

Investigating Medical Practitioner Competency using del Bueno's Concept

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Abstract

Current health care organizations have witnessed pressure extend to the leadership practice in which globalization continues to demand inventive, creative and innovation-driven outcomes – that are associated with performance improvement. In healthcare organizations, future success lies in efforts towards developing and implementing leadership strategies that systematically address critical issues while adapting to uncertainty and rapid change. Credentials and exam scores, which define the level of competency in an individual, foster career development in nursing. A group of competent nurses is that which has a proven knowledge base and demonstrates a greater professional competency to issues such as lifelong learning. Other attributes include professional opportunities through input and influence and, personal accomplishment through routine empowerment, fulfillment and pride. Other outcomes include the reduction of medication errors, avoidable hospitalizations, and improved patient outcomes. Indeed, future success lies in efforts towards developing and implementing leadership strategies that systematically address critical issues while adapting to uncertainty and rapid change. Credentials and exam scores, which define the level of competency in an individual, foster career development in nursing. A group of competent nurses is that which has a proven knowledge base and demonstrates a greater professional competency to issues such as lifelong learning. Other attributes include professional opportunities through input and influence and, personal accomplishment through routine empowerment, fulfillment and pride. Other outcomes include the reduction of medication errors, avoidable hospitalizations, and improved patient outcomes.

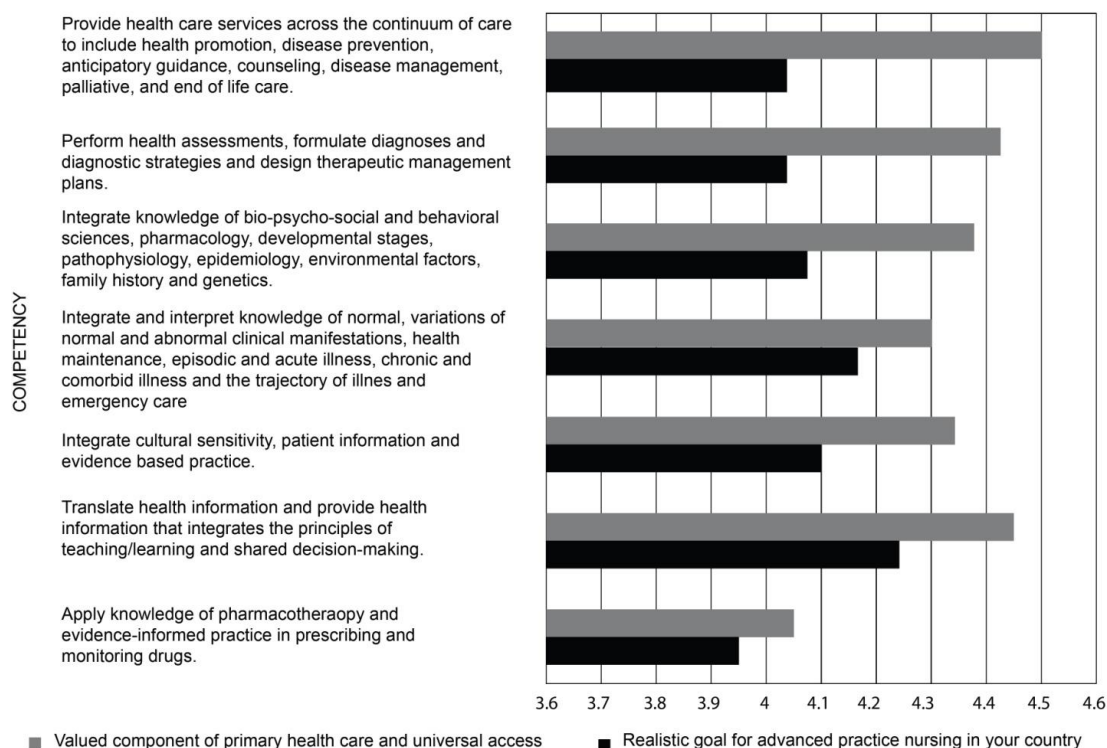
Introduction

In nursing, competency refers to the practitioners' ability to provide care services efficiently or successfully. Therefore, a competent nurse is one who engages in role performance and task completion using the talents, **skills**, and expertise available (Redman, Lenburg & Hinton, 1999). According to del Bueno (2001), the validation and measurement of nursing practice in the healthcare sector aids in ensuring the provision of high-quality, evidence-based, and safe care to patients. this outcome arises from the healthcare environment's complexity in such a way that nurses ought to engage in educational programs that foster the acquisition of requisite abilities, skills and knowledge for providing care at the individual and healthcare team levels. Indeed, the validation of competence poses direct implications on patient outcomes while reducing costs among healthcare firms.

