

The Impact of Preceptor Behavior on the Critical Thinking Skills of Beginning ICU Nurses

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Abstract

Little research has been conducted to examine how preceptor behaviors impact the critical thinking (CT) of the beginning intensive care unit (ICU) nurses. The purpose of this study was to explore perceptions of new graduate nurses about the extent to which preceptor behaviors and strategies in an ICU unit promoted or hindered the development of these beginning nurses' CT skills. A qualitative exploratory descriptive design was used. Overall, 16 new graduate nurses hired to work in two large educational hospitals that offer comprehensive critical care nursing preceptorship participated in this study. Data were collected using demographic surveys and semi-structured interviews. Data were analyzed using a qualitative content analysis approach that identified various themes, which reflected the perceptions of new graduate nurses with respect to how their preceptor behaviors affected their CT. The findings of this study revealed that relationships between new graduates and their preceptors played a key role in the development of new graduates' CT and specific practical implications were suggested. This study offers data useful to critical care nurses, preceptors, nurse educators, and clinical nurse specialists. It contributes to efforts to enhance the preceptor-preceptee relationship to develop the CT of new graduates. It also contributes to the research and literature in the discipline of CT and preceptorship in clinical research and nursing education. Most importantly, it contributes to improved safety and care for patients, and cost-effective nursing care by new graduate nurses. The findings can be used to influence the development of future new graduate nurses' preceptorship programs to make the preceptor-preceptee relationships more conducive to novice ICU nurses' CT.

Biography

Mahmoud Kaddoura has completed his PhD in Health Professions Education from Simmons College, his Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) in Health Professions Education from Simmons College, his post Master's Adult and Gerontology Nurse Practitioner Certificate from the University of Massachusetts (U-Mass Boston), his Master's in Education and MSN from the University of Natal, and his BSN and Teaching Diploma from the American University of Beirut (AUB). He is an associate professor at MCPHS University (AKA Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Boston, MA. He is also a Nurse Manager, Off Shift Operations, at Cambridge Health Alliance, Cambridge Hospital, MA. He has published more than 12 papers in reputed peer-reviewed journals and serving as a reviewer for various reputed journals.