

Assessment of Quality Assurance Activities For Medical Surgical Course At Faculty of Nursing, Mansoura University: Students' Perspective

Wessam Ahmed Elsayed¹, WalaaNasreldinOthman^{2*},
HebaAbobakr M. Salama²

¹ Lecturer of Nursing Administration, Faculty of Nursing, Mansoura University, Egypt

² Lecturer of Medical-Surgical Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, Mansoura University, Egypt

*Corresponding Authors: dr.walaanasr@yahoo.com

Abstract

Background: Nowadays, Quality assurance is considered a major concern for providers of services in the society especially in higher education and the health services. Checking of students' perceptions is one of main items can help the success of the educational courses and beneficial for course development and improvement.

Aim: This study aimed to assess quality assurance of Medical -Surgical course at Faculty of Nursing, Mansoura University from Students' perspective.

Methods: This study was carried out at Faculty of Nursing, Mansoura University with all available students of third level who have been studied and passed exam of medical surgical course.

Results: The results noted that, total mean score of students' responses regarding course content, course design and course assessment standard was 36.29 ± 10.33 , with Min-Max(13 -56). There was no significant difference noted between gender and total scale score.

Conclusion: Data provided by students' perceptions about medical surgical course revealed that the assessed items were fully met criteria around fifty percent.

Keywords: Medical surgical course, Quality assurance, Students' perspective,

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I. Introduction

Nowadays, quality assurance is considered a major concern for providers of services in the society especially in higher education and the health services. Nursing, a profession career dealing with human being, is a combined and integrated process of interpersonal interactions, in addition to human-system relationships, cultural, political and social community connections that must ensure quality assurance in the training of those who are the providers of services to their service recipients (Mgbekem, & Samson, 2016). Nursing education is an important and integral skill that consists of different disciplines engaging in a variety of activities carried out by a variety of staff in different settings that demands objective evaluation of its processes and product (Quinn, 2001 in Mgbekem & Samson, 2016). In higher education, the first release of quality assurance concept appear in 1992 as audit (Brown 2000 in Hogston, 2006), but after that it became expensive and considered a burden on institutions of higher education (Brown 1997 in Hogston, 2006). Nursing has a special interest in the quality assurance of higher education like other professions, to attract applicants to the profession (Randall 2002 in Hogston, 2006). Quality assurance in nursing education had two basic objectives: help in designing and implementing effective strategies through equip technical assistance for evaluate quality and correcting systemic deficiencies and refine existing methods for ensuring optimal quality health care through an applied research program (Decker, 1985 and Schroeder, 1984 in Mgbekem, & Samson, 2016).

The nursing courses, specifically, must ensure competent professionals training, who provide safe and quality care (Brackenreg, 2004 in González-Chordá, 2015) as well as active and innovative, able to use up-to-date and future needs of health (Figuerola, 1999 in González-Chordá, 2015) in addition to adapt to the constantly evolving knowledge and technology. It is proper to consider that the good of nursing education can improve the quality of care provided as well as professional development (Maciá Sole, 2013 in González-Chordá, 2015). Quality assurance in nursing courses can be achieved by ensuring the efficiency and quality of educational courses and nursing professors through the aforementioned accreditation programs. A cultural change is also required (González, 2014 in González-Chordá, 2015) providing for the participation of all stakeholders (students, professors, practice counselors and staff) for continuous quality improvement (Brown, 2008 in González-Chordá, 2015) Quality assurance as an essential part of all health care delivery, aimed to assess,

evaluate or enhance the quality of care delivered by the health care team. Therefore, quality assurance is assumed for a proper purpose and its feedback used to improve health care. Faculties do best efforts to educate and motivate their staff about putting into consideration quality assurance in all nursing courses, since it is integral to health care. (Wolf, A., Bender, P., Beitz, J., Wieland, D. and Vito, K. 2004).

The importance of studying students' expectations in medical surgical nursing course has been mentioned in the references as an proper technique for not only enhancing students' participation in educational programs but also for developing and evaluating program processes (Reyes, H.L., 2007). Keeping of quality in higher education specially nursing courses is an integral responsibility between both academic and assistance staff (Reyes, H.L., 2007). Concerning course plan and evaluation, Students' expectations have a great value on self-efficacy, learning, knowledge and skills (Thompson & Sheckley, 1997 and Laforet-Fliesser, 1999 in Stavropoulou, 2009).

