

**REFLECTIVE AND EVIDENCE-BASED NURSING PRACTICE: TOOLS TO FACILITATING LEARNING AND TEACHING DURING TEACHING A BONE FRACTURE**<sup>1\*</sup>Ibrahim M., <sup>2</sup>Yalwa, T., <sup>3</sup>Ahmad, S., <sup>4</sup>Shehu, A. and <sup>5</sup>Anyebe E. E.<sup>1,2,3</sup>Department of Nursing Sciences, College of Health Science Federal University Birnin Kebbi.<sup>4,5</sup>Department of Nursing Sciences, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria.**\*Corresponding Author: Ibrahim M.**

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**ABSTRACT**

Nursing profession has been facing barriers and challenges to learning and teaching particularly in the field of nursing practice and education. To facilitate teaching and learning, nurse-tutors hold the responsibility of providing current educational innovations in order to meet up with professional standard and competencies of feature nurses. Although, several approaches to facilitating learning and teaching exist, but incorporating reflective and evidence-based nursing practice in teaching process is till limited. The study is aimed to facilitate teaching and learning by exposing the student-teacher to in-corporate reflective and evidence-based practice during planning, delivery and evaluation of one-hour teaching session on bone fracture. Demonstration and discussion methods have been used whilst exploring evidence based and comprehensive reflection during planning and delivery of teaching of 30 undergraduate students' nurses. Lesson plan has been used to guide the planning, delivery and evaluation of the teaching. The study is underpinned with professional guidelines, policies, learning theories (cognitive, behavioural, constructivist and humanistic), inter-professional issues, systematic search and literatures. The strengths and weaknesses of learning theories, large and small group teaching, teaching plan, methods and strategies as well as other factors facilitating learning and teaching have been explored. Result shows that a cognitive learning theory is a powerful tool to facilitating learning and teaching as deep learning rather than surface learning occurs. In essence, during deep learning, students retained what they have learned into their cognitive structures and apply them later in their daily practices. That justifies why other learning theories contrary to cognitive theories were not emphasized due to their weaknesses.

**KEYWORDS:** Facilitating learning and teaching, reflective and evidence-based nursing practice.**INTRODUCTION**

In nursing profession, several issues have been raised by the National leaders relating to nursing education including barriers and challenges which need to be reduced or withdrawn completely by the responsible agencies. Whereas, nurse educators are also holds the opportunity of providing current innovations regarding to educational approach which coincides with the professional standard and competencies for feature nurses (Klein-Collins 2011). Similarly, United Kingdom higher education sectors (together with the 4 financing agencies, National Student Union, UK's Universities and GuildHe) have approved the UK professional standard scheme for teaching and reinforcing learning in tertiary institutions (UKPSF) which is under the supervision of higher education academy (HEA). The motive of the scheme is to deliver at a doorstep and provide a maximum support to the higher education teachers and facilitators of learning in carrying out their expected role

(QAA 2015). Therefore, in view of the above, the Nursing and Midwifery Council urges that, nurse educators should participate fully in teaching and facilitating effectively up to standard, so that the acquired knowledge and skills gained by student nurses and midwives can be applied successfully in their clinical areas without supervision (NMC 2015).

Facilitating learning and teaching are key words to this study. Therefore, for these to be achieved or effective learning to take place, the four processes of learning need to be considered. These includes; "wanting to learn, learning by doing, receiving feedback and reflection" (Boyd 2013 p. 3). In respect to this, Bastable (2013 p. 610) defined learning as change in behaviour of an individual which occurred either knowingly or unknowingly due to an exposure to environment. On the other hand, facilitation is a process of encouraging and supporting the learners in order to carry out their task of learning through the effort of facilitator (Fry et al 2015).

However, in the processes of learning both academic and clinical tutors encounter different challenges in the field of health care education, these challenges were found in almost every angle starting from clinical setting, simulation and classroom where lectures are being delivered (Brown and William 2015p. 3).

The significance of Evidence-based practice in the health care system has been recognised since in the 1970s (Joanne Brook 2015). Evidence-based in nursing was defined by Cullum *et al* (2008) as the implementation of justifiable and related information base-on research in reaching the decision processes. In addition, Hung (2015) urges that, EBP has been considered as the fundamental principles that are required for student nurses in meeting the standard of nursing profession before graduation. Based on the points highlighted above this assignment will be based on Quality Assuring Agency for enhancing academic quality, contribution to effective learning and teaching section, UK Quality code for higher education (QAA 2015), Nursing and midwifery council (NMC2015) as well as United Kingdom Lifelong Learning Professional standard for teachers, tutors and trainees (LLUK 2015).

