

Zest for Inter-Professional Learning (IPL) Among the Nursing Students in one of the Private Nursing Institutions in West Malaysia

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Abstract

Interprofessional learning (IPL) is about learning arising from the interaction between members (or students) of two or more professions. IPL can contribute to patient safety where it enhances understanding of professional roles; shares approaches learning and explores different learning and teaching preferences. While the importance of IPL is gaining widespread acceptance, healthcare professions are lacking in its training programs. Many are ignorant of the other health professions due to a lack of collaboration in their respective scope of education. As for healthcare students such as medical, nursing, physiotherapy, pharmacy or medical imaging excited to start the program. This study aimed to determine to which extent the readiness of the nursing students with the IPL program. This is a cross-sectional study with self-administered questionnaires conducted on 157 of year three diploma in nursing students. Convenient sampling sizes were calculated based on Krejcie Morgan (1970). The instrument used to measure the readiness based on Teamwork & collaboration, Professional identity, Role of profession and confidence in communication by Casey-Fink Readiness (2008). Data were analyzed through SPSS version 20 with 5 Likert scale measurement. The overall result showed 51.3% of respondents agreed that shared learning could help for better teamwork. Nursing students agreed that the subscales of 'teamwork and collaboration' funded the most in the positive of IPL. In conclusion, it can be summarized that students with previous experience in IPL have higher readiness than the student without previous experience of IPL. This study suggested, students who had experience of collaboration with students from other departments had a more positive attitude toward teamwork and collaboration as well as interprofessional learning.

Keywords: Inter-professional learning; Nursing students; inter-professional collaboration; Team work

Introduction

Interprofessional learning (IPL) is about learning arising from the interaction between members (or students) of two or more professions [1,2]. The concept of IPL is not new, and over the past ten years, it has become an integral part of many pre- and post-registration health and social care professional programmes throughout the United Kingdom. The driver for this rapid growth in IPL activity is the requirement for health and social care graduates to be competent regarding interprofessional collaboration and team working in a variety of setting [1]. Interprofessional learning is supported globally. The World Health Organisation (WHO) proposes the purpose of this is to develop collaborative practice through which health workers from different professional backgrounds work together with patients, families, carers, and communities to deliver the highest quality of care [2]. This involves professionals engaging with any other person who could contribute to delivering the desired health goals. The WHO proposes that this demands educational or learning approaches which enable the development of working together with a common purpose, commitment, and mutual respect [2].

In healthcare institutions, IPL 'funded' to patient safety where it enhances understanding of professional roles; shares approaches learning and explores different learning and teaching preferences [3-15]. This contributes to increased awareness of the impact of human factors on safety that includes human and individual characteristics

which influence behavior at work, including aspects of communication, team dynamics, and team learning. Poor communication between team members and with patients or carers can impact negatively on patient safety [3].

Universities may struggle with fulfilling these IPE activities throughout education for medicine, pharmacy, nursing, and allied health programs. Several reasons include logistical barriers, identifying and creating events in line with their student's curriculum, and faculty understanding. Many IPE activities focus on clinical knowledge or practice, which forbids early years of practice-based or knowledge gaps in the student's education. Nonetheless, technology presents a novel opportunity to engage students in IPE activities [4].

Interprofessional learning (IPL) is about learning arising from the interaction between members (or students) of two or more professions [1,12]. The concept of IPL is not new, and over the past ten years, it has become an integral part of many pre- and post-registration health and social care professional programmes throughout the United Kingdom. The driver for this rapid growth in IPL activity is the requirement for health and social care graduates to be competent regarding interprofessional collaboration and team working in a variety of setting [1]. Interprofessional learning is supported globally. The World Health Organisation (WHO) proposes the purpose of this is to develop collaborative practice through which health workers from different professional backgrounds work together with patients, families, carers, and communities to deliver the highest quality of care [2]. This involves professionals engaging with any other person who could contribute to delivering the desired health goals. The WHO proposes

