PERCEIVED CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TO HIGH FAILURE RATE OF STUDENTS IN THE NURSES’ LICENSURE EXAMINATION IN ZIMBABWE

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate the perceived contributory factors to the high failure rate of students in the nurses’ licensure examination in Zimbabwe. A sample of 90 consenting general nurses and 10 consenting nurse educators was drawn using the random sampling method. The study employed a descriptive design. A self-administered questionnaire was used as the data collection tool and data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics. The questionnaire covered demographic data, student related factors, physical, psychological and environmental factors, educational factors and other reasons which may contribute to the high failure in the examination as perceived by participants. The data was presented in the form of bar graphs, pie charts and tables. The brain based learning model was used to guide the study. The researcher found out that the academic qualifications of the students’ mentor are a cause of concern as there was no supervisor in the clinical area with at least a degree in nursing. Also, at the time when the study was carried out, there was no nurse educator with a masters’ degree in nursing. This compromises the quality of nursing education. Other factors which were perceived to contribute to high failure of the students in the nurses’ examinations in Zimbabwe were; some student nurses choose nursing as a second career choice hence lack motivation, students studying only during block, thus compromising ability to integrate practical and theory, lack of recreational facilities as these are important to enable students to relax and to relieve stress , staying out of the compass as the students were exposed to noise and travel problems to and from the school, the library opening times were not conducive for the students to study, time allocated for study in preparation for the examinations was also seen to be insufficient, relationship of the students to people in higher offices and the tutors meant that the students were accorded the opportunity to train as a nurse without their intrinsic motivation to be a nurse, nurse educators were reported to be bossy and concerned with social issues of the students, impinging on the students’ freedom to seek help and the effects of travelling to and from examination venues posed stress on the students.