This study is a reflective type of review article as such; Fry *et al.* (2015) describe assessment as a strategy of evaluating the achievement of the ongoing process of the learners. Whereas, reflective practices are concepts of assessment which involve two constituents of “reflection-in-action” in form of formative and “reflection-on-action” in form of summative as classified by Bastable (2013. P. 615). For this study, “reflection-on-action” is our main consideration. Similarly, the reflective critical writing in nursing profession has been considered very significant, and due to its effectiveness it has been documented by some nurses’ cooperatives such as, National League for Nursing and American Association of Nurses College (Jessica and Wyatt 2014). Furthermore, another survey was carried out among student nurses from different specialities, and the findings shows that, reflective writing provide students a chance for deliverance to demonstrate their opinion, feeling as well as their level of understanding. In addition, the two researchers recommended that, if subsequent result revealed a remarkable increase among student nurses’ critical thinking, those interventions could be incorporated into the nursing curriculum, and nurse educationalist should change the pattern of evaluating learners (Coleman and Willis 2015). However, the above study shows an increase in critical thinking among student nurses. Presently reflective writing has been intervened in to the nursing curriculum. Although, reflective writing is still not captured in the nursing curriculum of some African countries for example Nigeria.

The purpose of this study is to discuss on planning a one-hour teaching session on bone fracture. Therefore, in order to consider the evidence based and comprehensive

reflection on the planning and delivery of the session among 30 undergraduate adult students’ nurses, this assignment will be underpinned on professional guidelines, policies, appropriate learning theories, inter professional issues, systematic search and recent review of literatures and some educational journals. Moreover, it will also critically explore the strengths/ weaknesses of learning theories, large and small group, teaching plan, methods, strategies and other factors related in facilitating learning and teaching.

### **Lesson Plan**

In order to meet the requirement of the session, a lesson plan is formulated, designed and organised in a progressive manner. Similarly, Gopee (2011) stated that, as nurse educators in order to achieve the aim of the expected out comes while teaching, teachers should endeavour to use a sequence, organised as well as structured session plan which will serve as a guide irrespective of either a small/ large group of learners were involved. Furthermore, Gluten (2013) highlighted on the significant of his findings which provided information on lesson plan. According to him out of 150 teachers’ trainees 95% indicate their lesson plan objectives correctly, while 41% found it difficult to arrange the objectives properly although, the participants encountered some difficulties while drafting their lesson plan. The finding was also similar to Gafoor and Umer Farooq (2010) Ruys *et al.* (2012) as cited by the researcher respectively. In view of the above, the lesson plan of the one-hour teaching session on bone fracture comprises all aspect related to the session starting from aim, learning outcomes, content development etc. In addition, related factors have been taken into account while planning the teaching session.

Furthermore, during the session students’ needs will be considered and lesson plan will be carefully followed accordingly to the extent that all the vital points were mentioned during the one-hour teaching session. This goes in similar with Hughes and Quinn (2013) who suggested that, educationalist should bear in mind and consider learner’s demands during teaching. Because, lesson plan provides a concept of achieving both the learners and nurse educators’ need, and it reduces the possibility of omitting the important point during the teaching session. In addition, Unlu and Suda (2015) highlighted that, a well-designed lesson plans foster student activities, creativity, participation as well as full involvement by presenting a theoretical-based knowledge. This is because, a good lesson plan flows a sequence manner and a Progressive approach of learning that is from simple to complex. However, to explore more on this assignment, some content of the teaching plan need to be discuss in detail. These include, the aim of the session, learning outcomes, vary learning style, methods, and Blooms revised taxonomy used within the content of the lesson plan.

Aims/learning outcomes: As a cognisant to this assignment and to achieve the intellectual abilities as well as maximum understanding of the learners, “cognitive domain” was considered while formulating the learning outcomes of this one-hour teaching session, because, it is one of the three categories of educational objectives as coined by Blooms (1956) as cited by (Hughes and Quinn 2013 p. 107). The main focus of these behavioural objectives domain is concerned with cognitions, intellectual’s concept in acquiring facts, by the way of thinking of an individual. Therefore, in this assignment less emphasis has been given to other domain, “Affective domain” which is concerned with values, attitude and interest of an individual. And “psychomotor domain” deals with acquisitions of skills/task. (Bastable, et. al. 2011 pp. 601 – 614).