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The goal of interprofessional collaboration in healthcare is to provide patient-centered care involving comprehensive and holistic treatment plans. These treatment plans result from the collaborative efforts and interdisciplinary interactions among various health professionals as well as the patient. Therefore, in addition to encouraging meaningful patient participation and decision-making, inter professionalism also requires professionals to continuously exchange knowledge and reconcile their differences to resolve interprofessional education and care issues [5,16]. It is essential for each of healthcare provider to understand own professional identity while in advance gaining the knowledge on other's professional role in the team to guarantee the success of the interprofessional collaboration. According to the study of Bridges D, they were using the models that represent an educational program which is a community-based experience and an interprofessional-simulation experience. The program emphasizes interprofessional team building skills, knowledge of professions, patient-centered care, service learning, the impact of culture on healthcare delivery and an interprofessional clinical component [17]. The community-based experience demonstrates how interprofessional collaborations provide service to patients and how the environment and availability of resources impact one's health status. The interprofessional-simulation experience for the healthcare personnel grants clinical team skills training in both formative and summative simulations used to develop skills in communication and leadership [17]. Thus, healthcare workers such as doctors, nurses, pharmacists, social workers, physiotherapists, and radiation therapists should all involve and act as the model in the interprofessional learning so that they can engage in continuous interaction and teamwork to provide the best possible care for their patients [5] and student's outcomes in the future.

Background of Study

School of Nursing (SON) KPJUC is among the six schools that sheltered under the management of KPJ Healthcare University College as the rest of the school; School of Medicine (Master degree), Pharmacy, Health Sciences, Business and Health, and CBGD. This University college has a total of 2500 students altogether with 280 lecturers. Nursing school is the most prominent school in this

University College. However, the majority of the students from these schools come from the Diploma program besides other programs such as; undergraduate, postgraduate and specialization programs are also conducted as well. Between those schools, the students learning approaches remained traditional.

Nursing school (SON) at KPJUC, was the first private nursing school conducting the nursing programs in the country in 1992, then followed by the rest of schools to make up the name of the University College and number of students. To date, SON has produced almost 5000 nursing graduates' majority from the Diploma of Nursing program working in the 26 KPJ Hospitals throughout the country. The purpose of this study was to determine the IPL program through student's keenness perspectives in one of the private institutions.

Problem Statement

Students in this university college have long been practicing a 'shared' culture in their life as students in campus, dormitory, and clinical placement. However, in reality, the practice of working together as healthcare professional students between the faculties do not transpire. Where is the boo-boo and what necessity to be thru for improvement so that students are learning to collaborate and share in chock-full as a family with better understanding to obtain good students outcomes? The need to educate health professions collaboratively was recognized many years ago and has been cited as a way to improve patient outcomes, particularly those related to quality and safety. Evidence supports the notion that team delivered health care is more effective and efficient. The nursing students must understand and appreciate the roles of other professionals. Perhaps the most effective way to facilitate health professionals' understanding of the roles of other disciplines is to provide shared experiences for students during their initial educational program [6].

Many articles have been published on the development and delivery of IPE, yet there is a paucity of contextual and synthesized evidence on its effectiveness. Unfortunately, the education of the vast majority of health professions students, including nursing students, takes place in silos with very little interaction among the disciplines. Including IPE educational experiences as part of the transformation of nursing education was a resounding recommendation but incorporating IPE experiences into existing nursing curricula is often daunting to nurse educators [7]. While the importance of IPL is gaining widespread acceptance, healthcare professions are lacking in its training programs. Many are ignorant of the other health professions due to a lack of collaboration in their respective scope of education.