The investigation of students' perspective prior planning program can provide useful information for teachers and course designers. Such perceptions and experiences can help in design and implement of educational courses and to improve the teaching process as a whole (Stavropoulou, 2009). To get the desired achievement of program outcomes and students' overall educational and professional goals, we are responsible as educators for ensuring an excellent learning experience by providing all suitable resources, planning, and assessment that culminate in courses. Therefore, this paper conducted to assess quality assurance activity for medical surgical course and determine the students' perception toward quality assurance activity related to this course.

II. Study Aim

This study aimed to assess quality assurance activities for medical surgical course from students' perspective and determine their perception for course activities.

2.1 Research questions:

What are the students perception toward quality assurance activities related to medical surgical course?

2.2 Subjects and Method:

2.3 Research design: Descriptive research design was used.

2.4 Setting: The study was conducted at Faculty of Nursing, Mansoura University.

2.5 Sample: convenient sample was used that consists of all the students of third level who have been studied and pass exam in medical surgical course in 1st semester of academic year 2016/2017 in the above mentioned setting.

Tools of data collection: **Quality Assurance Checklist (2009) for Evaluating Learning Objects and Courses** was used for data collection. This tool is composed of three standards namely, Contents, instructional design and assessment. Each standard contains two parts (essential criteria and desirable criteria).

Scoring system: ranged from 0-2 as followed

0 = Unfulfilled, 1 = Partially fulfilled, 2 = Fulfilled.

III. Pilot study

A pilot study was carried out prior starting collection of the data. It consisted of 10% of the study sample selected randomly to ensure the clarity, feasibility and applicability of the tool and to estimate the time needed to fill in the tool's items. The collected data from the pilot study will be excluded from the study results.

3.1 Administrative and ethical considerations:

First, obtain approval to conduct the study from the Scientific Research Ethics Committee at faculty of nursing – Mansoura University. Then inform the students that their participation is voluntary in the study and there is no harm if they choose not to participate and no individual information is shared outside of the research. The Consent was established with the completion of the questionnaires.

3.2 Statistical analysis

Data was collected, coded, organized, categorized, and then transferred into especially designed formats. The data statistical analyzed was done by using statistical package for social science program (SPSS). The data finally tabulated and presented. The quantitative data was presented as mean and standards deviation, while qualitative data presented as frequency and proportion. The analysis of the data was performed to test statistical significant difference between variables of the study. X^2 - test was used to compare between 2 variables.

IV. Results

Table (1): Students' demographic Characteristics n= 196

Age	No	%
19 years	5	2.6
20 years	191	97.4
Sex	No	%
Male	63	32.1
Female	133	67.9
Total	196	100

Table (1) presents the demographic characteristics of the students; the majority of them (97.4) were 20 years old, about two third of them (67.9%) were Female.

Table (2): Students Responses related course content n= 196

Standard A: Content	Meets criterion					
	Fully	Partially		A	N	%
		2	1			
1. Measurable and clear course objectives.	25	3.8	4	2.7	0	6.8
2. provision of clear and complete course specification	7	4.2	9	0.5	0	5.3
3. Objectives are in the same line with content and students levels	9	0.3	9	0.3	8	9.4
4. Matching of course requirements (e.g. timeframes, communication skills, activities and assessments) with objectives	3	2.3	0	0.8	3	6.8
5. Availability of learning assessment, answers with explanations.	8	9.8	6	3.9	2	6.3
6. The course content is accurate, up-to-date and neutral	5	3.3	8	9.8	3	6.8
7. Basic knowledge and communication skills are included with in the course.	00	1.0	8	9.8	8	2
8. Availability of learning resources to help students acquire prerequisite information and skills earlier than beginning of the course	1	6.4	3	2.1	2	1.4
Mean ±SD	10.42 ±3.34					
Min	3					
max	16					

Table (2) this table declares that students' responses varied from 'Fully meets criterion' to 'not applicable' the most items gained fully response were " Course objectives measurable and clear"(63.8%)followed by " Basic knowledge and communication skills are incorporated with in the course"(51%). The study also showed that total mean score of students' responses for content sub-items was10.42 (SD=.3.34), with (Min 3 – Max 16).

