

Selected Abstracts from Unpublished Works

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THE EFFECT OF INDUCED CONTROL ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF CONTROL, MOOD STATE AND QUALITY OF NURSING CARE FOR CLIENTS IN A CRITICAL CARE UNIT

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The experimental study was conducted to investigate the effect of control induction on the critical care unit (CCU) client's

mood state and perception of the quality of nursing care received. The study was conducted at Sacred Heart Hospital, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, from January to April 1979. Inquiries may be sent to John T. Kallio, Instructor, School of Nursing, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI 54701.

Theoretical Basis

Theorists have postulated that lower animals and humans learn helplessness and that such learning leads to stress, anxiety, depression, lowered morale and even death. The induction of control over daily situational activities has a marked effect on those mood-state parameters. Specifically, control induction lessens or reverses the effects of helplessness on animals and humans.

Stress, anxiety, depression and low morale are common negative aspects of the CCU client's experience. These negative aspects further compromise the already debilitated client. If nursing measures that induce control are instituted in the CCU setting, and if the client perceives greater personal control over daily situational activities, then the client should also report less stress, anxiety, depression and higher morale.

Intuitively, these same nursing measures that induce control should, by virtue of their positive effects of client mood state, effect greater appreciation for the quality of nursing care received. However, this has not been studied previously.

Problem Statement

The problem under investigation was: Does the induction of control have an effect on the critical care unit client's

perceptions of control, mood state and nursing care relative to a comparison group for whom control has not been induced?

Methodology

An experimental design was utilized in the study. A control group comprised 20 clients. Within 48 hours of admission to the CCU and on agreeing to participate in this study, each client heard a taped "orientation" message about the CCU. The message was neutral in its reference to nurses and nursing care.

Twenty-four hours after hearing the tape recording, participants answered three questionnaires to measure their perceptions of personal control of daily activities, mood state and quality of nursing care, respectively.

Demographic information was obtained from the client and/or Kardex.

After all control group data were obtained, a CCU policy change was effected encouraging clients to control their daily situational activities. Clients could control their bath time; placement of cards, letters, and flowers; chair rest time and their leisure activities (watching TV, reading, listening to the radio, etc.)

On agreeing to participate in the study, 20 experimental group clients heard a taped message inducing their control over the above situational activities. Twenty-four hours later they answered the same three questionnaires the control group received.

Results

T-test analysis of group means revealed that the control group was more fatigued and depressed than the experimental

group ($p < .05$). The experimental group perceived greater control of daily situational activities ($p < .001$).

Analysis of variance of test items showed significantly less reported anxiety, anger and depression for members of the experimental group.

The study findings suggest that:

1. CCU clients can perceive greater control over daily situational activities following deliberate control induction by a nurse;
2. the greater perception of control effects less self-reported fatigue, anxi-

ety, depression and anger; and

3. control induction has no significant or consistent effect on the client's perception of the quality of nursing care received.

Findings reveal that male and female clients may perceive control induction and the CCU experience differently, therefore benefiting to greater or lesser degrees from control of specific daily situational activities. The same findings appear to be true for older and younger clients. No significant sex-age interaction was found for the data ($p < .18$).