

Self-handicapping among nursing students: an interventional study

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Abstract

Background

Self-handicapping is an effective defense strategy in an individual's behavior that leads to weak performance in different situations like education. This study aimed to investigate how training problem solving skills affected the rate of self-handicapping among nursing students.

Methods

This interventional study was done in Jahrom, Fars province, Iran during 2016–2017. Totally, 90 nursing students were selected among those admitted from 2013 to 2016 using stratified sampling. Then, the students were randomly divided into a control and an intervention group each including 45 participants. Teaching problem solving skills to the intervention group was completed over six sessions each lasting for two hours. The students' rate of self-handicapping was evaluated based on the scores obtained in Jones and Rodwalt's self-management questionnaire before and after the intervention (immediately and one month later). The data were entered into the SPSS statistical software, version 16 and were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including t-test, chi-square, and repeated measures ANOVA. The significance level was set at 0.05.

Results

The findings revealed a significant difference in the intervention group's self-handicapping scores before and after the intervention ($p < 0.001$). However, no significant change was observed in this regard in the control group ($p = 0.575$). The results indicated no significant differences between the intervention and control groups concerning the mean score of self-handicapping immediately after the intervention ($p = 0.761$). However, a significant difference was detected between the two groups in this regard one month after the intervention ($p = 0.014$).

Conclusion

Teaching problem solving skills influenced the students' beliefs and performances positively and led to a decrease in their self-handicapping. Thus, teaching cognitive-behavioral approaches is recommended to be considered among the ten life skills used in curricular design for medical students, including nurses.

Trial registration

[IRCT 2017011231895](#) N.Data registered: October 30, 2016.

Keywords

- Problem solving
- Nursing
- Students