Table (3): Students Responses related course Instructional design No= 196

Standard B: Instructional design	Meets criterion					
	Fully	Partially		A	N	%
		2	1			
1. Course design covers numerous teaching methods with displaying a clear understanding of student needs	5	3.4	1	6.4	0	0.2
2. The course is divided into chapters and lessons.	21	1.7	7	9.1	8	2
3. Chapterdirectionsdescribe the aims, activities, and resources.	2	1.8	5	8.5	9	7
4. Each lesson includes lesson evaluation, standards and activities, assignments and exams.	1	6.2	5	3.4	0	0.4
5. The students engages in course activities that reflect a differentlearning styles	9	5.5	1	6.2	6	8.4
6. Different assignments and activities are						

appropriate for the course content and the students' level.	3	7.4	1	1.3	2	1.2
7. The course is aimed to teach skills in addition to concepts that students will maintain over time	7	4.4	4	2.9	5	2.8
8. Course instruction concerns with engage students in interactive learning	0	5.7	01	1.5	5	2.8
9. Instruction gives student alternative learning pathways to understand the content according their learning needs	9	0.3	4	2.9	3	6.8
10. The course gives opportunities for the students to use high-level of thinking (critical thinking, problem solving, and taking decision.	5	8.5	4	2.7	7	8.9
11. Instructional course design allows accommodation with special student needs	0	5.9	8	9.8	8	4.3
12. Teacher- student interaction is maintained through course design, including continuous feedback about student progress.	3	2.3	5	8.3	8	9.4
13. Information and learning materials that enrich the course content is easily accessed to students	7	4.4	3	2.3	6	3.3
14. Course gives opportunities for students to give feedback on course content	9	5.4	2	6.7	5	7.9
Mean ± SD	18.17 ± 5.54					
Min	6					
max	28					

Table (3) this table represents that the only item get percent more than **61.7%** fully response was related to "The course is divided into units and lessons". While, about half of the sample **51.5%** have partially response only regarding " Course instruction concerns with engaging students in interactive learning" it also showed that total mean score of students' responses for Instructional design sub- items was **18.17 (SD= 5.54), with (Min 6 – Max 28)**.

Table (4): Students Responses related course assessment No= 196

<i>Standard C: Assessment</i>	Fully		Partially		NA	
	2	1	1	0	0	0
1. Assessment techniques are constant with course objectives and are clearly informed.	2	1.8	6	3.9	8	4.3
2 Assessment students' achievement of learning objectives presented in course structure adequately and appropriately.	5	3.2	09	5.6	2	1.2
3. Ongoing assessments are conducted to verify the learner understands.	9	5.4	2	6.7	5	7.9
4. Assessment techniques inform the student about his/her progress.	8	0	3	7.2	5	2.8
5. Assessment techniques are adequate, flexible to assess student in a numerous ways.	0	5.9	2	6.7	4	7.3
6. Grading system and models are available to teacher for assessing student.	9	5.4	0	5.7	7	8.9
Mean ±SD	7.69 ±2.67					
Min	0					
max	12					

Table (4) this table illustrates that the item related to " Assessment techniques inform the student about his/her progress." get **50 %** fully response while the item related to " Assessment students' achievement of learning objectives presented in course structure adequately and appropriately " get partially response more than fifty percent (**55.6%**). Students responses varied from fully meets criterion' to 'not applicable" with a mean score of **7.69 (SD= 2.67), with (Min 0 – Max 12)**.

Table (5): Students' total standards responses (content, design, assessment) No= 196

Mean ±SD	36.29 ± 10.33
Min	13
max	56

Table (5) revealed that, total mean score of students' responses regarding course content standard, course design standard and course assessment standard was **36.29 (SD= 10.33) , with (Min 13 – Max 56)**.

Table (6):Relation between gender and total score of the three standards No= 196

r	Gende	Total content stander	Total design standard	Total assessment
		X ² test P	X ² test P	X ² test P
	Male & Female	0.939	0.244	0.719

Table (6) showed that, there wasn't statistical significant difference between students' gender and course content, course design and course assessment at **P 0.939, 0.244 and 0.719 respectively**

V. Discussion

Examination of students' expectations is important for the success of the educational Courses and beneficial for course development and improvement. So, The present study was conducted to assess the quality assurance criteria of medical surgical course from their perspective.

VI. Demographic Characteristics

Based on the study results, the personal data for the participated students represents that the majority of them were 20 years old. This come in agree with **(Mahmoud Y, 2014)** who noted that about half of participated students' age, were ranged from 20 - 22 years, this may be the participated students were regular and normally upgrading. The study also showed that, about two third of them were Female. This come in contrast with **(Mahmoud Y, 2014)** who said that, the gender distribution in his study do not differ approximately.

6.1 Students' responses related course content

This study declared that students' responses varied from 'Fully meets criterion' to 'not applicable' the most items gained fully response were " Measurable and clear course objectives ", and " Basic knowledge and communication skills are included with in the course.". This findings come in agree with Bydam J,(2004) who noted that, the importance of studying students' expectations on course's content has been illustrated in the research paper as a proper tool for increasing individuals' engagement in educational programs in addition to developing and evaluating program processes. Salsali M (2005) discussed the importance of studying students' expectations in depth on course contents. Granum V (2004) make notes specially on care quality issue and focused on students' expectation about their education and stressed on quality of care should be examined prior the application of any educational activity. Tang F., Chou S., and Chiang H,(2005) reported that investigating students' perception can be useful for development and improvement of the program.

