Supernumerary Learning Experience on Placement: A Social Learning Perspective

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In this presentation

- The study
- Communities of practice
- Learning by doing
- Supernumerary status
- Findings
- Conclusion and implications
Macau
The study

- The qualitative strand of a qualitative dominant mixed methods study
- Academic year 2012-2013
- One of the nursing institutions in Macau
- Third (n=7) and fourth (n=6) year student nurses → Focus groups
- Clinical instructors (n=5) / mentors (n=5) → Semi-structured interviews
- Thematic analysis
Communities of practice (Wenger, 1998)

- ‘Learning is a process of becoming’ (Wenger, 1998, pp215)
- Mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire
- The duality of participation and reification
  - Reification is a projection of meaning
  - Interconnecting concepts
  - Supernumerary status as a reification of full student status on placement
Learning by doing

- Highly valued in nursing
- ‘Doing’
  - ↑ psychomotor skills
  - ↑ Relationship with ward staff
  - Establish trust with the team
  - Make contributions
  - Gain acceptance, recognition, and a sense of belonging to the workplace
Supernumerary status

- ‘Student will not, as part of their programme of preparation, be contracted by any person or body to provide nursing care’ (Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2010, pp65)
- Learning needs before service needs (O’Connor, 2007, Allan et al., 2011)
- Adopted in some Asian countries since late 1990’s (Chan and Wong, 1999, Liu et al., 2010)
- Not in North American publications
However…

- The idea of supernumerary status is not negotiated within the community of practice of the workplace
  - Has not been localized → not being valued by all members of the community.
- Criticisms
- What students are not supposed to be > what students are expected to be on placement
  - Confusion
Clinical facilitators’ perceptions of supernumerary learning on placement

- ↑ The range of learning and practice opportunities
- ↑ Flexibility of clinical learning
- ↓ Practice opportunities when the ward is busy
- Influence students’ learning attitude
- Better remains tacit
- Presentation of self
Student nurses’ perceptions of supernumerary learning on placement

- Lack of clarity concerning supernumerary status
- The degree of engagement in practice is not as expected
- Boundary between students and ward nurses
Conclusion and Implications

- Supernumerary status allows flexibility
- Inconsistent interpretation
- Imbalance between participation and reification
  - Cannot be corrected by reinforcing the weaker component alone
  - Clarify the meaning of supernumerary status
  - Develop a structural concept of student participation on placement
Thank you

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References:


- NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL 2010. Standards for Pre-registration Nursing Education
