



MOUNT ST. JOSEPH UNIVERSITY®

PRESENTER: Janet N. Wray, Ph.D., R.N.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project was to examine students' mental health in pre-licensure BSN and MSN Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing courses by means of an assignment using the Affective Domain of Bloom's Taxonomy. The objective was to intervene with students who were experiencing significant mental distress that might interfere with their academic and clinical performance. The rationale for this project was increased student and faculty reports of anxiety and depression experienced by students during the pandemic.

INTRO

Studies show a relationship between the stress response and lower levels of performance in areas such as language, information processing, and problem-solving. We don't think well when we don't feel well. The pandemic has been a time of disruption. It has interfered with the ability of many nursing students to do well. Students' focus has turned to self-preservation, depleting energy for critical thinking and clinical reasoning. Nurse educators do not understand this phenomenon well.

METHODOLOGY

Bloom's Affective Domain has suffered neglect in nursing education because it is more difficult to evaluate than the cognitive or the psychomotor domains. An assignment entitled "2020 and Me" that utilizes the Health Nursing courses starting Spring, 2020. Affective Hierarchy of Bloom's Taxonomy was assigned to students in the pre-licensure BSN and MSN Psychiatric-Mental 20. I have continued to utilize this assignment each semester since then. This activity was assigned early in the course during the unit when stress and trauma are taught. The purpose of this reflection exercise was to provide students with an opportunity to reflect upon and to discuss their feelings about their lives during the tumultuous period from 2020 to the present, as well as a means for me to encourage them during this time. I also provided guidance on how they might benefit from the course and from other campus resources.

RESULTS

The reflective assignment was, and continues to be, a powerful tool. Students are authentic and vulnerable in their writings. I obtained the students' permission to share the reflections with other faculty. The reflections have helped the faculty have a better understanding of what the students are experiencing, and the students have said that this writing has helped them process their feelings. The nursing faculty were able to intervene successfully with several students who were in crisis. This had the secondary benefit of diminishing attrition. There is a need to incorporate more assignments that utilize learning skills that are predominately related to emotional (affective) processes such as behaviors of awareness, interest, attention, concern, responsibility, and the ability to listen and respond in interactions with others. This will assist nursing educators to know when students "do not feel well" and it will help us to develop well-rounded learners and nurses.

CONCLUSION

Nurse educators risk focusing upon easily quantified learning outcomes because we value measurable outcomes, and we have less interest in the development of learning in the affective domain.

I recommend course assignments that enhance students' emotional and affective processes, as well as developing measures of evaluating our students' affective learning.

Krathwohl, D.R., Bloom, B.S., Masia, B.B. (1973). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, the Classification of Educational Goals. Handbook II: Affective Domain*. New York: David McKay Co., Inc.

Impact of an affective assignment on nursing students' mental health and retention

AUTHOR



Janet N. Wray, Ph.D., R.N.
Mount St. Joseph University
Cincinnati, OH

OBJECTIVE



The objective was to intervene with students experiencing distress that might interfere with their academic and clinical performance. The rationale was increased student and faculty reports of anxiety and depression experienced by students during the pandemic.

METHODS/TITLE



Nursing students were assigned a 2-5 page reflective essay entitled "The Pandemic and Me: The Story of My Life." They wrote about how they dealt emotionally with COVID-related disruptions, using the 5 categories in the Affective Domain of Bloom's Taxonomy.

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN



Affective domain in Bloom's taxonomy:

- Characterizing/Internalizing values
- Organizing
- Valuing
- Responding
- Receiving/Attending

As Nursing faculty, we emphasize the cognitive and psychomotor domains in our teaching. Yet the affective domain can significantly enhance, inhibit or even prevent student learning. The affective domain includes factors such as student motivation, attitudes, perceptions and values. Satisfaction correlates with retention.

RECOMMENDATIONS



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Future plans and recommendations:

Intentional use of affective assignments

The QR code provides resources on the importance of the Affective domain in promoting esteem and Learning in students thru' teaching effectiveness.

Janet.Wray@msj.edu