6.2 Students' responses related course Instructional design

This study represented that, the only item get more than fifty percent fully response was related to "The course is divided into chapters and lessons.". While, about half of the sample have partially response only regarding " Course instruction concerns with engage students in interactive learning". It also showed that total mean score of students' responses for Instructional design sub- items was 18.17 (SD= 5.54), with (Min 6 – Max 28). This is come in accordance with **(Dante A., Valoppi G., Saiani L., and Palese A, 2011)** who reported that, the primary reason for developing a quality improvement framework is to help responsible individuals to organize integrated, designated quality programs that have the opportunity for success in today's fast-paced health care surrounding, as well as exploration of students' perception on course design is important for the success of the teaching programs.

6.3 Tang F., Chou S., and Chiang H,(2005)

summarized that, by examining students' expectations and perspectives prior implementation of the educational program, positive or negative trends can be easily touched, which important for planning the incoming program. Several studies considered many aspects during measuring students' expectations related to nursing courses, such as self-empowerment and personal development **(Carrick J, 2010 and Smith H., and Nortvedt M, 2008)**

6.4 Students responses related course assessment

The study illustrated that, the item related to " Assessment techniques inform the student about his/her progress " get fifty percent fully response while the item related to " Assessment students' achievement of learning objectives presented in course structure adequately and appropriately " get partially response slightly more than fifty percent. Students responses varied from fully meets criterion' to 'not applicable" with a mean score of 7.69 (SD= 2.67),with (Min 0 – Max 12).Concerning program plan and evaluation, **Carrick J,(2010)** and **Smith H., and Nortvedt M,(2008)**reported the value of students' expectations on self-efficacy, learning, knowledge and skills.As regards learning processes, it is valued to confirm that from a teacher's perception, appreciation of the elaboration of "learning" for the students, is appropriate in order to help students to develop as learners and consideration of students' expectations is important for enhancing learning methods and strategies.

6.5 Students' total standards responses (content, design, assessment)

The finding of the study revealed that, total mean score of students' responses regarding course content standard, course design standard and course assessment standard was 36.29 ± 10.33 with (Min 13 – Max 56). The core of the recognize students' perception prior the structuring and application of an educational course i.e nursing course ,relates to the good understanding, and matching students' characteristics with expectations throughout the process of the course. Regarding these issues improve main judgments toward the process of introducing educational courses to a particular group of health professionals (Nahas V., and Yam B, 2001). Another study done by (Oermann M., Saewert K., Charasika M., and Yarbrough S, 2009) found that, students' reactions and interactions related to the development of the course can give a positive effect to the course development specially at initial stage. In this regard, investigating issues related to students' expectations and experiences can be a significant guide for developmental of the overall educational process.

6.6 Relation between gender and total score of the three standards

The study reported no significant difference detected between students' age and course content, course design and course assessment. This comes in agree with (**Mahmoud Y, 2014**) who illustrated that there is no statistically significant difference was detected between students' gender and their expectations of the quality assurance items of all curriculums. This findings may be due to that male and female students are from the same culture, have the same background, and have the same characteristics. In addition to that medical – surgical nursing course was taught by the same teachers, introduced the same contents, the students attend clinical rotation in the same places, and exams and assignment was introduced same to all the students. The finding of the study supported by other results, (**Ozdemir A., Akansel N., and Tunk G.C, 2008**) in which they examined academic achievement of nursing students during classroom and clinical learning, they found no statistically difference among study outcome and the students sex. **Dante A., Valoppi G., Saiani L., and Palese A,(2011)** added that students' academic success rate is not affected with sex. Other study by (**Nahas V., and Yam B, 2001**) mentioned that there is no significant differentiation between students sex and their awareness related to teacher qualified competencies, interpersonal rapport and individual character.

VII. Conclusion

Data provided by students' perceptions about medical surgical course revealed that the assessed items, were fully met the quality assurance criteria around fifty percent.

VIII. Recommendations

1. Development of medical- surgical nursing courses can be positively affected by investigating students' experiences and perceptions,
2. Regular assessment should be designed to ensure that the continuous improvement of the student experience related to quality assurance and enhancement activity,
3. Department staff should take personal responsibility for enhancement qualities of their contribution towards improving course outcomes.

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