Methods

The concept of assessing the practitioners' competency is informed by the array of individual differences, characterizing a majority of the current, multicultural workplaces. Therefore, a mechanism that seeks to enable the educators and employers assess practitioner competencies before assigning them to practice contexts and, advancing them through educational programs is crucial. Specifically, the mechanism of assessing competency focuses on the manner in which the nurses' actions align to the goals and objectives of a given healthcare organization. Two major approaches are used to assess competencies. On one hand, Competency Performance Assessments (CPAs) focus on all class assignments that affect the course grade. CPAs include presentations, participation, projects, and papers. On the other hand, Competency Performance Examinations (CPEs) apply to clinical contexts to understand potential clinical outcomes. The implication is that CPAs apply to class work while CPEs apply to practice or clinical settings (Byrne, Delarose, King & Leske et al., 2007). Notably, the tools define critical elements that entail observable, discrete and single mandatory behaviors that all nurses ought to exhibit. Therefore, CPAs and CPEs are content- and context-specific in such a way that they describe what is required towards acceptable performance with exactness; applying to both the non-clinical and clinical courses. Indeed, this pre-determined foundation determines the course grade.

Results



From the affirmations, CPEs and CPAs ensure that the practitioners possess knowledge consistent with the state of practice and science that aids in fostering performance while evaluating their ability to perform in particular contexts. Also, the elements document that a given practitioner can (consistently and accurately) perform in practice. It is also worth noting

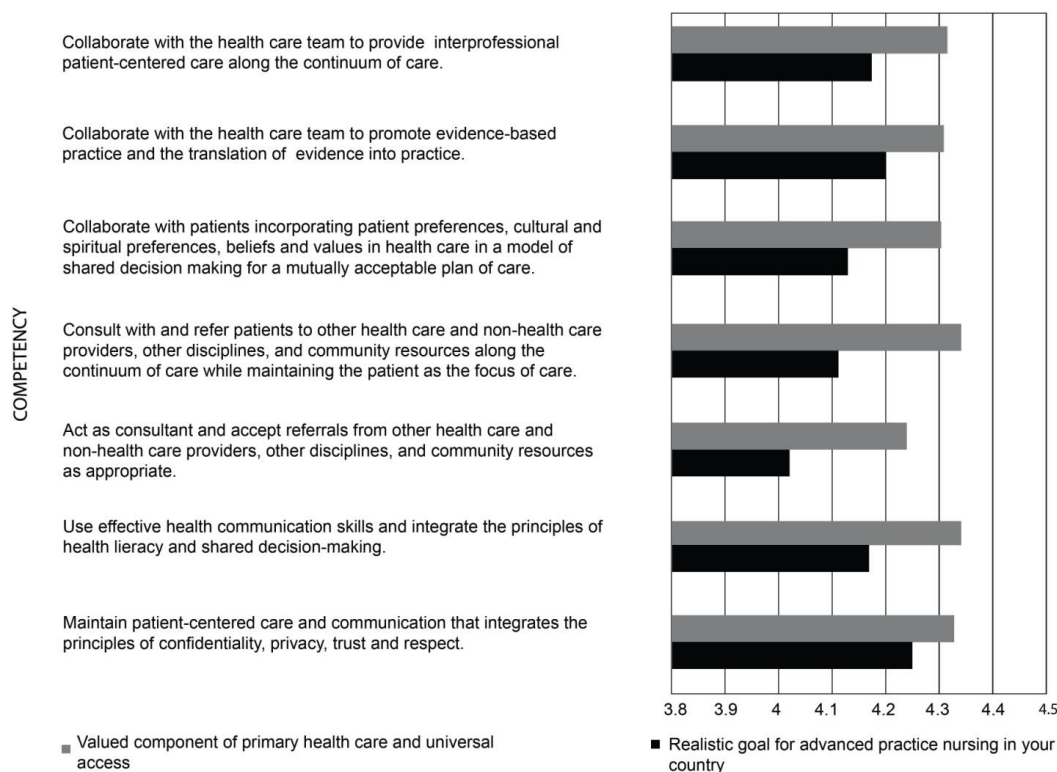
that CPAs and CPEs incorporate the principles of reliability and validity. Whereas reliability entails the degree to which scores and related measures remain unchanged after being tested and retested among evaluating teams, validity refers to the degree to which certain measures assess what they are intended to measure (Redman, Lenburg & Hinton, 1999).

