

Public Health in Midwifery: Reflective Essay Sample

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Introduction

Public health promotion is critical in midwifery practice (Soucy et al., 2023). It ensures that mothers and newborns receive best clinical outcomes (Smith et al., 2017). As such, midwives must understand the principles and practices of public health promotion. This knowledge enables midwives to work with mothers, families, and communities to improve their health and well-being (De Leo et al., 2019; McLellan et al., 2019). This reflection focuses on my experience of developing a health promotion poster for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) using the Gibbs reflective model. It will explore the importance of effective communication and collaboration. It also outlines the significance of using health promotion models in promoting midwifery practice. Additionally, it evaluates the influence of psychological, social, cultural, political, and economic factors on women and their families.

Reflection is an essential component of professional development in midwifery practice (Koshy et al., 2017). It enables midwives to examine their practice, identify areas for improvement, and take action to enhance their skills and knowledge (Sweet et al., 2019). Reflective practice also provides midwives with an opportunity to learn from their experiences (Sweet et al., 2019). It integrates new knowledge and skills into their practice and improves the quality of care they provide (Sweet et al., 2019). I have selected Gibbs' reflective model for this evaluation. It consists of six stages, which are description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan (Gibbs, 1988). This model provides a structured approach to reflection. As such, it facilitates the evaluation of experiences and development of actionable insights for application in future practices (Gibbs, 1988).

Description

The task of developing a health promotion poster was an opportunity to raise awareness about a critical public health issue affecting infants. Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden and unexpected death of a baby under one year of age (Jullien, 2021). It is the leading cause of infant mortality in developed countries (Osei-Poku et al., 2021). As such, healthcare organizations prioritize promoting the use of safe sleep practices to reduce the risk of SIDS. As part of the development process, I worked with a team of health promotion specialists who were responsible for developing and implementing health campaigns. The team was made up of individuals with skill sets. These skills include graphic design, content development, and project management. We had regular team meetings to discuss the progress of the project (Persson et al., 2021). During the meetings, we shared ideas on how to improve the poster's content and design.

However, we encountered challenges that tested our teamwork and communication skills. For instance, we had to balance the workload of the different team members. We ensured that team members had equal shares of the responsibilities (Rosen et al., 2018). Also, we communicated effectively to ensure that team members understood the project's objectives and goals (Schilling et al., 2022). There were significant technical difficulties that arose during the project's execution. For example, we initially faced difficulties with incorporating the relevant information into the poster design in a visually appealing and easy to read manner. However, we overcome these challenges

by working collaboratively (Schmutz et al., 2018). This teamwork enabled us to develop a poster that effectively communicated the key messages about SIDS prevention.

The experience of working with the team had a positive impact on my professional development. It taught me the importance of teamwork and communication in achieving a common goal (Rosen et al., 2018). I realized that working collaboratively leads to a more effective and efficient outcome than working alone (Rosen et al., 2018). Additionally, working in a team environment enabled me to learn new skills from my colleagues such as graphic design and project management. These skills are essential since I can use them in my future projects. This experience had a positive impact on my professional development. It taught me the importance of teamwork and communication in achieving a collective objective (Rosen et al., 2018).

Feelings

Throughout the process, I experienced a range of emotions. At first, I felt overwhelmed and unsure about where to start. I was unsure if I had the necessary skills to create an effective poster. This was due to my limited experience in health promotion and graphic design. However, I began to feel more confident in my abilities after delving deeper into the topic. I found the research process to be enjoyable and engaging. During this process, I learned more about the risk factors and prevention strategies for SIDS. I was motivated by the idea that the poster we were creating could raise awareness SIDS and potentially save lives.

As the project progressed, I experienced a range of emotions related to teamwork and communication. At times, I felt frustrated by the workload and the pressure of meeting deadlines. I also felt uncertain about how to communicate effectively with my team members. The team members had different skill sets and perspectives (Gander et al., 2022). However, I recognized that these challenges were an opportunity to develop my communication and teamwork skills. In addition, I experienced a sense of satisfaction by seeing the project take shape. Seeing the information and graphics come together and communicate the key messages about SIDS prevention effectively was rewarding.