More so, to express the one-hour teaching session on bone fracture using a cognitive domain which follows in a hierarchical manner, usually began with the lowest, moderate and then to the six highest level as bellow:

- Remembering: in the first level what is required for the learner is to gain some ideas, or concepts through prior experience (related to bone fracture).
- Understanding: the learner will use the above prerequisite to behaviour which is remembering to (define or describe the bone fracture). In their own word.
- Applying: is the ability of the student to apply the two above prerequisites to behaviour by using theories, ideas, rules or principles, to the actual situation e.g.(applying the first aid principles in bone fracture situations).
- Analysing: the learner breaks down the structure information into their component parts, or differentiate significance and less significance e.g. (distinguished between simple and compound types of fracture). The above four are prerequisite to behaviour.
- Evaluating: at the fifth level the learner should be able to justify the value of some things using an appropriate verb for e. g (Priority in giving ABC approach in fracture situation). By considering the above five as prerequisite to behaviour.
- Creating: is the six level of cognitive domain, is the ability of the learner to consolidate or bind the element together into a whole.

Learning styles: has been defined by Bastable (2013p. 610) as an approach/way through which a person understand and process a piece of information. Furthermore, (James et al 2012) stated that, knowing the preferred learning styles of an individual, yield to an effective teaching methods, techniques and strategies uses by educationalist in facilitating learning and teaching. So also, it results in deep learning (Tsingos et al 2015 p. 492). However, several approach of learning styles has been established and used by different authors in order to achieve the need of the learners. But, the most influential ones use today are Kolb learning styles

inventory (LSI, Kolb,1976), Honey and Mumford’s learning styles, and Vark learning styles respectively (Hughes and Quinn 2013 pp. 35 – 38). Therefore, regarding this session Vark learning styles will be considered because it will cater the need of the students during the one-hour teaching session.

Vark learning style: as the name implies the word vark stand for visual, aural, read/ write and kinaesthetic as they always mirror the learning style experiences. For effective learning to take place, one or more of these learning styles have to be adopt by individual (Bastable 2013 p. 690). Ideally, visual learner preferred watching things such as pictures, symbols together with writing instructions. Aural type of learners enjoys listening to someone, like group discussion and disliked much writing (Asiry 2016). Read/write students as their name implies they like written word either by reading or writing. Lastly, the kinaesthetic learner’s characteristics are enjoying hands-on activities. (Hughes and Quinn 2013). Therefore, the above study shows how relevant and important of vark learning styles in the one-hour teaching session.

This article is underpinned with learning theories, as they are the systematic framework and set of combination of rules, principles that illustrate and explained the manner individuals learn (Bastable 2013). However, there are several approach of learning theories which are applicable to facilitating learning and teaching as stated by (Guney and AL 2012). With regard to this assignment and teaching session cognitivist approach will be considered to this one-hour teaching session on bone fracture because the teaching session will be linked with the previous student’s knowledge on anatomy and physiology of the muscular skeletal system. Secondly, the main concern of cognitive theory is to understand the meaning of the subject matter (Guild 2009 p.45). In view of the above, other learning theories such as behaviourist, constructivists and humanistic (Freitas and Leonard 2011) approach also have some limitations toward andragogy learning. Therefore, the weakness/limitation will be discussed in detail in lesson delivery.

### Lesson Delivery

The aims of the session are to increase awareness on bone fracture and its nursing management of the related types of fracture. So, as cognitivist expressional objectives were set up using a revised Blooms taxonomy (Bastables 2013). Lecture and demonstration methods were used due to large number of students which is greater than 20 (Azizinezhad, et al. 2013). When N is considered as the number of students, therefore, large group =  $N > 20$  and 30 that will be total number of students during the session (Reece et al., 2007). Furthermore, the one-hour teaching session among adult student nurses on bone fracture and its management will be underpinned with the appropriate elements of cognitive learning theory approach. These include

Bruner (discovery of learning), Asubel (Assimilation theories of meaningful learning), GestalSchool Perception, Piagetian theory and Kolb's experiential learning respectively.

The famous works of Bruner on discovery learning made him to perceived learning as a subject that consists of three processes (Hughes and quine 2013). Therefore, with regard to this session, the application is shown below;

**Acquisition of new information:** at this first level, students will gain a new concept/ ideas because the subject matter (bone fracture) will be built on the student previous knowledge/experiences on muscular skeletal system.

**Transformation of information:** during the teaching session the subject matter (bone fracture) will be analysed or break down into categories (causes of fractures), then into another subcategory (types of fracture, sign and symptoms, progressively up to the level of management) for easy assimilation, understanding so that student may apply their knowledge in daily situations.

