

**Experiential Teaching Method Applying in Career Planning Class for Associate Nursing Students in China**Jia Shulei<sup>1, 2</sup>, Liu Guiping<sup>1</sup>, Ida Matinson<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup> School of Nursing, Zhengzhou University, Zhengzhou, Henan 450052, China<sup>2</sup> Nursing College, Nanchang University, Nanchang, Jiangxi 330006, China[lgping@zzu.edu.cn](mailto:lgping@zzu.edu.cn)

**Abstract: Objective** Exploring an experiential teaching method in the Career Planning class for associate nursing students in China. **Methods** The random choosing of 100 nursing college students as a trial group (n=50) using experiential teaching method, and the selection of a control group (n=50) using the traditional teaching method. "Students' satisfaction" and "Self-reported questionnaire" are used to evaluate the teaching effect. **Results** The application of experiential teaching in career planning helps students set up professional nursing values. Improved abilities in career planning, independent learning, logical thinking, communication skills and team cooperation are shown in the trial group (P<0.05). **Conclusion** The experiential teaching method applied in the career planning class is superior to the traditional teaching method. The experiential teaching method is a useful method of teaching, deserving popularization and further research.

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**Introduction**

Children in the United States have received career planning education since six years old. Chinese children do not receive career planning class until their university education. Furthermore not every child has such an opportunity, since only a few universities provide career planning classes. Such classes are 18 hours for 1 credit and taken as a junior or senior student. The content of career planning education in China include: employment orientation, how to collect employment information, maintaining a stable mental state, employment situation analysis, employment policies and regulations, resume and interview skills, how to start you own business, etc. The giving of lectures is supplemented by discussion groups and simulation interviews. Some universities invite enterprise personnel, alumni, and human resources experts to deliver thematic lectures as well. The reason for adopting the traditional lecture method is, firstly, a teacher delivers lectures on career planning theory on the stage while hundreds of students passively listen. And it is difficult to realize small-class-based lecture or individual counseling because of teachers shortage. Secondly, some difficulties, such as insufficient teaching conditions in China, security and safety issues including parental concerns, the disagreement of the public, values and cultural differences, etc, are met in the course of self exploration and career exploration activities in career planning class. Until now, most universities have not form career planning education system. In recent years, with the country place more value on college career development education, moreover many universities also strengthened the teaching materials. These publications go by titles on

"employment guidance", "vocational guidance", "career planning", "career development", etc. However, most materials expound career planning knowledge and skills with theory, lacking giving attention to matters of practical implementation as case studies.

However, there are good examples in China. Some universities encourage students to organize monthly career development activities. For example, under the management of the Career Guidance Center, career development students carry out a great many monthly career development activities in the Shanghai Jiao Tong University, such as inviting professionals or career development teachers to deliver lectures, lectures by great professionals from different careers, community researches, visit diverse industries, professional seminars. Furthermore, some vocational guidance projects are carried out, such as employment counseling, interview workshops, professional competence development, etc. Compare to classroom teaching, Career development month activity and career development association activities are relatively rich. In addition, many colleges provide the opportunities for students to formulate career plans and business designs, when participate career planning competitions.

Career planning education in western countries started earlier than in China, mostly uses concept games and activities in the course of teaching and receives satisfying results. Because of the different cultural backgrounds, applying western career planning methods and content directly into Chinese education is not the way to proceed. However, the successful experiences of western countries set up a good example for China.

Based on experiential learning from the 1940s,

David Kolb in 1984 put forth some proposals. Experiential teaching model is an integrative approach to teaching, as such actual experiment (doing), personal experience (sensing), observation (fact building), summarizing (thinking)". He revised his proposal in 2006. Experiential teaching could also be called "Discovery through the teaching", "Teaching through activity" or "interactive teaching". More specifically, students first take part in a series of activities to gain personal experience, and then they present and share ideas with each other under the teacher's guidance, and finally apply the understanding into daily life and work. Experiential teaching alters the passive and isolated study experience into introspection and shareable one, which activates thinking, make students fully participation. From the middle of the 90's, China rapidly commenced experiential teaching research. Although experiential teaching is widely researched in China, it is only on the level of theory, and lacks an adequate teaching plan. The limited application focuses on the teaching of sports, spoken foreign language, Chinese composition and reading, etc.

