Title:
Emancipatory Nursing Praxis: A Theory of Social Justice in Nursing

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Session Title:
Interprofessional Relationships and Healthy Workplaces

Slot:
B 03: Friday, April 8, 2016: 1:15 PM-2:30 PM

Scheduled Time:
1:35 PM

Keywords:
advocate-to-ally, social justice and theory

References:

Abstract Summary:
How do nurses come to know and practice social justice? How do they decide when, where, and how to engage? What are the risks? This session explores these issues within the transformational theoretical framework identified from a constructivist, grounded theory study involving 33 nurse-activists from nine countries.

Learning Activity:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Describe four social processes nurses use to develop their professional role in social justice.</td>
<td>Present key social processes identified in an international, grounded theory study of nurses who self-identify as engaging in social justice (Power point presentation, discussion)</td>
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<td>2. Identify the professional, financial, and personal risks of nurse involvement in social justice.</td>
<td>Discuss the multi-level risks identified by nurses who self-identified as engaging in social justice (Power point presentation; discussion)</td>
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<td>Differentiate the advocacy role from the role of ally in social justice engagement as a nurse.</td>
<td>Explore the expanded professional role of ally that was articulated by nurses who self-identified as engaging in social justice (Power point presentation; discussion)</td>
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Abstract Text:
Emancipatory Nursing Praxis: A Theory of Social Justice in Nursing
Purpose: The purpose of this international qualitative, constructivist grounded theory study was to generate a middle-range theory of social justice specific to the discipline of nursing. The primary research question was, "What are the critical factors shaping nurse professionals' perceptions and attitudes about their role in social justice?" Related questions included, "How do nurse professionals come to know and practice social justice?" and, "What processes do nurse professionals use to identify the contexts in which they will engage in social justice?"

Background: Scholars increasingly argue that health and its attendant disparities and inequities are socioculturally constructed, and implore nurses to engage in social justice to identify and redress the societal conditions that negatively impact individual and public health. Few nurses understand or engage in social justice, but professional awareness and involvement may increase if a theoretical framework elucidating the process is developed.

Methods: The methods employed in the study were consistent with the constructivist, grounded theory methodology articulated by Charmaz (2014). Semi-structured, individual interviews were conducted to collect data from English-speaking nurses internationally who self-identified as engaging in social justice. Data segments from the interviews were coded, categorized, and analyzed for conceptual relationships. Theoretical sampling was used to develop and saturate the conceptual categories and themes identified from the interviews. The conceptual relationships were developed into a substantive theory to explain the role of nurse professionals' engagement in social justice. A focus group of seven nurse experts in social justice was used to confirm the conceptual categories and the theory.

Findings: Emancipatory Nursing Praxis was the basic social process co-constructed from the voices of nurses internationally who engaged in social justice. The implementing processes—becoming, awakening, engaging, and transforming—comprised the non-linear, non-hierarchical social process that concomitantly determined Emancipatory Nursing Praxis. Two conditional contexts, relational and reflexive, framed and influenced the process. The theoretical framework provides an in-depth understanding of nurse engagement in social justice.

Conclusions/Implications: Four major interpretive conclusions emerged from the study findings: (a) this study was primarily informed by the voice of White, middle-class privilege; (b) there was a notable absence of professional nursing education and organizational support in the development of the nurse's role in social justice; (c) Emancipatory Nursing Praxis emerged as a transformative learning theory characterized by reflection-in-action, and paradigmatically grounded in the critical philosophical tradition; and, (d) the advocacy role in nursing practice is expanded to include the social justice role of ally.