Rethinking assessment of competence within a first year nursing science module

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Research Team
Background literature

• assessing competence in nursing education is controversial and a current world-wide concern (Anderson, 2008; Cowan et al., 2005; Lauder et al., 2008; Pincombe et al., 2007)

• assessment of competence remains under-researched (Rychen, 2004).
The initiative/practice

NCNZ competencies incorporated into the science modules

Bernstein, B. (1973)
Developing competence

- Building blocks
- Links to context
- Performance in more than one context
- Complex performances

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3
**Year One Science Competency** – safely and accurately measure BP in a managed context and make a basic interpretation of the result

**Matrix of competence**
Research aim

To develop and evaluate an innovative assessment tool which would provide evidence of whether students were developing science informed competence for nursing
Assessment tool

• OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) – practical test

• 14 stations; 2½ minutes per station

• e.g. Give 2 reasons why it is important for a student nurse to know the correct names of bones
Method

Research Questions

- Does the new assessment tool provide evidence that students are making links between science learning and nursing practice?
- Does the new assessment tool provide evidence of students’ developing science-informed competence?
- How do students understand the new assessment tool?
- What is their response to the new assessment tool?

Validity

- Construct validity
- Concurrent validity
- Consequential validity

Data Collection

- Science-informed competence matrix map comparison
- Analysis of student results on a 4 point Likert scale
- Correlation of student results from HLSC514 and HLBN513
- Student self completion questionnaire
- Student focus group interview
Evidence of effectiveness

• Construct
  – All aspects of competence assessed
• Concurrent
  – Low
• Consequential validity
  – Understood purpose of tool
  – Negative response to assessment
Conclusion

• Challenges and tensions remain
• New understandings gained
• Future changes to the assessment tool are more likely to be based on students’ pedagogical preferences (Boud, 2007)
References