In view of the above limitations, this study aims to explore suitable experiential teaching in nursing career planning suitable to the current condition in education. This will not only inspire Chinese college students to develop a career planning consciousness, but also improve their career planning and management ability. Experiential teaching method in group is used in our career planning class, and the result is acceptable. Now introduce specific experience in report as follows.

## 1 METHODS

### 1.1 Sample

Selected first year nursing students of Zhengzhou university nursing college, were divided into two groups according to their orders of application. The trial group (n=50) used the experiential teaching method, and the control group (n=50) the traditional teaching method. All the students are from Henan province, 18 to 22 years old, with an age average of (20.45±0.31). There were no statistically significant differences in age, learning achievement and basic cultural knowledge ( $P > 0.05$ ).

### 1.2 Implementation

#### 1.2.1 The trial group implementation

The trial group applied experiential teaching methods. Perform in the second semester of the university, every two weeks for 2 academic hours (each hour included 50 minutes' teaching and 10 minutes' break), for a total of 18 hours. The textbook used was "Career planning for university students" authored by ZHONG GULAN and YANG KAI. The teaching content included self-exploration, career exploration,

and then decision-making and setting of goals, Only then does one proceed of job hunting, and development of interview skills, etc. Below is how 2 academic hours of Career planning on "work world exploration" were conducted.

**Step 1: preparation before classes** Students were divided randomly into 10 groups of 5 each. A leader were elected for each group. Before class, each student drew a picture about "the work world in your eyes" based on their own experiences using colored pencils on white paper. It did not matter whether the pictures were beautiful or professional, but it did matter that they were drawn from one's own ideas. The teacher provided a book list and video on "What is nursing" and "Notes on being a nurse", to help nursing students prepare for effective hospital practice.

**Step 2: actual experiment (doing) and personal experience (sensing)-hospital practice** Students were arranged to visit the hospital as volunteers twice a week to work with the nurses. They interviewed one or two nurses about the work atmosphere, as well as the relationship among patients, doctors, nurses and other medical officers, the salaries, the satisfaction with daily tasks, the location, promotion, etc. In this way they became acquainted with the daily nursing work, communicated with the patients, became familiar with the hospital environment, gained an overall understanding and impression about nursing, all of which are important for the freshmen's future career planning and job choices. After social practice in the hospitals, they drew another picture about "the real work world in reality" to compare with the first picture they drew in Step 1. Furthermore, the students completed their personal on-site practice reports and nurse-interview reports. The teacher took photos and kept confidential record.

**Step 3: group discussion and reflection** In the first academic hour, 20 minutes were spent to group discussion about the hospital visit experience, feelings and pictures. After evaluation, analysis and discussion, each group assigned one student as the reporter to share with the whole class. To sum up, the main conclusions were "Working in the hospital as a nurse is time-consuming and energy-consuming", "Nurses is patient and busy", "and Nurses' salary is acceptable", etc. After discussion, several questions were brought out in the course of the work world exploration, such as "What are the methods of explore the work world", "How to interview nurses more effectively", "What kind of jobs can nursing students hunt after graduation", "What should the nursing students prepare for the future career", etc. The presentation and discussion all over the class spent 25 minutes. At last, the teacher summed up the class in 5 minutes. The task of the teacher is to control the whole process in case discussion away from the topic.

