

How do perioperative nursing students experience the learning environment in the operating room?



Lovisenberg
diakonale høgskole

Hvordan opplever videreutdanningsstudenter i operasjonssykepleie læringsmiljøet ved operasjonsstua?

A qualitative study

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Aim:

To describe how operating room students experience the learning environment in practice studies OR departments



Background

- Research is scarce
- The learning environment is marked by
 - time limitations
 - pressure for efficiency
 - inadequate guidance time
- Students struggle with integrating practical and theoretical knowledge
- Gaining deeper insight is crucial for improving the educational quality of clinical placements



Methodology: Qualitative descriptive design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design because:

Suitable for research on human characteristics i.e experiences, thoughts, motives and attitudes



Data collection

- 2 focus group interviews
- Each group lasted approximately 1 hour
- The researcher acted as the moderator, with a co-moderator present



Sampling

- Eleven perioperative nursing students from the same cohort and at the same university
- All of them had practical training at different hospitals
- All of them had successfully completed and passed all of their practical periods
- Approval from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD).



The analytic process

Systematic text condensation (STC) as described by Malterud (2012b).



Results

3 Main groups and sub-groups:

- Formal supervisors' importance.
 - Supervisor competence.
 - Continuity.
- Informal supervisors' importance.
 - Aligning supervision according to the tasks of other professional groups in the team
 - Use of power tactics
- Complex and unpredictable learning environment.
 - Unprepared for complexity.
 - Lack of influence on daily work.



The importance of formal supervisors

- Formal supervisors play a significant role in the learning environment
- They provide structured guidance and support



Supervisor competence

Experienced:

- Social and professional competence
- Time for space and reflection
- Updated on goals and learning outcomes



Continuity in supervision

Experienced:

- Continuity gave trust
 - Width and depth of learning
- Achievement and self-confidence
 - Particularly important in the first practice
- Random supervision
 - Varying execution/observer



The importance of informal mentors

- An informal mentor is a person who offers guidance and support without having a formal or official role as a mentor.
- Informal mentors can be valuable resources as they often have personal experience and practical knowledge in areas that may not be covered by formal mentoring structures.



Guide without disrupting operations

- *Experienced:*
- The guidance had to take place quietly
- The guidance had to take place without disturbing other professions



Use of power tactics

- *Experienced:*
 - Ignoring and scolding
 - Surgeons had a significant impact on the atmosphere
 - Fear of making mistakes



A complex and unpredictable work environment

- *Experiences:*
- Unprepared for the complexity
- Lack of influence over one's own daily life



Unprepared for the complex work environment

- *Experiences:*
- Time pressure - emphasis on efficiency
- High noise levels
- Unprepared for the communication style
- Difficulties in grasping the complexity and seeing connections



Lack of influence over daily work life

- *Experienced:*
 - Unpredictability
 - Random guidance
 - Constantly changing placements
 - High complexity with excessive mastery demands
 - Limited influence over one's own day
 - Being used as labor
 - Previous work experience without relevance



So what can we do to make it better for the students?

- Preparing students in advance:
 - School: Clear learning outcomes developed in collaboration with practice (master's program)
 - Practice: Information about the department-contact nurse/design
- Clarify expectations in the tripartite conversation
- Meet the student as someone with prior knowledge
 - They are nurses, not "just" students!
- Preferably have consistent supervisors
 - Start with the basic skills-build a bridge between theory and practice
 - Provide opportunities for task repetition/quantity training to experience mastery
 - Allow the supervisor opportunities to enhance their competence through practice supervisor courses



Thank you

[Link til artikkel](#)



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