Title: Shattered Assumptions: Examining Discrepant Perceptions of “Reasonable” Accommodations Among Faculty and Student Nurses with Disabilities

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Session Title: "What Did That Mean?” An Examination of Personal Disposition in Nursing Education and Practice
Slot: F 10: Friday, 28 July 2017: 2:30 PM-3:45 PM
Scheduled Time: 2:50 PM

Keywords: Theory of Shattered Assumptions, academic accommodations and negotiation

References:


Abstract Summary:
Nursing faculty and student nurses with disabilities (SNWDs) sometimes find that their respective assumptions about reasonable accommodations are significantly discrepant. The struggle over questions related to implementing academic accommodations can lead to visceral responses on the parts of both parties.
Learning Activity:

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<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Recognize assumptions of nursing faculty and of student nurses with disabilities, as those assumptions relate to the implementation of formally-established academic accommodations.</td>
<td>Discuss commonly-reported conceptions held by faculty and students with disabilities regarding the process of implementing formally-established academic accommodations.</td>
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<td>2. Describe the relevance of the Theory of Shattered Assumptions to analysis of the expectations that constrain patterns of interaction among nursing faculty and student nurses with disabilities.</td>
<td>Address tenets of the Theory of Shattered Assumptions and consider the relevance of those tenets to the negotiation process of faculty and students through implementation of approved academic accommodations.</td>
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Abstract Text:

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this study, which combined case study and content analysis methods, was to examine and begin to highlight features characterizing the interface between the assumptions of faculty members and student nurses with disabilities (SNWDs), as those assumptions regard implementation of academic accommodations.

**Methods:**

The investigators used explanatory case study method and content analysis to examine how the Theory of Shattered Assumptions (Janoff-Bulman, 1992) helped to explain the responses of both faculty and SNWDs endeavoring to address teaching and learning from their respective viewpoints. Used to categorize data emerging from a systematic review of the literature, the steps in the process included investigator identification of: the assumptions of both faculty and SNWDs; the character of the ‘traumatic events’ precipitating clashes of assumptions; the process of disillusionment and change often seen to demarcate the experiences of both faculty and SNWDs; the ways both faculty and SNWDs might process newly recognized data about the accommodation process; and routes to rebuilding relatively more congruency between and among faculty and SNWD assumptions.

**Results:**

Systematic literature review suggested that both nursing faculty and SNWDs processed their academic accommodation experiences through the steps outlined in the Theory of Shattered Assumptions (Janoff-Bulman, 1992). The ‘traumatic event,’ that is, the process of implementing formally-defined accommodations, challenged the fundamental assumptions of both groups. Both faculty and SNWDs described disillusionment with the changes to their personal perceptions of what constituted the status quo in the nursing classroom. For both faculty and students, lack of knowledge about the Americans with Disabilities Act and conjoint interpretation of the term ‘reasonable accommodation’ interfered with abilities to modify fundamental assumptions. Moreover, as staff in disabilities services sought to support both faculty and students, they found themselves in the tenuous position of identifying and understanding the sometimes disparate needs of each group, while adhering to the law. Analysis demonstrated that although assumptions are not immediately changeable, nursing faculty and SNWDs are able to address concerns that will support them in negotiating reasonable accommodations. Review of literature suggests
that faculty and SNWDs work through the steps outlined in the Theory of Shattered Assumptions as they address implementation of academic accommodations.

Conclusion:

Although the original premise of the Theory of Shattered Assumptions addressed recovery from traumatic events, it has broad applicability in characterizing the struggle engaging nursing faculty and SNWDs as they try to engage with recommended academic accommodations. Through this presentation, the applicability of the theory of shattered assumptions will be highlighted, demonstrating how historical, hard-wired beliefs can be rebuilt through education, communication, interpretation, and resource support.