**Step 4: summary (thinking)-combining theory and practice**

In second academic hour, the teacher delivered a speech about how to explore the work world according to the questions that the students put forward. It spent 20 minutes. The content of the speech include "why we should know more about future jobs", "what kind of information should we explore about the work world", "what the current situation of job market", "the opportunities and challenges in the competitive society", "provide various category of jobs: full-time jobs, part-time jobs, SOHO(small office house office), establish a business, etc", "the choices of further study", "the skills and methods of career exploration", "nurse-interview reports at best cover: what do you do daily work, how did you find this job, how you view the future trend of this job, is there any career planning in your work field, what requirements for being a excellent nurse, what do you like most and dislike most as far as your job, which part you are most satisfied and most unsatisfied, what kind of problems you met when enter into nursing career, is there any special suggestion for nursing students who are freshmen and who are about to hunt jobs, could you introduce several acquaintances to be my next interviewees, what else methods do you think could help me about nursing career". After that, apply "brain storm" make the students think about that what else jobs can nursing students hunt after graduation apart from nurses in the hospitals and nursing teachers in the college schools. And the results were healthcare nurses, massagists, nurse practitioners, clinical specialists, nurse midwives, nurse anesthetists, Psychiatrists, work for the Medicines Companies and Medicare offices, etc. It spent 10 minutes. And then, group discussion about "what did you do and what will you do about career exploration". It spent 10 minutes. Finally, group presentations cost 10 minutes. What most students have already done were overall evaluation of themselves and careers, information collection from publications, videos, and Websites, profession interviews, visiting work places and social practices. What most students would do next after discussion were formal and detailed evaluation (Holland career interest tests, career personalities tests, career value tests, listing professional skills, etc.),

examples of parent-characters and relative-characters, Specialty Practices, broaden possible career choices, making full use of alumni resources, etc. The teacher summarized and reviewed the whole class, and encouraged students recording experiences and the work world exploration methods, so that put into practices.

**Step 5: assignments outside the class and preparation for next class**

Students were asked to draw up the social practices and profession interviews plans of their own, and carry out regularly. Since the exploration of one self and the work world had been learned, the next lesson-"decision and action plans" should combine above two aspects. What each group should do was handing in a report about how to put what you learn into practice. Students should work with the other group members to complete the reports. The teacher marked the reports as a part of final examination score.

**1.2.2 The control group implementation**

The control group applied traditional teaching methods, which means the teacher standing on the platform, teaching theories with a few questions and answers, no groups for students. Perform in the second semester of the university, every two weeks 2 academic hours(each hour includes 50 minutes' teaching and 10 minutes' break), 18 hours in total, "Career planning for university students" as the textbooks(the authors are ZHONG GULAN and Yang Kai), teaching content are similar to the trial group.

**2 RESULTS**

After finish the whole lessons of career planning at the end of semester, each student of the two groups was asked to complete "The ability score of students' career planning" (Form 1) and "Self-reported questionnaire" (Form 2). The results of the trial group were superior to that of the control group, which demonstrated that experiential teaching method applying in career planning class is better than the traditional teaching method. And students in the trial group were more satisfied about the teaching effects.

Form 1. The comparison of the ability score of students' career planning (n=50,  $\bar{x} \pm s$ )

list	before		t	P	after		t	P
	the trial group	the control group			the trial group	the control group		
Self-recognize	3.37±0.05	3.48±0.05	-1.58	0.12	3.87±0.40	3.65±0.46	3.48	0.00
Career-recognize	3.32±0.06	3.34±0.06	-0.20	0.85	3.90±0.46	3.69±0.41	3.15	0.00
Career decision	2.90±0.06	2.99±0.07	-0.91	0.36	3.47±0.61	3.26±0.60	2.38	0.02
Planning-recognize	3.22±0.05	3.26±0.06	-0.48	0.63	3.89±0.49	3.65±0.45	3.41	0.00
Action adjustment	3.18±0.06	3.20±0.08	-0.21	0.84	3.79±0.56	3.44±0.59	4.04	0.00

Form 2. The comparison of the Self-reported questionnaire for teaching effect (n=50,  $\bar{x} \pm s$ )

list	the trial group	the control group	t	P
Study by oneself	8.89±1.25	8.25±1.13	3.40	0.00
Logical thinking	7.65±1.32	7.25±1.24	2.35	0.02
communication	8.90±1.21	8.35±1.23	3.39	0.00
Team-work	7.45±1.28	7.02±1.19	2.62	0.00

### 3. DISCUSSION

The application of experiential teaching in the career planning helps students set up professional nursing values. Better career planning ability, independent learning ability, logical thinking ability, communication skills and team cooperation ability are shown in trial group ( $P < 0.05$ ). Experiential teaching method is a useful method of teaching, deserving popularization and further research.

Nurses in China are busy with injection and delivering medication, without time educating the patients. The main reason is the shortage of nurses in China. Compared to the proportion of the number of nurses versus that of doctors 10 in America, there is less than 1 in China.

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