Exploring the basic elements required for an effective educator-student relationship in nursing education

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Co-Supervisor: Prof MP Koen

May 2014
I, Kathleen Froneman student number 23049847, declare that the dissertation entitled: Exploring the basic elements required for an effective educator-student relationship in nursing education is my own work.

I confirm that:

- This dissertation is my own work and has not been partially or wholly copied from other’s work.
- Each contribution to, and quotation in this dissertation of work of other’s has been cited and referenced accordingly.
- All main sources of help have been acknowledged.
- This research study has obtained ethical clearance from the North-West University’s Ethical Committee, Potchefstroom Campus.
- This research study complies with the research ethical standards and principles as stipulated by the North-West University manual for post-graduate studies.

_______________________
Kathleen Froneman
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16 September 2013
ABSTRACT:

An effective educator-student relationship is a key factor to ensure a positive learning climate where learning can take place. Educators must work together to build caring relationships with students, provide support to eliminate barriers and create a positive learning climate. This will establish an atmosphere characterised by mutual support, caring and understanding, all of which are fundamental to a sound educator-student relationship. Resilience research consistently points to the importance of positive and supportive relationships between the educator and student as a key protective factor in students’ progress. Strengthening students’ resilience from the beginning of their nursing career through a positive and supportive educator-student relationship can improve their well-being, as well as improve the quality of education and eventually the patient care delivered.

The overall aim of this study was to explore and describe the basic elements required for an effective educator-student relationship in a private nursing education institution in the North-West Province. The study enabled the researcher to recommend guidelines to strengthen the resilience of nursing students within the educator-student relationship. An explorative, descriptive and contextual qualitative design was followed. This study made use of a non-probability sample and specifically a purposive sampling method. The sample consisted of forty enrolled nursing auxiliary students. The “World Café” method was used to collect data. Data were analysed by using Creswell’s steps in data analysis. Five main categories were identified: (1) teaching/learning environment, (2) educator-student interaction, (3) educator qualities, (4) staying resilient and (5) strategies to strengthen resilience.
Conclusions were drawn by looking at the interrelation between the literature review, the theoretical framework chosen for this study, namely Kumpfers' resilience framework, and the findings of the research. It is eminent that students need a caring and supportive learning environment including enough space, lighting and ventilation. Students reported that they need interaction that is constructive, interaction that acknowledges human rights and interaction that makes use of appropriate non-verbal communication. The educator must display qualities of love and care, respect, responsibility, morality, patience, openness to new ideas, motivation, willingness to “go the extra mile” and punctuality. Students reported various ways through which they manage to stay resilient namely: being positive, having a support system, improving study methods, self-motivation, setting personal goals, taking pride, perseverance and determination. Recommendations were formulated for nursing education, nursing practice and further research.

Keywords:
Educator-student relationship, nursing education, nursing education institute (NEI), nursing student, learning environment, resilience.
OPSOMMING:

’n Effektiewe dosent-student verhouding is ‘n belangrike faktor in ‘n positiewe leer-omgewing om te verseker dat leer kan plaasvind. Dosente moet saamwerk om omgee-verhoudings met studente op te bou, om ondersteuning te bied, om struikelblokke uit te skakel en ‘n positiewe leerklimaat daar te stel. Dit sal ‘n atmosfeer skep wat gekenmerk word deur wedersydse ondersteuning, omgee en verstaan, wat die fondamentele boublokke van ‘n goeie dosent-student verhouding vorm. Navorsing oor veerkragtigheid verwys deurgaans na die belangrikheid van ‘n positiewe en ondersteunende verhouding tussen die dosent en die student as ‘n belangrike faktor in studente se lewens. Bevordering van verpleegstudente se veerkragtigheid sedert die begin van hul verpleegloopbaan deur middel van ‘n positiewe en ondersteunende dosent-student verhouding kan hul welstand verseker, sowel as die gehalte van onderrig en uiteindelik pasiëntsorg verbeter.

Die oorhoofse doel van hierdie studie was om te verken en te beskryf wat die basiese elemente is vir ‘n effektiewe dosent-student verhouding in ‘n privaat verpleegonderrig instelling in die Noordwes-provinsie. Dit het die navorser in staat gestel om riglyne aan te beveel wat die veerkragtigheid van verpleegstudente versterk binne die dosent-student verhouding. ‘n Verkennende, beskrywende en kontekstuele kwalitatiewe ontwerp is gevolg. Hierdie studie het gebruik gemaak van ‘n nie-waarskynlikheids-streekproef en spesifiek ‘n doelgerigte steekproefneming. Die steekproef het bestaan uit veertig ingeskrewe verpleeghulpstudente. Die “World Café” metode is gebruik om data in te samel. Creswell se stappe van data analise is gebruik om data te analiseer. Vyf kategorieë is geïdentifiseer: (1) onderrig/leer-omgewing, (2) dosent-student interaksie,
(3) dosent kwaliteite, (4) om veerkragtig te bly en (5) strategieë om veerkragtigheid te versterk.

Gevolgtrekkings is gemaak deur te kyk na die verband tussen die literatuuroorsig, die teoretiese raamwerk vir hierdie studie, naamlik Kumpfer se veerkragtigheidraamwerk en die bevindinge vanuit die navorsing. Vanuit die bevindinge van hierdie studie is dit duidelik dat studente 'n simpatieke en ondersteunende leeromgewing benodig wat genoeg ruimte, beligting en ventilasie insluit. Studente rapporteer hulle benodig interaksie wat konstruktief is, interaksie wat erkenning gee aan menseregte en interaksie wat gebruik maak van toepaslike nie-verbale kommunikasie. Die dosent moet eienskappe toon van liefde en sorg, respek, verantwoordelikheid, moraliteit, geduld, oop wees vir nuwe idees, gemotiveerd, bereidwillig om "die ekstra myl" te stap asook stiptelikheid. Studente rapporteer op verskeie maniere hoe hulle dit regkry om veerkragtig te bly naamlik: positiwiteit, 'n ondersteuningstelsel, verbetering van studiemetodes, self-motivering, stel van persoonlike doelwitte, om trots te wees, deursettingsvermoë en vasberadenheid. Aanbevelings is geformuleer vir verpleegonderrig, verpleegpraktyk en verdere navorsing.

*Sleutelwoorde:*

Dosent-student verhouding, verpleegonderrig, verpleegonderrig instansie, verpleegstudent, leeromgewing, veerkragtigheid.
“What teachers know, do, expect and value has a significant influence on the nature, extent and rate of student learning. The powerful phrase ‘teachers make the difference’ captures the key role that professional educators play in shaping the lives and futures of their students.”

(National Statement from the Teaching Profession on Teacher Standards, Quality and Professionalism, May 2003)
DEDICATION:

This dissertation is dedicated to the one person who always believes in me...

My Mother...

She is an educator and has been my role model my entire life. Thank you for showing me all the qualities of a caring and supportive educator, and investing those principles in me from my first day of school. You have been a source of love, endless support, encouragement and inspiration throughout my life.
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First and foremost, my utmost gratitude to my Heavenly Father for the wisdom and perseverance that He has bestowed upon me during this research study and throughout my life:

“I can do everything through Christ who strengthens me.”

~Philippians 4:13.

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