However, I felt a sense of pressure to ensure that the final product was quality and would be well-received by the target audience. In reflection, I believe that my initial feelings of inadequacy and uncertainty were due to inexperience in health promotion and graphic design. However, I engaged with the research process and collaborated with my team members (Anderson et al., 2021). This enabled me to overcome the feelings and develop the necessary skills to contribute effectively to the project. Regardless, I developed positive emotions such as enjoyment and satisfaction. These emotions emerged from my sense of purpose and motivation to contribute to a critical public health issue. I believe that having a sense of purpose and meaning in an individual's work is essential for achieving job satisfaction and personal fulfillment.

The negative emotions I experienced such as frustration and pressure were due to the challenges inherent in the project's development process. Challenges such as workload and communication difficulties are common in team-based projects (Zajac et al., 2021). However, they are an opportunity to develop communication and teamwork skills. These skills are valuable in future projects. On that note, the process of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS was an emotional journey. It taught me valuable lessons about communication, teamwork, and personal growth. These lessons and experiences enable me to develop a greater appreciation for the importance of preparedness and teamwork in achieving a common goal.

Evaluation

I have learned a great deal about the importance of effective communication and teamwork from the reflection (Rosen et al., 2018). This opportunity has enabled me to understand the social, cultural, and economic factors that influence a family's health and well-being. I learned the importance of being well-prepared and organized when working on a complex project (Levin and Levin, 2019). For instance, our thorough research on SIDS enabled us to develop an effective poster. This poster communicated the key risk factors and prevention strategies for SIDS effectively. I also learned the value of dividing workload among team members. The sharing of responsibilities in a team maximizes efficiency and minimizes the risk of burnout (Wang et al., 2022).

I found that working collaboratively on this project was an effective way to share knowledge and skills (Wang et al., 2022). I learned from the team and expanded my understanding of health promotion and graphic design. This learning emerged from working with a culturally diverse team (Stahl and Maznevski, 2021). Accordingly, I believe that the experience of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS was successful in achieving its goal. It raised awareness about this critical public health issue. The poster communicated the key risk factors and prevention strategies for SIDS effectively (Hasanica et al., 2022). As such, I believe that it has the potential to positively impact the health and well-being of families in the community.

However, there were some areas where the project could have been improved. For instance, communication among team members was one of the key challenges that we faced (Rosen et al., 2018). In addition, the team members had different schedules and responsibilities. As such, it was difficult to coordinate our efforts and ensure that everyone was on the same page (Schilling et al., 2022). In future projects, I believe that setting clearer expectations around communication would foster project effectiveness (Rosen et al., 2018). This calls for creating a more structured approach to team meetings to succeed in the undertaking (Persson et al., 2021).

Effective communication is crucial in promoting teamwork and collaboration in midwifery practice (Soucy et al., 2023). The experience of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS highlighted the importance of communication skills among team members. Communication allows team members to share ideas and delegate tasks (Shamaeian Razavi et al., 2022). It also ensures that team members have a clear understanding of the project objectives. Clear communication also enables team members to overcome challenges. For instance, they work together to develop a successful project that effectively communicates key health promotion messages (Buljac-Samardzic et al., 2020). As such, effective communication skills are essential for midwives. This is due to the interpersonal collaboration among individuals, families, and communities to promote health (Busari et al., 2017). Therefore, it is crucial for midwives to develop these skills to provide quality care.

In addition, the project could have improved our understanding of the social, cultural, and economic factors that can impact a family's health and well-being. Although we did not identify risk factors for SIDS such as smoking during pregnancy, we did not consider how these factors might be influenced by broader social, cultural, and economic factors (Kim and Pearson-Shaver, 2022). In future projects, I believe that it would be important to take a more holistic and intersectional approach. This approach would facilitate our understanding of the complex factors that impact a family's health and well-being.

