characteristics divided into five sub-scales. The sub-scales are teaching ability, interpersonal relationships, personality, nursing competence, and evaluation.

### 2.4. Statistical Treatment of Data

The data gathered were analysed using weighted mean to determine overall index of the samples' responses and standard deviation. In addition, Mann Whitney U Test was used to determine the difference between the perception of the student and faculty members in the characteristics of a good clinical teacher.

### 2.5. Ethical Consideration

Before the administration of questionnaires, signed consent was obtained from all the respondents. Each of the respondent was ensured of anonymity as well as a commitment that the research findings will be used for research purposes only.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. Teaching Behaviors as Perceive by Faculty

Based on the findings of the study, the clinical teaching category with the highest mean rating as perceived by the faculty are in the nursing competence and teaching ability category. For the nursing competence, these teaching behaviours are: demonstrates communication skills, takes responsibility of own actions, is a good role model and demonstrates breadth of knowledge. On the other hand, the teaching ability category behaviours include: stimulates student interest, encourages active participation, corrects students' mistakes, is well prepared for teaching, enjoys teaching, promotes student independence, encourages a climate of mutual respect, is a dynamic and energetic person and appears organized.

Majority of teaching behaviours rated by faculty members as lowest belong to evaluation category. These behaviours include makes specific suggestions, identifies students' strengths and limitations, communicates expectations of students, provides frequent feedback, and observes students' performance frequently. (Table 2).

### 3.2. Teaching Behaviours as Perceived by Students

Clinical teaching behaviours with the highest ratings by the students were in the personality category. The top three teaching behaviours are: appears organized, self-confidence, is a dynamic and energetic person. Of the top nine highest ratings three items were from interpersonal relations and another three items were from nursing competence. It was observed from Table 3 that there are six items which were from different categories that received tie ratings.

As depicted in Table 4 majority of clinical teaching behaviours with the lowest ratings as perceived by the students are in the teaching ability. The evaluation category placed second and third for the teaching behaviours with lowest ratings.

In testing for the difference in the perception of the students and faculty members of the characteristics of a good clinical teacher a Mann Whitney U test was performed and revealed a significant difference as proven by p value of 0.001 and a U value of 26.

**Table 1.** Clinical Teaching Behaviours with the Highest Ratings as Perceived by the Faculty (n=20)

Item	Behavior Description	Category	Mean	SD
19	Demonstrates communication skills	Nursing Competence	6.6	0.97
3	Stimulates student interest	Teaching Ability	6.5	0.97
11	Encourages active participation	Teaching Ability	6.5	0.97
25	Takes responsibility of own actions	Nursing Competence	6.5	0.84
26	Is a good role model	Nursing Competence	6.5	0.97
33	Corrects students' mistakes	Evaluation	6.5	0.84
9	Is well prepared for teaching	Teaching Ability	6.4	1.25
10	Enjoys teaching	Teaching Ability	6.4	1.26
17	Promotes student independence	Teaching Ability	6.4	1.06
23	Demonstrates breadth of knowledge	Nursing Competence	6.4	1.06
37	Encourages a climate of mutual respect	Interpersonal Relations	6.4	0.70
42	Is a dynamic and energetic person	Personality	6.4	1.08
47	Appears organized	Personality	6.4	1.06

**Table 2.** Clinical Teaching Behaviours with the Lowest Ratings as Perceived by the Faculty (n=20)

Item	Behavior Description	Category	Mean	SD
27	Makes specific suggestions	Evaluation	5.8	1.16
29	Identifies students' strengths and limitations	Evaluation	5.8	1.16
31	Communicates expectations of students	Evaluation	5.8	1.16
4	Remains accessible to students	Teaching Ability	5.9	1.23
24	Recognizes own limitations	Nursing Competence	5.9	1.29
28	Provides frequent feedback	Evaluation	5.9	1.20
30	Observes students' performance frequently	Evaluation	5.9	1.03
32	Gives students positive reinforcement	Evaluation	5.9	1.37
39	Shows a personal interest in students	Interpersonal Relations	5.9	1.85

**Table 3.** Clinical Teaching Behaviours with the Highest Ratings as Perceived by the Students (n=100)

Item	Behavior Description	Category	Mean	SD
47	Appears organized	Personality	6.58	0.69
43	Self-confidence	Personality	6.44	0.81
42	Is a dynamic and energetic person	Personality	6.42	0.84
37	Encourages a climate of mutual respect	Interpersonal Relations	6.36	0.83
44	Is self-critical	Personality	6.33	0.79
11	Encourages active participation	Teaching Ability	6.33	1.07
20	Reveals broad reading in area of interest	Nursing Competence	6.31	0.71
23	Demonstrates a breadth of knowledge	Nursing Competence	6.31	0.71
35	Provides support and encouragement	Interpersonal Relations	6.28	0.91
10	Enjoys teaching	Teaching Ability	6.28	1.11
26	Is a good role model	Nursing Competence	6.28	1.03
30	Observes students' performance frequently	Evaluation	6.28	0.91
36	Is approachable	Interpersonal Relations	6.28	0.94
46	Has a good sense of humor	Personality	6.28	1.06