**Evaluation:** is the third processes according to Bruner at this stage all aspect of the information with regard to one-hour session starting from aims/objectives up to the summary are now justified through group discussion, quiz and questioning into assessment. Therefore, the above three processes serve as a guide on how the one-hour teaching session on bone fracture will be delivered to the large groups of adult student nurses.

The experiential learning theory by David Kolb is another important approach used by cognitivist, and it has four distinct stages as shown below. (Maslin-prothero, 2010 pp.32 – 33) also cited by (Mason-whitehead et al. 2010, pp.24 – 25).

- Concrete experience: (feeling) student previous experience on skeletal system which has been linked with the current information/ ideas on bone fracture through class discussion and interactions.
- Reflective Observation: (watching) as the name implies students will observe through slides images, pictures on the types of fracture and how it occurs will be demonstrated by the nurse educator using a sample of carrot for adult types of fracture, and green stick for children for them to reflect from different perspectives.
- Abstract conceptualization: (thinking) at this level student synthesised, a new concept that integrate the above observation in theoretical forms that can be apply in the next stage.
- Active experimentation: (Acting/ Doing) learners will be asked to demonstrate the types of fracture in adult by using a sample of carrots, by positioning the two ends of the carrots. Whereas, in children a real greenstick will be used. Therefore, in cognitivism

theory using Kolb's experiential learning cycle among health professional is very vital because it provide a means for sequencing during teaching and learning with easy understanding.

For the purpose of this session on bone fracture, argument has been raised on the suitable and applicable learning theory to be used by looking at some theories limitation/ weakness toward adult learning. From the behaviourist perspective the seminal works of Pavlov on (classical conditioning), B F skinner (operational conditioning) etc. all indicate the occurrence of change in behaviour from the external environment, which shows that learning has taken place. But, Kohler (1925), one of the founders of the gestal school, argued that, salivation of dog, caging a rat which becomes a conformed liver compressor etc. According to him punishment alone from the beginning will stimulate the trial and error learning. (Mason-Whitehead et al., 2010 p.23). Furthermore, to support the above argument Bruner also highlighted that, for an effective learning to take place understanding and meaning of the subject matter have to be discovered through brainstorming of the adult learner. Which is the main concerned in cognitive perspectives during the process of learning. Similarly, Gestal theory recommended that, considering the subject matter as a whole by adult learners (mind maps) rather than its components parts lead to provide meaning and understanding. This is because; both Bruner and Gestal theory are more concerned with the internal aspect or intellectual capacities of an individual which is cognitive (Gould 2009. P.53).

In behaviourist approach, adult learners' source of motivation is said to be an extrinsic in nature either by reward or by punishment. Whereas, in cognitive approach the reverse is the case as the learners' act by brainstorming or critical thinking in order to satisfy his/her needs. (Bastable2015 p. 64). On the other hand, looking at the element of learning, in behaviouristic theory, learning is relatively passive in nature and therefore, the S - R elements of Pavlov classical conditioning and Skinner operant conditioning are terms to be in separate entities, but linked later in the course of teaching because it is teacher-centred learning. While in the field of cognitivist theory the elements tend to operate/twist together as such it is hard to isolate them into different entities. for instance, (perception from memory), (remember and reinforcer) so also understanding new ideas/concept from the previous experiences, because learning is active in nature. But through the process of shaping from the Gestal school (Wertheimer, Cohler and Kaffka) an individual provides meaning on the new information he/she perceived and apply them to solve a particular problem or situation as cited by Mason-Whitehead (2010 pp.24 -25).

From the humanistic point of view, the seminal work of Carl Roger on his client, Maslow theory of need and Knowles (who term the word adult learning as



andragogy), all glance at an aims of assisting individuals in order to maximise his/her potentiality for personal growth. So according to them, learning is concerned with the individuals as a whole including his/her feeling, believe, ideas and inspiration cited by Mason-Whitehead (2010) and Gould (2009 pp.76 – 79). Therefore, some of the challenges of the above theory are lack of evidence-based facts to authenticate the approach. Furthermore, another alarm was raised by Braungart (2008) where she considered the humanistic theory as distressing both the educators and learners because of its “cult-like touchy feely approach” (Mason-whitehead 2010 pp. 72 – 74). In respect of this, above points signified the reason why humanistic approach will not be used during the one-hour teaching session on bone fracture. This is because; as a level six student adult nurses they have assumed their self-direction as pointed by Knowles. (1990), cited by (Hughes and Quinn 2013 p.22).with a mature cognitive structure as highlighted by Ausubel, (Gould 2009).

