INTRODUCTION

Background & Significance

All cultures are heterogeneous and in constant change therefore we emphasise attitudinal change and self-knowledge (Ramsden, 1993) so that any knowledge students have gained can be held tentatively as potential not as an imposed reality. There has been much research related to Cultural Safety there seems to be little that has investigated students' ways of knowing in the first year of an undergraduate nursing degree.

Specific Aims

• To explore and understand student needs related to their ways of thinking
• To explore the effectiveness of reflection, using on-line journaling, to students’ ways of thinking about the topics
• To investigate / consider how our pedagogical approaches can support students’ to stretch to more complex ways of thinking

Recruitment

All the students from one semester (n=92) were informed verbally about the study and given written information and a consent form. 59 signed consent forms were returned. The consenting students names were given to an associate not involved in the research who randomly selected 25. The associate retrieved these student’s assignments and each set was given a random number.

METHOD

We developed a matrix based on the work of three constructivist-developmental theorists. Our matrix had five positions: dualism, stretching to relativism, relativism, stretching to propositional and propositional. As these were first year students we were particularly interested in the shifts from dualism to relativism without excluding more complex ways of knowing.

Using the lens of the developmental framework each journal was read and reread separately by both researchers. Following the first reading we discussed our initial findings. Using the theoretical framework the different positions that students demonstrated were identified. Following a final reading we completed the matrix using our own comments and students’ quotes that we believed characterised their ways of thinking about the topics in this module.

THEORETICAL MODEL

The model was adapted from Perry (1970), Belenky et al (1986), and Keegan (1994; 2001)

RESULTS

Example of a more dualistic way of thinking.

"I think I should keep an open mind & use other people’s cultures to help me learn about my own”

Example of a more relativistic way of thinking.

“...knowing the impact myself as a nurse has on others as well as the impact the system has...

DISCUSSION

The three pedagogical strategies in the chart have emerged as helpful to students’ ability to stretch to new ways of knowing. Students need safety which is enabled through tutors’ emotional presence in tutorials & the iterative nature of the journal. This allows students to defend themselves when they feel challenged and also to stretch at different points in the module. Additionally, the wave tool gives them a space to imaginatively (re)position themselves in relation to the material they are engaging with.

A limitation of the cognitive model was that it did not adequately describe the thinking styles of students of non-Western ethnicities. This aspect needs further research to enable us to work meaningfully with students of different ethnicities.

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Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Potential sample</th>
<th>Randomised sample*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZ Maori</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ethnicities*</td>
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<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*B to retain confidentiality ethnicities remain undefined


