

Learning styles is
significant to student
nurses nursing essay



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In my own understanding, learning style is defined as how individuals prefer to learn or their steady way of responding and using stimuli in the aims of improving their learning. According to Keefe (1979) learning style is defined as the composition of cognitive, affective and psychological behaviour that serves as an indicator of how an individual perceives, interacts with and responds to the learning environment. There are numerous definitions to the perspective of learning style. Sims and Sims (1995) also stated that learning style helps in providing means for developing systematic understanding of how to absorb, retain and process the content of information.

In difference, Moseley, Hall & Ecclestone (2004) stated that the diverse experiences of individuals' learning can be difficult to measure to how best an individual's learning styles is determined. This learning style has been majorly stated to allow individuals to learn through the experiences thereby helping different people to organise and manage their own learning (Goldfinch & Hughes, 2007). Understanding learning styles supports student nurses in comprehending the value of learning and developing the skills needed to practice. It is important for an individual to know their learning style because it helps to build and produce effective team work as well as to strengthen self-confidence.

Learning styles have been an aid to reflection as it helps nurses to reflect appropriately on the care of the patients. Without learning styles for nursing students, it can be quite challenging to reflect on a situation as reflection stages involve thinking and learning in order to produce a better outcome. O'Carroll & Park (2007) also stated that reflection has become a key learning tool for practice based professions such as nursing. This simply means

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nurses are expected to reflect at all times based on the kind of care that is given and also to reflect on any areas of improvement, and if the right care is given to the right patients to provide a good standard of care.

According to Cottrell (2003) learning is a multi-faceted process involving an individual's learning history, the environment and the interaction in between. It is therefore based on the styles that are being used to acquire new knowledge and skills (Lesmes-Anel, Robinson & Moody, 2001). Another use of understanding learning styles for student nurses is for strategy how to overcome problematic situations and also to be more competent when qualified. For example if a student nurse have knowledge about their learning style, they will be able to look for the environment that best suit them as an individuals and would be able to work effectively within a team and other interdisciplinary team successfully .

Student nurses will also be able to target areas that need improvement by identifying the areas that are more difficult or a weakness so as to set up a strategy to deal with it for a better outcome, to get more out of education career and to be able to deliver good standard of care to patient. To sum up usefulness of knowing learning style to student nurses it makes learning stress-free, more effective and reduces the chance of anxiety. It also saves student nurses undertaking learning on a hit-and-miss basis, becoming an outstanding learner, increases flexibility and helps to learn from a wide variety of different understanding which can be recognized, informal, planned and unplanned. Learning styles will also enable student nurses to improve and develop learning skills. In addition, it increases awareness of how we learn, opens up the whole process to self-scrutiny and improvement.
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In Honey questionnaire (2006), the author identifies four learning preferences which are Activist, Reflector, Theorist and Pragmatist. My dominant learning style indicated to be a theorist in the formative work. The answer to the questionnaire also shows that my score was also strong for both pragmatist and reflector as a learning preference. While in activist learning style found a low score indicating underdevelopment of my learning style. According to Alghasham (2012) learners predominantly possess different strengths of learning preferences; therefore being dominant in one area does not ultimately imply weakness in the other areas. In the study by Lesmes-Anel, Robinson & Moody (2001) found that learners are predominantly reflector-pragmatist compared with trainers as reflector-theorist.

Being a theorist according to Honey questionnaire I learn most easily from activities where I have the chance to question and probe practice, I am also stretched by analysing a complex situation by working with people who ask searching for searching similar answers. I adapt and assimilate observations into complex and logically sound theories; I also think problems through stage- by-stage and tend to be perfectionists who like to fit things into a clear structure. The activities that allow a theorist to benefit from the learning process for me as a student nurse are situations where there is a chance to discover the association and the interrelationship between ideas, events and situations.

For example, being a theorist allows me to learn best by contributing in class activities which means taking part in good effective communication and it has enabled me to seek for information by asking questions to stimulate

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others participation and also to understand the coherent and the assumptions of the theories. Conversely, the difficulty here is in the case where there are activities without background information or apparent purpose which will impair my learning and where I feel myself out of tune with other participants, for example when with lots of activist or people of lower intellectual competence. (Honey & Mumford, 1986).

Evaluating my learning style as an activist has indicated under-developed style in my learning. Having this style will improve my ability to experience new skills by working as an individual. I will have to develop the aspect of my weaker style which is activist to support my learning on the programme and in my career as a nurse by being able to learn from new experiences as learning needs; I will also be prepared to take risk by going outside the comfort zone of what is identified and experiment new and unfamiliar routine and developments. According to Heidari and Galvin (2003) activist learner is an action learning where the learner becomes independent in the learning process thereby contributing to the team. For this to be achieved increasing the independent learning and reduce my day to day routine work which In this case action plan requiring daily tasks will be applied.