However, the one-hour teaching session will be delivered using an appropriate learning theory (cognitive approach) as it suits the learners by considering their previous experiences on muscular skeletal system. Similarly, from the cognitive perspective, learning is an intellectual process that deals with individual internal aspect which includes perception, thinking, interpretations and recalling back the information that had been stored (bastable 2013 p. 601). Furthermore, Ausebel assimilation theory, has contributed a lot in cognitive approach. Whereby, he emphasizes on meaningful learning which occurs only when a new information interacts with the previous experience that already exist into the individual cognitive structure (Hughes and Quinn 2013 pp. 72 -73). However, despite some criticisms on Piagetian theory, Piaget remained one of the best contributors in cognitive theory as he focuses on the individuals’ intellectual development. Indeed, his fourth stage (formal operational) has been considered valid and relevant to andragogy learning, because it highlighted an active involvement of the adult learners, it increases adult student thinking due to increase complex schema (script/schemata) which are responsible in providing meaning and understanding at adult stage. So also, he emphasizes on quality rather than quantity development of an individuals in the process of learning (Hughes and Quinn’s 2013).

In view of the above mentioned points with regard to learning theories, it has shown clearly the differences between cognitive and other learning theories in terms of their approaches. Likewise, in order to deliver the one-hour teaching session appropriately other contents of the session have to follow same patterns with cognitive approach. And these include teaching plan, strategies, methods and assessment. For that reason, a well-designed teaching plan as shown in figure (1) highlighted the aim together with a clearly stated expressional objectives of the one-hour teaching session on bone

fracture has been draft. As a nurse educator, after self-introduction the lecture will began with a clear aim and learning outcomes in a convenient well-arranged and prepared classroom of about 30 adult’s student nurses. At the beginning, an instances will be given inform of advance organiser before glancing at our definition on bone fracture as recommended by Ausebel (1964). This also goes in similar with discovery-based approach, as highlighted by Brunner where students should be allowed to think critically searching for meaning, of the subject matter themselves at a bigger picture rather than telling them (Gould 2009 p. 56).

As a cognitivist, the best teaching methods occurs when emphasis are given to the learning process rather than the contents of the session. therefore, with regard to this one-hour teaching session on bone fracture, considerations will be given to the learning process as already discussed above in the fourth stages of (Kolb’s learning cycles) which follows in sequential manner, will be achieved through class discussion with students. (Gould 2009). More so, in order to avoid confusions and to carter for the students need, a cognitive non ambiguous types of questions, clear, short and appropriate to the learner’s level will be asked, as classified by Brown and Edmondson (1984). Because, this type of questioning follows same criteria with Blooms types of question classifications which is linked with educational objectives as already included in the lesson plan Figure (1). So also, the 3 Ps pose, pause, and pounce question techniques will be used during the teaching session occasionally. Because this will lead them to generate new ideas through brainstorming before arriving at their own answers, and by so doing, they will acquire a deep learning rather than surface learning which is characterised by engaging in the argument, problem solving, searching for meaning, interacting actively during the session and ability to link/apply what they have learned into their daily practices. (Reece et al. 2007, pp. 117 – 118), Maslin-prothero, 2010, pp. 56 – 57) and cited by Hughes and Quinn 2013, pp. 161 – 164).

## CONCLUSSION

The one-hour teaching session on bone fracture and its managements has been delivered successfully as already planned. This was achieved by the used of cognisant seminal text, recent literatures from other fields and nursing educational perspectives, together with appropriate learning theory, teaching skills, students involvement and their full participation during the session. All these provided evidence that the aim and learning outcomes of the session has been achieved.

This article critically explored the reason why a cognitive learning theory will be used, in relation with other contents that follows same pattern such as cognitive teaching plan, strategies, methods as well as cognitive types of questioning, discussion inform of debate among students during the teaching session. This served as clear indications that, a deep learning rather

than surface learning will occur. Because, in deep learning, students retained what they have learned into their cognitive structures and apply them later in their daily practices. Furthermore, it also analysed the reasons why other learning theories/approach in contemporary to cognitive will not be used due to their weakness and limitations.

As a nurse educator is not easy to achieve the aim of the session within an hour. But, nevertheless effort has been made to meet the necessary requirement up to standard in attaining the student competencies as recommended by Nursing and Midwifery Council. Similarly, consideration was given to the evidence-based, policies, inter-professional issues and appropriate learning theory during the teaching session of bone fracture as proposed by Quality Assurance agency LLUK respectively.

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