There are many factors that could impact their risk of SIDS. For example, a woman's mental health and well-being can play a significant role in her ability to provide a safe and nurturing environment for her newborn (Dong et al., 2022). If a woman is experiencing high levels of stress, she may not respond to her newborn's needs such as creating a safe sleep environment (Dong et al., 2022). In

addition, social and cultural factors play a role in a family's risk of SIDS (Ahn et al., 2021; Bartick and Tomori, 2019). For example, cultural beliefs around co-sleeping and the use of newborn's sleep aids may influence a family's behaviors and practices related to safe sleep (Shimizu and Teti, 2018). Comparatively, economic factors such as access to safe housing and the ability to afford newborn sleep products may influence a family's ability to create a safe sleep environment for the newborn (Pease et al., 2021; Cole et al., 2020).

Political factors can also play a role in the prevention of SIDS. For example, public health policies related to safe sleep education and access to safe sleep products can influence a family's ability to prevent SIDS (Duncan and Byard, 2018). Similarly, policies related to maternal and infant health care access can impact a family's ability to access the resources and support for safe sleep practices (Ellis et al., 2022). Therefore, the experience of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS was a valuable learning experience. It taught me about the importance of effective communication, teamwork, and understanding the complex social, cultural, political, and economic factors that influence a family's health and well-being. I believe that the project was successful in achieving its goal of raising awareness about SIDS. However, there were some areas where the project could have been improved. This includes communication and understanding of intersectional factors that can impact a family's risk of SIDS (Duncan and Byard, 2018).

Moving forward, I believe that it is important to develop my skills and knowledge in health promotion and public health. This is especially essential in understanding the social, cultural, and economic factors that can impact health outcomes. I also believe that effective communication and collaboration are critical to the success of any health promotion project (Schilling et al., 2022). As such, these skills should be continually developed and refined. Accordingly, the experience of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS was a valuable learning opportunity. It enabled me to develop my professional skills and knowledge. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with my peers on this project. I believe that the poster we developed has the potential to positively impact the health and well-being of families.

Analysis

In reflecting on my experience of developing a health promotion poster for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), I have identified several areas for further analysis. These include the importance of effective communication, the role of multi-agency working, and the impact of the health promotion model. Effective communication is a critical aspect of public health and health promotion strategies (Chichirez and Purcărea, 2018). When working with women and families, it is essential to communicate information clearly. This requires a deep understanding of the target audience. It also outlines the cultural and social factors that influence their understanding of health information (Stahl and Maznevski, 2021). In the case of SIDS, it is important to communicate the risks associated with certain sleep practices and the measures that can be taken to reduce the risk of SIDS.

The health promotion poster we developed for SIDS was one way of communicating this information to the target audience (Hasanica et al., 2022). However, it is important to note that posters alone are not enough to effectively communicate health information. For example, in some cultures, the use of images of babies in posters may not be culturally appropriate (Abebe et al., 2021). In addition, it may also not effectively communicate the intended message. Therefore, it is important to consider the cultural context in which health information is being communicated (Abebe et al., 2021). This consideration creates an enabling basis for tailoring messages accordingly.

Another important aspect of public health promotion is multi-agency working (Rosen et al., 2018). This involves working collaboratively with a range of stakeholders (Rosen et al., 2018). Some of these stakeholders are healthcare professionals, community groups, and policymakers. These stakeholders play a pivotal role in promoting the health and well-being of community members. In the case of SIDS, multi-agency working could involve collaborating with healthcare professionals (Duncan and Byard, 2018). This collaboration ensures that parents receive accurate and up-to-date information about safe sleep practices (Duncan and Byard, 2018). It also facilitates working with community groups to raise awareness about SIDS and promote safe sleep practices (Duncan and Byard, 2018).