Honey and Mumford (1986) expressed a pragmatist learner learns best through existing activities that allows the individual to try out. This way learner has the tendency to have the opportunity to practice what they have learnt. In this case, being a pragmatist enable me to take part in activities by effort to follow instructions from lectures, colleagues, author's mentors and nurses on placement who have the theoretical and practical experience to share with. For example, during my first placement I had the opportunities to <https://assignbuster.com/learning-styles-is-significant-to-student-nurses-nursing-essay/>

practice under supervision on how to take out cannulation using the Aseptic Non Touch Techniques (ANTT) to remove cannula and Nasogastric tube in both men and women.

This assisted in building myself confidence I needed and also promotes self-regulation of clinical reasoning skills. On the other hand, Honey & Mumford (2000) found that it can be difficult for the learner in situations where the learner cannot see significant reward from the activities. In this case, it will be best for me as a student nurse to link theory to practice by asking questions to clarify points being made to develop my understanding.

Jasper (2003) expressed reflector as an individual who has the experiences of standing back and looking at a situation from different perspective. Having a high score as a reflector in the questionnaire, shows I will enjoy activities which involve watching, observing and listening to people during group discussion and lecturing session. There also the tendency to think about what has happened or learnt by relating new ideas or information to the past experience and then to examine them (Howatson-Jones, 2010). Learning as a reflector will enables me as a student nurse to be thoughtful and consider all possible areas and implications of obtaining detailed information before making decision (Honey & Mumford, 1986).

In conclusion learning style is beneficial for student nurses because it allows individuals to reflect on the past, present and future. It has also indicated my dominant learning style and I was able to identify my weaker style which has aided me to provide an action plan that will equip me to learn from a wide

variety of experiences for me to be able to deliver good standard of care to patients now and in future.

Annotated bibliography

Jasper, M. (2003). *Beginning reflective practice*. Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes Ltd.

This book introduces what reflective practice is all about, importance of reflection, how to reflect both individually and with others, approach of individual learning as well as developing professional practice. It also demonstrates skills necessary for effective practice, benefits of successful reflection to pre-registration and on-going professional development portfolios. The book will also enable student nurses to develop the practical skills necessary to reach the standards for registration as practitioners and make an awareness of individual knowledge, skills and your limitations so as to be competent.

Honey, P. & Mumford, A. (2006). *The learning style questionnaire*.

Maidenhead: Peter Honey Publication.

This learning style questionnaire was given in class and the content of the book explain different definition of learning, focuses on learning styles preferences and helps to see how an awareness of our preferences can help to become more effective learner. It also helps identify our preferred styles and enhance our learning efficiency by guiding us towards learning opportunities that will best suit our partialities. The questionnaire also have 40 learning style question to answer and clarify individual preferred ways of

learning so that discrete people will be in a better position to select
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experiences that suits their style. The book is as used to broaden people scope by strengthening underutilised styles and being able to write essay on how to develop an aspect of our weaker style to support individual learning on the programme.

Madeline O Carroll & Alistair P. (2007). Essential mental health nursing skills: Elsevier publications.

This book will help individual to recognize the skills and resources that students already have and show how these can be developed into the essential skills needed for nursing in health practice environment. The book also identifies four essential skills that are essential to nursing practice and these skills are the ability to form therapeutic relationships, observations, taking on different roles and reflection. Part of the book section focuses on the process of care and provides background in which the essential skills is applied and also covers assessment, care delivery, communication, improving physical wellbeing and managing care.

Howatson-Jones, L. (2010). Reflective practice in nursing. Exeter: Learning Matters.

This book discussed what reflection is, benefit of reflection, it also state a valued accumulation to the transforming nursing practice and emphasis on reflective practice in the NMC standards for pre-registration nursing education. The book provides method for developing logical skills through different way of using personal and professional reflection for learning and developing as a practitioner. The book is an aid to reflect as well as ways to

assimilate personal reflective insight and a means of helping to advance nursing knowledge in more diverse ways.

Heidari, F. & Galvin, K. (2003). Action learning group: Can they help students develop their knowledge and skills? *Nurse Education in Practice*, 3, 49-55.

This article explain what reflection is, acknowledged three stages to promote reflection which one has to go through, it also indicates ways to help student nurses how to reflect that can be used once qualified and when training. The article also talk about the important of reflective practice as learning resources for education is growing and reflecting on their own personal development as well as sharing the improvement. To sum up the article states the aim of action learning groups (ALGs) and evaluates importance, weakness and strength of the book to student nurses.

Lesmes-Anel, J., Robinson, G. & Moody, S. (2001). Learning preferences and learning styles: a study of Wessex general practice registrars. *British Journal of General Practice*, 51, 559-564.

This British journal of general practice states learning experiences generate during the year in practice and the aim of this journal are to determine for the general practice registrars the nature of their learning preferences, learning styles and relationships between them. The journal also introduces what learning styles is and how honey and Mumford questionnaire establish the learning styles of 63 general practice learners in their year of practice and how experienced trainers react very differently to identical learning experiences during the year in practice. Finally this journal describe activist

as having experiences, reflector as reviewing experiences, theorist as concluding from experience and pragmatist as planning the next steps.

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