To address the undesirable aspects of health care, interprofessional education (IPE) should be progressively introduced into universitybased medicine, nursing, and allied health curricula to improve teamwork and to increase the understanding of roles across health care. Interprofessional education consists of students from different healthrelated professions learning 'from, with and about each other to improve collaboration and the quality of care.' Interprofessional learning refers to the practice, ideally stemming from IPE, of promoting 'effective communication, collaboration, and teamwork within healthcare settings to improve patient care and student clinical learning outcomes. Thus, it is necessary to consider the geographical and institutional context in which IPE is conducted. Student factors, such as their social, economic and cultural backgrounds, as well as the stereotypes, expectations, and attitudes that they bring to higher education, vary considerably between institutions

even within one health profession course, and will probably influence IPE experiences and learning. Thus, it is emphasized that interprofessional learning should begins at the early stage of their study period before they started to develop a negative stereotype to another students from different profession.

Design

This is a cross-sectional study with self-administered questionnaires conducted in one of the private universities in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. Convenience sampling was used on respondents who were in the general criteria, calculated based on Krèjcie Morgan (1970) and the total sampling was 115.

Instrumentation

The instrument was adopted and modified from Casey-Fink Readiness for Practice Survey, 2008 (RIPLS) with some modification done. Written permission was obtained, for the instrument to be used for the study. It consists of 4 domains of readiness for IPL as below and 26 items measured through 5 Likert Scale from strongly agreed to disagree strongly

1. Teamwork & collaboration
2. Professional identity
3. Role of the profession
4. Confidence in communication

Data Collection

Data collected while Diploma of nursing students was in the campus and explanation was given prior to distribution of the questionnaires. Respondents were given five days to answer the questionnaire. The responses rate was 100% (n=115 respondents).

| Ranks | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|-----|-----------|--------------|
| Previous experience in Inter-Professional Learning | | N | Mean Rank | Sum of Ranks |
| IPL | With previous experience of IPL | 63 | 61.47 | 3872.5 |
| | Without previous experience of IPL | 50 | 51.37 | 2568.5 |
| | Total | 113 | | |

Table 2: Difference of students' readiness between the student with previous experience of IPL and with the student who did not experience IPL.

The above result had shown almost 55% of the respondent who had experience with IPL presented high mean rank, 45% of the respondent who had no experience with IPL showed low mean rank. However, through nonparametric statistics, a higher mean rank showed that the respondents with previous experience of IPL had a better keenness for shared learning compared to the respondents who had no experience in IPL.

| | IPL |
|----------------|--------|
| Mann-Whitney U | 1293.5 |
| Wilcoxon W | 2568.5 |
| Z | -1.628 |

Results

Data were analyzed through SPSS Version 20 which was based on the specific objective of the study. Sixty-three (55%) of respondents have some experience of IPL, and 55% of students have experience learning with other students during the course they are currently studying. Together with students from other faculties, they undergo extra curricula such as 'silat,' choir, CSR program, and clubs. The balance of 45% among them, do not consider the activities as IPL, and some of those respondents were inactive with the university's extra curriculum activities.

In general, there is a significant result regarding students' keenness about IPL, especially among students who have had so-called collaboration experience with other students of different faculties. Tables 1 and 2 showed the distributions of the mentioned results.

In this study, more than 50% of the students said they had experience undergoing IPL with students from other faculties, and there were also about 45% of students who had never experienced it. When the analysis was done the data, Table 2 showed, IPL requirements are very significant in the nursing program, and students reacted positively towards it. While Table 3 showed the test statistics for students that have and do not have previous experience in IPL which determined the significance of the data.

| Experience of IPL | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Yes | 63 | 55 |
| No | 52 | 45 |
| Total | 115 | 100 |

Table 1: Students completing survey questionnaire based on previous exposure to IPL.

| | |
|--|-------|
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.103 |
| a. Grouping Variable: Previous experience in Inter-Professional Learning | |

Table 3: Test statistics between students that have and do not have previous experience in IPL Test Statistics.