The health promotion poster we developed was created through a collaborative effort among a group of peers. This experience highlighted the importance of effective communication and collaboration in achieving a common goal (Rosen et al., 2018). However, it also highlighted the challenges of working within a group. Some of these challenges are differences in opinions and conflicting schedules (Zajac et al., 2021). To overcome these challenges, it is important to establish clear communication channels and set realistic timelines (Buljac-Samardzic et al., 2020). It is also important to ensure that each member of the group has a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities (Buljac-Samardzic et al., 2020).

The health promotion model that underpins SIDS is the Health Belief Model (HBM). The HBM suggests that individuals are more likely to engage in health-promoting behaviors when they perceive a threat to their health (Ackley et al., 2021). This also occurs when people believe that the recommended behavior will reduce that threat (Ackley et al., 2021). In addition, people engaging in healthy promoting practices when they perceive that the benefits of engaging in the behavior outweigh the costs (Ackley et al., 2021). HBM is an effective framework for designing and implementing effective health promotion interventions. It postulates that people's beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions influence their decisions to adopt or reject health behaviors (Ackley et al., 2021). The model provides insights into how individuals perceive their susceptibility to a particular health problem.

This model has been used in public health interventions to promote maternal and child health. As a midwife, understanding and applying the principles of the HBM can enhance communication with clients (Ackley et al., 2021). It also enables midwives to develop targeted health promotion messages. As such, it promotes positive health behaviors among women and families. This model has been applied to a range of health behaviors including safe sleep practices to reduce the risk of SIDS (Hirsch et al., 2018). As such, the experience of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS has highlighted the importance of effective communication and collaboration. It has also outlined the use of a health promotion model to guide public health strategies. Moving forward, it is important to continue to develop my skills and knowledge in these areas. This move will ensure that I am able to effectively contribute to public health promotion efforts.

Recommendations and Action Plan

The experience of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS has been a valuable learning experience. This activity has enabled me to develop a deeper understanding of the importance of effective communication, collaboration, and the use of health promotion models in promoting health and well-being (Ackley et al., 2021; Rosen et al., 2018). A key takeaway from this experience is the importance of effective communication when working with women and families (Rosen et al., 2018). This involves understanding the cultural and social factors that may impact their understanding of

health information. It has also highlighted the importance of collaboration especially in multi-agency working to achieve a common goal.

Furthermore, the use of HBM in SIDS has demonstrated the value of having a theoretical framework to guide public health promotion efforts. HBM enabled us to develop a poster that effectively communicated the risks associated with certain sleep practices. It also enabled us to evaluate the measures that can be taken to reduce the risk of SIDS (Ackley et al., 2021; Jullien, 2021). This experience has also provided me with an opportunity to reflect on my professional development. It has highlighted areas for improvement such as the need to be more proactive in group communication and time management (Ackley et al., 2021). It also highlights the importance of being culturally sensitive when communicating health information.

Moving forward, this experience has influenced my learning for future practice. It emphasizes the importance of continued learning and development (Mlambo et al., 2021). I recognize that there is always room for improvement. It is also important to remain open to new ideas and approaches (Mlambo et al., 2021). I also understand the importance of working collaboratively with others to achieve common goals. In addition, this experience has reinforced my commitment to promoting health and well-being through public health promotion efforts. It has highlighted the important role that healthcare professionals play in raising awareness about health issues. As such, the experience of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS has been a valuable learning experience. It has enhanced my understanding of effective communication, collaboration, and the use of health promotion models in promoting health and well-being (Ackley et al., 2021; Rosen et al., 2018). I look forward to applying these ideologies in future practice. I will also continue to develop my skills and knowledge in public health promotion.

I have identified two SMART objectives to guide my future actions. These objectives are based on my reflections and evaluations of the experience of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS. NHS (2023) calls for doing things differently, addressing inequalities, and using digital technologies to overcome health issues in its long term plan.

Objective 1: Enhance Communication Skills

Specific: I will improve my communication skills when working with women and families from diverse backgrounds. These people will also involve those with limited English proficiency. My engagements with these people will promote understanding and facilitate informed decision-making (Oliveros et al., 2019).

