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An exploratory study of caring transaction in nursing education

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Abstract

While the need for transacting caring is widely advocated, research-based strategies for its implementation in nursing education are not well articulated. Justifying nursing programs in higher education might not be as convincing as it should be in some countries. A study based on a mixed-method approach recently conducted in Singapore to gain insights into the transaction of caring could not be timelier for infusing some useful considerations to the current debates in nursing education. The focus of the study was on students' perspectives but participants included nurse lecturers, clinical instructors in the hospitals and patients in their care. Non-participant observations of student interactions with others and semi-structured interviews of students were conducted to elicit relevant information for content analysis of the emerging themes. Results demonstrated that caring was viewed as two distinct aspects of instrumental and expressive caring in varying combinations for quality patient care by students. Both were transacted in classroom settings and were considered by students as essential for building confidence in clinical practice. Students felt that the opportunities for learning caring were bountiful in clinical placements. However, students benefited more from nurse lecturers who in their opinions were good at explaining the clinical observations. The myths of clinical placements as being the best for transacting caring were dismissed. Successful caring transaction undoubtedly demanded clinical opportunities, but more critically, it needed consciously engineered teaching strategies at every level of students' daily nursing educational experience; in a controlled and safe learning environment within the higher educational context.

Biography

Jennifer Loke was awarded the prestigious title of *International Scholar of the Higher Education Academy* in 2012 and has achieved the professional status of *Senior Fellows of the Higher Education Academy* in the following year. These achievements are significant evidence of her sustained commitment and capacity to evidence core knowledge, professional values and diverse delivery skills above the expected academic teaching standard in enhancing and supporting nursing student learning experience. She frequently conducts seminars and collaborative research in Singapore and is the lead author of books on interprofessional online learning (IPOL) and research methodology for IPOL.

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