

An Analysis of Scores Obtained by Undergraduate Nursing Students using Poster Presentations as the Assessment Method

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Background, including underpinning literature and wherever possible, the international relevance of the research

Poster presentations are being used increasingly as a method of assessment in nursing (Davis, 2000). Although published accounts of their use are scant in this country, there is evidence that the method stimulates a positive attitude to learning (Halligan, 2007), facilitates applying the theory of research and nursing to the practice setting (Conyers & Ritchie, 2001) and enables the development of transferable skills which will ultimately serve to enhance care delivery (Handron, 1994).

The authors module contains a poster presentation summative assessment worth 20%. The group consists of undergraduate first year students who are studying general adult nursing and several “branch” students who in second year will branch into children’s, mental health, learning disability nursing and midwifery. McMullan (2016) found the students enjoyed the poster presentation and found it developed many skills that were beneficial to their development as a nurse such as communication and literature critique. However, this study also raised students concerns, the main being that marking was subjective and “it depended on who marked you” as to whether you got a high score or not, a common opinion held by students, the literature would suggest (Falchikov, 2013). Secondly, students revealed they believed that mature students would do better as they had more of the skills necessary for a good presentation from previous life experience, that females would find this an easier task than men and that branch students would get better scores than their general adult nurse colleagues.

Despite employing clear marking criteria (Tisi et al, 2013) support for new markers and a robust internal and external moderation of marks which is regarded as good practice (Bloxham, 2009) we were still faced with uncertain reliability and certainly a lack of faith in the robustness of the marking by students (Bell, 2013). An extensive search found no literature whatsoever that investigated the scores awarded from poster scores except for scant reporting of claims of reliability based on the spread of marks (Jackson, 2000, Huntley-Moore, 2005).

Aim(s) and/or research question(s)/research hypothesis(es)

The aim of this paper therefore is to investigate marks awarded following poster presentations through statistical analysis of variables which could influence the reliability of scores as discussed.

1. There is no statistically significant difference between the scores obtained by students in various “branches” compared to other students.
2. There is no statistically significant relationship between the age of the student and the score obtained.
3. There is no statistically significant difference between the scores awarded by various markers.
4. There is no statistically significant relationship between experience of marker and the score awarded.
5. There is no statistically significant difference between the scores obtained by males and females.

Research methodology/research design, any ethical issues and methods of data collection and analysis

The scores awarded to the September 2018 (n = 362) were analyzed using various tests with SPSS:

Ho 1: ANOVA

Ho 2: Spearman.

Ho 3: ANOVA

Ho 4: Pearson correlation

Ho 5: Independent T-test t

Biography

Johanna McMullan clinical background in acute care. She practiced in the Emergency Department, Intensive Care and as Bed Manager to the level of Senior Sister in St. Georges and East Surrey hospitals in London. She has been in Education since 2002 working as an NVQ assessor in the Belfast Trust and in Queens as Lecturer in Education since 2004. She teaches life Science to both undergraduate and postgraduates and specializes in Trauma and Emergency Care. Her area of research interest is Education especially assessment, student experience and users and careers involvement.