Measurable: I will measure my progress by receiving feedback from women and families and colleagues regarding the clarity of my messages and their level of understanding.

Achievable: I will achieve this by attending training sessions on effective communication, cultural competence, and health literacy. In addition, I will seek feedback from my colleagues and patients.

Relevant: Effective communication is essential to promoting health and preventing adverse health outcomes (Wieke Noviyanti et al., 2021). This move will focus on vulnerable populations. It is consistent with the goals of public health promotion.

Time-Bound: I will achieve this objective within six months by consistently applying the skills and knowledge gained from training and feedback.

Objective 2: Develop Collaborative Skills

Specific: I will improve my collaborative skills when working with other healthcare professionals and agencies. This move is especially paramount when working in multi-agency settings (Busari et al., 2017). As such, I will achieve common goals and promote health and well-being.

Measurable: I will measure my progress by seeking feedback from colleagues and partners regarding the quality of our collaborations and the achievement of our goals.

Achievable: I will achieve this by actively seeking opportunities for collaborative working. I will also seek feedback from colleagues and partners. These considerations will create the basis for attending training sessions on collaborative working.

Relevant: Collaboration is essential to achieving common goals and promoting health and well-being, particularly in the context of public health promotion (Martin and Bryant, 2022).

Time-Bound: I will achieve this objective within one year by consistently applying the skills and knowledge gained from training and feedback.

To achieve these objectives, I will undertake multiple actions. Some of these actions are:

Attend training sessions on effective communication, cultural competence, and health literacy to improve my communication skills (Mavreles Ogrodnick et al., 2021).

Seek feedback from women, families, and colleagues regarding the clarity of my messages and their level of understanding to monitor my progress.

Attend training sessions on collaborative working to improve my teamwork skills (Rosen et al., 2018).

Actively seek opportunities for collaborative working, seek feedback from colleagues and partners, and participate in team-building activities to develop collaborative skills.

Consistently apply the skills and knowledge gained from training and feedback to achieve my objectives (Hardavella et al., 2017).

Regularly review my progress towards achieving these objectives and adjust my actions as necessary to achieve my goals.

As such, the experience of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS has provided valuable insights into the importance of effective communication and collaboration. It also evidences the significance of using health promotion models in promoting health and well-being (Fertman and Grim, 2022). As such, setting SMART objectives to enhance my communication and collaborative skills creates an enabling ground for continuing to develop my skills and knowledge in public health promotion. This consideration enables me to make a positive impact on the health of the communities I serve.

Conclusion

The experience of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS using Gibbs reflective model has provided me with valuable insights and learning opportunities. Through the process of reflection, I identified areas of strength and areas for improvement in my professional practice. Some of these areas are communication, collaboration, and the use of health promotion models. I recognized that effective communication is critical to promoting understanding and facilitating informed decision-making (Rosen et al., 2018). I also appreciated the importance of collaboration in achieving common goals and promoting health and well-being (Rosen et al., 2018). Moreover, I gained a deeper

understanding of the impact of health promotion models in public health promotion and their role in guiding effective interventions (Fertman and Grim, 2022).

Through the experience of developing the health promotion poster, I also developed a greater appreciation for the importance of preparedness, teamwork, and effective time management (Wang et al., 2022; Levin and Levin, 2019). I also recognized the influence of psychological, social, cultural, political, and economic factors. These factors influence women and their families, especially when preventing SIDS. This consideration evidences the need to consider these factors when promoting health. Moving forward, I have developed two SMART objectives to enhance my communication and collaborative skills. I am committed to taking the necessary steps to achieve these objectives. I recognize that these skills are essential to my professional development and my ability to make a positive impact on people's health.

Therefore, the experience of developing a health promotion poster for SIDS has been a valuable learning experience. It has enabled me to reflect on my practice, identify areas for improvement, and set goals for my professional development (Koshy et al., 2017). I am confident that I can continue to develop my skills and knowledge in public health promotion. This will enable me to make a positive impact on the health and well-being of others.

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