**Table 4.** Clinical Teaching Behaviours with the Lowest Ratings as Perceived by the Students (n=100)

Item	Behavior Description	Category	Mean	SD
13	Quickly grasps what students are asking	Teaching Ability	5.72	1.34
27	Makes specific suggestions	Evaluation	5.75	1.27
29	Identifies students' strengths and limitations	Evaluation	5.78	1.41
24	Recognizes own limitations	Nursing Competence	5.81	1.31
12	Gears instruction to students level of readiness	Teaching ability	5.89	1.37
4	Remains accessible to students	Teaching Ability	5.92	1.18
7	Provides specific practice opportunity	Teaching Ability	5.94	1.24
3	Stimulates student interest	Teaching Ability	5.97	1.21

**Table 5.** Difference in the Perception of a Clinical Teacher by Students and Faculty Members

Parameter	U value	p value	Interpretation
Good Clinical Teacher	26	*0.001	Significant
Worst Clinical Teacher	36	0.714	Not Significant

## 4. Discussion

The study aims to identify the characteristics of a good clinical teacher as perceived by the faculty members and the students. The results of the study indicate that students rated personality and interpersonal relationship as the top categories for characteristic of good clinical teacher. According to the perception of students a good clinical instructor appears organized, with self-confidence, self-critical, and with a good sense of humour. The findings support the study of Gignac-Caille and Oermann [11] in which students rated interpersonal relationship as the most important category. Same results were demonstrated in a study conducted in Omani nursing students who rated professional competence of instructors as the most important characteristic and instructors' relationship with students as the second most important characteristic [12]. The results of Brown's [8] study had similar findings in which the category of relationships with students rank second, and the category of personal attributes third. While respondents in the Bergman and Gaitskill [13] study agreed that all items were descriptive of effective teaching, both faculty and students rated the faculty member's relationship with students first, professional competence second, and personal attributes third.

The relationship between the student and the professor is an important component of teaching effectiveness. This relationship can impact education in three ways [14]. First, a strong student-professor relationship enhances enjoyment of the educational experience for both parties. Second, a strong relationship improves student evaluations of faculty. Finally, a strong relationship enhances student learning. A group of teachers identified as excellent indicated that the effective

teacher is able to maintain good interpersonal relationships with the students, other faculty, and the community at large [15].

During their college years, nursing students meet challenges common to most college students. Balancing work or family commitments with study time, preparing for examinations and keeping up with coursework are typical college concerns experienced by nursing students [16]. Because of demands of the profession and anxiety about passing the state exams, many nursing students feel over-worked, unprepared and in need of support from faculty [17]. They appreciate instructors who engage students, clearly apply theory, give meaningful examples, and interact with students during class [18]. In addition, students in clinical areas need to approach nurse clinical preceptor when they have some problems or cannot perform a task properly and an instructor with interpersonal skills is essential for effective teaching. Hence, students valued clinical instructors with good interpersonal relationship and personality.

On the other hand, faculty members have different view of characteristics of good clinical teacher. Nursing competence and teaching ability were the top categories rated by the faculty members and appeared as the most important characteristics. Similarly, in the study by Brown [8], faculty found the items related to the category of professional competence to be the most important. Krichbaum [19] stated that teaching ability is related to the performance and knowledge of a clinical teacher in the practical settings which reflects the performance of the student that is associated with cognitive gain. This cognitive gain is directly linked to knowledge gain, which means that the faculty should be able to impart knowledge to the students in such a manner that will help the students to perform better in real practical situation. Although several studies revealed that teaching ability is the most important characteristic of a good teacher perceived by students, in this study this teaching category was only rated as third. For faculty members' behaviours such as stimulate students' interest, encourages active participation, and well prepared for teaching under

teaching ability category were valued and received highest ratings. Likewise, students also placed high ratings on teachers' ability on two items: encourages active participation, and enjoys teaching. These teaching behaviour although placed under teaching ability has elements of interpersonal relationship, thus it could be viewed that for students, teachers with good teaching ability are teachers that can interact well with their students.

The techniques used to teach effectively and the teacher's decisions about how and when to use various techniques make up the category of teaching ability. The ability to teach is an integral part of effective teaching [20, 21]. Findings of the current study revealed that five items rated by students as lowest were in the teaching ability category. These teaching behaviours were: quickly rasps what students are asking, gears instructions to students' level of readiness, remains accessible to students, provides specific practice opportunity, and stimulates student interest. Such behaviours were perceived by students as least important characteristics of a good clinical instructor.

Faculty and students both perceived the evaluation category as least important characteristic of good clinical instructors. Six items from evaluation category were rated lowest by students and faculty which include: makes specific suggestions, identifies student's strengths and limitations, remains accessible to students, provides specific practice and opportunity and provides frequent feedback.