During the development of competency programs, various models are applied. However, common components that foster safe nursing practices include the examination of one's clinical effectiveness, attitudes and abilities, skills, and knowledge. The assessment of one's knowledge is necessitated by the rapid pace of scientific advances and change. According to del Bueno (2001), the assessment of knowledge focuses on the awareness of biopsychosocial issues that the families and patients face, standards of practice, and the best available evidence. Indeed, knowledge is evaluated through reflective journals, testing, and dialogue.

On the other hand, the component of skill attainment is critical to safe patient care. Specifically, technical skills in nursing can be demonstrated in simulation settings or classrooms. By accurately demonstrating skills, the outcome forms a reflection of the ability of nurses to perform patient care processes while using the equipment safely and appropriately (Byrne, Delarose, King & Leske et al., 2007). Regarding non-technical skills (that include patient teaching and communication), some of the approaches adopted during the assessment include role playing, case studies, and alternative interactive techniques.

Regarding the assessment of attitudes and abilities of nurses, the main aim is to understanding the application of knowledge to practice settings. Therefore, an effective application of skills and knowledge in practice settings is perceived as that which entails the practitioners' engagement in decision-making, prioritization, and clinical judgment. Practical, indicators of a competent practitioner are inferred from outcomes such as trends in medication errors, infection rates, and fall rates (Redman, Lenburg & Hinton, 1999).

According to Byrne, Delarose, King and Leske et al. (2007), some of the most crucial purposes for nursing program credentialing include public protection, the ability to meet the needs of practitioners and employers (through the identification of individuals with certain skills and knowledge), and the assurance of consumers regarding the professional's satisfaction in relation to the standards of practice (del Bueno, 2001). Also, exam scores and credentials in nursing demonstrate the practitioners' commitment to lifelong learning and the profession, as well as offering the practitioners with a sense of professional accomplishment; besides pride (Byrne, Delarose, King & Leske et al., 2007).



Regarding the issue of accomplishment and professional recognition, credentials foster respect among certified nurses. Indeed, exam scores and credentials confirm the capability and competency of a nurse to the administrators, supervisors, patients and peers. Furthermore, credentials and exam scores indicate levels of clinical competence, enhance professional credibility, and validate specialized knowledge.

Regarding the concept of professional achievement, credentials and exam scores distinguish certified nurses in their area of specialty. As such, an increase in the complexity of patient acuity and healthcare delivery meets appropriate adjustments because the demand for highly skilled and experienced care providers may not pose a critical challenge to an already-prepared team of practitioners. The assertion implies that competent nurses with desirable credentials and exam scores exhibit an improved ability to care for critically ill, chronic, and acute patients. Overall, credentials and exam scores aid in raising the nursing profession's stature.

Conclusion

In conclusion, current health care organizations have witnessed pressure extend to the leadership practice in which globalization continues to demand inventive, creative and innovation-driven outcomes – that are associated with performance improvement. In healthcare organizations, future success lies in efforts towards developing and implementing leadership strategies that systematically address critical issues while adapting to uncertainty and rapid change. Credentials and exam scores, which define the level of competency in an individual, foster career development in nursing. A group of competent nurses is that which has a proven knowledge base and demonstrates a greater professional competency to issues such as lifelong learning. Other attributes include professional opportunities through input and influence and,

personal accomplishment through routine empowerment, fulfillment and pride. Other outcomes include the reduction of medication errors, avoidable hospitalizations, and improved patient outcomes.

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