The above result presented a data on the test statistics that determine the actual significance of the test value. This test value is shown in the table, offered that the students' readiness for a student with previous experience of IPL was not statistically significant with (U=1293.500, p=0.103). Therefore, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference between students' readiness for students with or without the experience of IPL.

| Domain | Items | Lowest Scores Variances | |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------|
| Teamwork & collaboration | The team working skill is important for nursing students | 4.9 | 4.807 |
| Professional Identity | Nursing professionals need to respect and trust each other | 4.44 | 1.045 |
| Role of A Profession | Shared learning throughout the study can help to be better teamwork. | 4.26 | 0.965 |
| Confidence in Communication | I am comfortable asking for help | 4.03 | 1.1 |

Table 4: Reason of Keeness for IPL –The highest scores from the four domains: “What we strongly agree about IPL.”

The results above showed the main reasons for keeness of IPL program among respondents. The results were retrieved from the highest score from the four main domains. The highest answer obtained from the four domains is unified into one statement.

| Domain | Items | Lowest Scores Variance | |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|-------|
| Teamwork and Collaboration | Communication skill should learn with other healthcare students | 4.1 | 0.902 |
| Professional Identity | I do not want to waste time learning with other healthcare students/professionals. | 1.99 | 1.203 |
| | Clinical problem solving can only be learned effectively with students from my own School. | 2.5 | 1.314 |
| | It is not necessary for the nursing student or professionals to learn together. | 2.52 | 1.252 |
| Role profession | I am not sure what my professional role will be. | 2.26 | 1.207 |
| | My profession need more knowledge and skills than another healthcare profession. | 2.96 | 1.423 |
| Confidence in communication | I do not need to communicate with a doctor in patient care. | 2.21 | 1.501 |

Table 5: Reason for Keeness of IPL –The lowest scores from the four domains: “What we strongly disagree about IPL.”

The results above showed the main reasons for keeness of IPL program among respondents through the lowest scores in the four main domains. All answers collected from the questions of harmful elements have been consolidated into a single paragraph of statement support the IPL program.

Discussion

IPL from a student perspective

This study used a cross-sectional design. Among a total of 115 respondents, 55% had experienced collaborating situations with students from other faculties. Whether they were at the University campus, or they were in clinical areas, to them, socializing, talking to hospital staff and talking about learning things with other students, is viewed as collaboration. They are thrilled with the situation and are in the mood for IPL. In the aspect of the curriculum, they are together with students from School of Pharmacy, Health Sciences and Business Health, they conduct martial arts, choir, mountain climbing and performing charitable work together for the community and they think this is IPL, why not?

Interprofessional learning (IPL) is about learning arising from the interaction between members (or students) of two or more professions. IPL can contribute to patient safety where it enhances understanding of professional roles; shares approaches learning and explores different learning and teaching preferences. While the importance of IPL is gaining widespread acceptance, healthcare professions are lacking in its

training programs. Many are ignorant of the other health professions due to a lack of collaboration in their respective scope of education. As for healthcare students such as medical, nursing, physiotherapy, pharmacy or medical imaging excited to start the program (NHS).

Reason for agreement IPL

The results of the study had shown the main reasons for keeness of IPL among respondents. Those results were retrieved from the highest score of the four main domains. From the Table 4, the highest answers obtained from the four domains had been integrated into one statement. A definite recommendation from respondents about the necessity for all students in IPL is as follows. "A good teamwork and collaboration are important for nursing students and Nursing professional to respect and trust each other in the learning experience, and they believe sharing is learning throughout the study help to develop better teamwork, and when they are familiar with one another, it is easy to communicate and ask for help and views [8,9].

“Team working skill is important for nursing students,” it scored the highest at 66% from 115 respondents. If the researchers were to combine the scores of strongly agree and agree, then, it is almost 90% of respondents believed teamwork and collaboration are the keys to the willingness to IPL programs to be implemented in health programs.

