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Teachers' Attention to Students: Inspiring Confidence and Commitment

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Abstract

Teachers play a vital role not only in delivering instruction but also in shaping students' self-confidence and academic commitment. This paper explores how teacher attentiveness through encouragement, recognition, hand-holding, and positive expectations fosters students' trust in their abilities and inspires lasting dedication to academic and professional goals, traversing towards quality-improved, family-centred care and value-enriched progress. Centering on certain theoretical foundations that influence education, this paper outlines the psychological and instructional mechanisms by which teacher attention enhances student engagement.

Particular emphasis is placed on nursing education, where teacher-student relationships carry deep significance due to the emotionally intensive nature of the profession. The article also references practices and experiences from the Holy Spirit Institute of Nursing Education (HSINE), a NAAC-accredited institution in Mumbai, India. It concludes with actionable strategies that educators can implement to cultivate confidence and commitment among students, contributing to retention, performance, and long-term success that encompasses the training and development of individuals working in all areas of healthcare.

Keywords: Teacher-student relationship, motivation, academic confidence, student commitment, nursing education

Introduction

The success of students in higher education often hinges on more than their intellectual capabilities; it depends on how deeply they feel seen, supported, and believed in by their teachers. While pedagogy and curriculum are important, the emotional and motivational impact of teacher attention is also absolutely vital.

In nursing education, where students train for intense, principled, people-centered roles, the ability of a teacher to inspire confidence can determine not just academic outcomes but also long-term professional identity and passion. This article explores how teacher attention manifested through encouragement, belief in student potential, and meaningful interactions creates a foundation for both academic confidence and student commitment.

Theoretical Basics

- **The Pygmalion Effect:** The Pygmalion effect, also known as the Rosenthal effect, describes when teachers

express belief in their students' capabilities, students often internalize those hopes, raising their self-concept and academic concern (Brophy, 1983) ^[6].

- **John Keller's ARCS Model of Motivation:** This model sketches four essential components for motivating learners: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. "Attention," in this context, denotes not only grabbing focus through engaging methods but also providing individualized support and showing genuine interest in student growth.
- **Belonging Interventions:** Recent educational research by Walton & Cohen, 2011 ^[4], has shown that even brief interventions promoting belonging, such as affirmations from teachers expressing confidence in a student's potential, can lead to long-term academic and psychosocial improvements.

Methodological summation

This article draws on a review of prevailing research and

institutional observations at HSINE, integrating literature on motivational psychology and teacher expectations, feedback and reflections from nursing students on faculty engagement and support, and comparisons with national-level best practices in NAAC-accredited nursing colleges.

**Teacher attention in practice
Recognition and Affirmation**

Students often cite the power of a teacher remembering their name, encouraging them after a setback, or expressing confidence in their future. Such small, deliberate gestures create a climate of recognition that strengthens academic self-concept.

Creating an Engaging Learning Environment

Students appreciate teachers engaging in varied activities and teaching methods, such as using visuals, incorporating movement, and integrating technology, which can help maintain student interest. Providing students with choices in their work or activities can increase engagement and ownership of their learning. Acknowledging and praising students who respond to attention signals encourages positive participation.

Expectations and High Standards

At HSINE, faculty are trained to maintain high academic and behavioural expectations. This “benevolent prospect” conveys belief in students’ potential and leads to greater commitment and performance. Taps the best in the hidden areas of self-windows, opening the truer image of the student, e.g., the walls of the corridor are the art of the student's hand, hard work, and ingenuity.

Availability and Empathy

Beyond the classroom, teacher availability, whether during office hours or informal mentoring, and people-to-people

caring and a wholesome academic approach have directly improved student satisfaction and institutional trust, which is so true in the study by Tinto, 2017 [3].

Nursing and Fine-tuning

Recognizing that individual students have different needs and learning styles, teachers can adjust their pace, goals, or support strategies to ensure all students can access the learning. When a student signals for help, acknowledging them, responding promptly, and providing timely support can prevent minor issues from escalating. If a student is disruptive, addressing the behavior promptly and calmly can help minimize distractions and maintain a positive learning environment.

Impact on Confidence and Commitment

Confidence refers to a student’s belief in their ability to perform, while commitment is their ongoing willingness to stay engaged and persevere. Teacher attention boosts both by creating a safe environment where students feel valued. Encouraging risk-taking and participation without fear of ridicule. Fostering self-efficacy through positive reinforcement and high expectations. Nursing students, who often face intense clinical training and ethical challenges, benefit particularly from teachers who combine technical instruction with emotional support and trust.

Case Context: Holy Spirit Institute of Nursing Education

HSINE in Mumbai is a NAAC-accredited institution known for blending academic rigor with ethical and spiritual development. Faculty mentorship is deeply embedded into the curriculum, and students regularly credit faculty attentiveness as a factor in their growth. In internal feedback collected during mentorship reviews (2023), over 85% of students reported that “teacher encouragement” and “faculty approachability” were critical to their academic persistence

Table 1: Recommended core strategies for teachers

Core Strategies	Description
Adopt Growth Oriented Language	Replace blunt corrections such as “You’re wrong” with more encouraging phrases like “You’re on the right track. Try looking at it this way.” Focus on framing feedback around potential rather than limitations. It nurture continuous improvement.
Offer Specific, Meaningful Praise	Instead of using generic comments like “Good job,” provide specific feedback that highlights what was effective. For example, you might say, “Your clinical notes demonstrate strong reasoning and attention to detail.” This approach reinforces the behaviours you wish to encourage.
Be approachable and Accessible	Small actions; such as making eye contact, remembering names, and conducting regular feedback sessions will foster trust and openness and significantly signal to students that they belong and are valued.
Create Opportunities for Student Voice	Actively encourage students to share their reflections, insights, and feedback during class. When they feel heard, their confidence and engagement will increase.
Balance Challenge with Support	Set high expectations while also providing guidance, resources, and encouragement to ensure that students feel capable of meeting those expectations.

Conclusion

Attention from teachers is not a soft skill; it is a transformative force. By deliberately recognizing, encouraging, mentoring, awarding, and expecting excellence from students, teachers spark internal motivation and lasting academic commitment. In nursing education, where human values intersect with professional excellence, such attention becomes not just beneficial but essential.

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