In summary, ranked the items in different orders. Faculty found the items related to nursing competence and teaching ability to be the most important. Students, on the other hand, found the faculty member's personality to be the most important followed by relationship with students. Both groups found evaluation to be least important. The study identified a significant difference in the characteristics of a good clinical teacher based on the perception of the students and faculty members. However, the finding is in contrast with the study conducted by Allison-Jones and Hirt [22] which concluded that there was no significant difference in student and teacher ratings of effective behaviours in an associate degree program.

## 5. Conclusions

There was a difference in the perceptions of students and faculties for the characteristics of a good clinical teacher when categories of clinical teacher characteristics were compared. For students' perception, the study suggests that personality and interpersonal relations were the characteristics of good clinical teacher and teaching ability and nursing competence were most favoured by faculties. Although teaching ability and nursing competence did not receive the highest ratings by the students it was still valued as a good characteristic because it received a fairly high rating.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Aiken LH, Buchan J, Sochalski J, Nichols B, Powell M., 2004, Trends in international nurse migration, *Health Affairs*, 23, 69-77.
- [2] Lorenzo FME, Galvez-Tan J, Icamina K, Javier L., 2007, Nurse migration from a source country perspective: Philippine country case study, *Health Services Research*, 42, 1406-1418.
- [3] Overland MA. Philippine reformer quits under pressure, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2005 May 27.
- [4] Masselink LE, Lee SYD., 2010, Nurses, Inc.: expansion and commercialization of nursing education in the Philippines, *Social Science and Medicine*, 71, 166-172
- [5] Hicap JM. Nursing schools mushrooming, *Manila Times*, 2005 May 25.
- [6] Sparacio DC., 2005, Winged migration: international nurse recruitment—friend or foe? *Journal of Nursing Law*, 10, 97-114.
- [7] Karuhije, H. F., 1997, Classroom and clinical teaching in nursing: Delineating differences. *Nursing Forum*, 32(2), 5-12.
- [8] Brown, S. T., 1981, Faculty and student perceptions of effective clinical teachers. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 20(9), 4-15J. Breckling, Ed., *The Analysis of Directional Time Series: Applications to Wind Speed and Direction*, ser. Lecture Notes in Statistics. Berlin, Germany: Springer, 1989, vol. 61.
- [9] Kegel-Flom, P., 1983, Personality traits in effective clinical teachers. *Research in Higher Education*, 19(1), 73-82.
- [10] Mogan, J., Knox, J, 1987, Characteristic of "best" and "worst" clinical teachers as perceived by university nursing faculty and students. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 12, 331-337S.
- [11] Gignac-Caille, A. M., Oermann, M. H., 2001, Student and faculty perceptions of effective clinical instruction in ADN programs. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 95, 347-353.
- [12] Madhavanprabhakaran, GK, Shukri, RK, Hayudini. J, Narayanan, SK., 2013, Undergraduate Nursing Students' Perception of Effective Clinical Instructor: Oman. *International Journal of Nursing Science* 3(2): 38-44.
- [13] Bergman K and Gaitskill T., 1990, Faculty and student perceptions of effective clinical teachers: an extension study *J Prof Nurs* 6 33-44.
- [14] Walsh, D.J., Maffei, M.J., 1994, Never in a class by themselves: an examination of behaviors affecting the student-professor relationship. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*. 5, 23-49.
- [15] Collinson, V., 1999, Redefining teacher excellence. *Theory into Practice*. 38, 4-11.
- [16] Nicholl H, Timmins F., 2005, Programme-related stressors among part-time undergraduate nursing students. *J Adv Nurs*. 50(1), 93-100.

- [17] Magnussen, L. and Amundson, M.J., 2003, Undergraduate Nursing Student Experience. *Nursing and Health Sciences*, 5, 261-267.
- [18] Gibbons C, Dempster M, Moutray M., 2008, Stress and eustress in nursing students. *J Adv Nurs*. 61(3), 282-290.
- [19] Krichbaum, K., 1994, Clinical Teaching Effectiveness Described In Relation To Learning Outcomes of Baccalaureate Nursing Students. *Journal of Nursing Education* 33, 306-314A. Karnik, "Performance of TCP congestion control with rate feedback: TCP/ABR and rate adaptive TCP/IP," M. Eng. thesis, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, India, Jan. 1999.
- [20] Darling-Hammond, L., Wise, A.E. and Pease S.R., 1983, Teacher evaluation in the organizational context: a review of the literature. *Review of educational research*, 53, 285-237.
- [21] Smith, R.A., Cranton, P.A., 1992, Students' Perceptions of Teaching Skills and Overall Effectiveness Across Instructional Settings. *Journal of Research in Higher Education*, 33(6), 747-764.
- [22] Allison-Jones, L. L., Hirt, J. B., 2004, Comparing the teaching effectiveness of part-time and full-time clinical nursing faculty. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 25, 238-243.