Reason for disagreement IPL

The reason for only 55% of respondents agreed to IPL and 45% of respondent were undecided about IPL although Chulani (2017),

mentioned that, even WHO and its partners had identified IPL and practice as an innovative strategy that placed an essential role in justifying the global health workforce crisis [10].

The reason for the undecided of IPL among the 45% of respondents could be due to the following reasons; firstly, this is the first time the word IPL has been introduced to the respondent. Secondly, the respondent would have perceived IPL as the unimportant approach of performing clinical practice because they have their group, task to perform and structured program to be completed.

Thus, for the future, if at all any particular institution who are keen to adopt IPL, the result of this study had shown significant information about introducing the IPL first to the institution as well as to the students is critical. The teacher plays a role in encouraging the students to participate in IPL as adult learners actively. For some students, they may need help in letting go of deferential and hierarchical styles of learning. Thus, Barr H believed that preparation before being ready to enter into a more egalitarian and more democratic socially constructed engagement is essential so that students understand the IPL process and their teachers' expectations [11,12]. This statement is also supported by Lennen (2017), IPL is an integral and necessary practice that must take place to ensure that positive outcomes are achieved and to promote patient safety. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the Institute of Medicine, and the National League of Nursing have prioritized interprofessional collaboration as a crucial component of education necessary to improve the quality of health care [13].

The researchers were also very excited to see the reason for keenness of IPL among the nursing students involved in this study and the analysis was done through the lowest scores from the four domains with the Likert Scale measuring "What we strongly disagree about IPL". In Table 5, all the answers collected from the questions of harmful elements have been consolidated through the highest means of the lowest scores from each item was rearrangement from the 'keenness' of the responses and developed it into a single paragraph statement supporting the IPL program. In this context of study, respondents claimed that communication is a very important element in IPL for all faculties. They believed that every profession must have equal knowledge and they hope to be able to learn together to solve the clinical problem. They know what their duties and responsibilities are and through good communication and the knowledge they acquired through learning together in the form of IPL, they are able to explain to the medical officers about the care they are giving to the patient. The above statement is a sincere statement from the students' keenness and all of us believed what they have reflected in the form of questionnaires given to them.

Development of professional identity and role of the profession

In this study, students claimed that through professional identity in IPL, it assisted them in acquiring the professionals need to respect and trust each other. Keefe (2017) the development of students' professional identity and socialization is proposed as necessary preparation for future interprofessional work. Socialization in health education: encouraging an integrated interprofessional socialization process and interactions with other health professionals can provide students with a rich source of clinical experiences to support individual professional identity formation. IPL is alongside with the acquisition of skills and knowledge both disciplinary and interprofessional team [11]. In parallel to these developments in health care, universities are more

overtly committing to graduating students with skills in collaboration and teamwork. This emphasis on learning outcomes and "graduate attributes" reflects a greater awareness of the abilities needed for employment and responsiveness to employer and community needs and expectations.

Conclusion

This study used cross sectional study which examined the experiences of students from one satellite nursing program and did not include students from other health care professions. Therefore, the results might not represent the perception of all students since the students from other courses experienced different medium of exposure to IPE in their curricular. Level of education of the students also may affect the perception towards IPC and IPE. As in this study the researchers only chose a population from diploma students. This may influence the results as Bachelor students may interpreted different thought toward IPC and IPE as the students have more exposure to inter disciplinary during theoretical class and also clinical practice. This study has provided a conclusion on students' keenness towards IPL. Teamwork and collaboration skills are the keywords for it, as they firmly rejected the statement given such as, "I do not want to waste time learning with other healthcare students /professionals." Any health institution that wishes to implement the IPL program, a starter meal activity should involve the competency of team and teamwork. The overall involvement of all healthcare personnel in the development of IPL will provide a spectacular luminosity of learning to the students. In the more challenging engagement in the construction of IPL, culminating a project that highlights the teamwork of interdisciplinary care of IPL give an impact to the real learning of clinical areas [13-17].

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