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Nursing Students' Caring Behavior Scale: Development and Psychometric Evaluation

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Background:

Caring is the core and the essence of nursing (Nelson & Watson, 2012). Over the past decades, caring has gained increasing attention as one of the major criteria of professional nursing and has been related to patient outcomes and patient satisfaction (ANA, 2015; Dieppe, Roe, & Warber, 2015). Caring is so much a part of nursing that if nurses don't care, they have lost the heart of what it means to be nurses (Holopainen, Nyström, & Kasén, 2017). However, caring receives little to no attention in nursing education compared to the current emphasis on the acquisition of technical skills (Walker, Quinn, & Corder, 2016). Although instruments that evaluate the cognitive and psychomotor aspects of nursing students' performance have been well developed, there is no caring behaviors' measuring instrument available that is designed from an educational perspective (Nelson & Watson, 2012; Porr & Egan, 2013). This indirectly lead nursing students to pay little attention to caring since it is not part of their performance evaluation.

It is essential that caring behaviors be evaluated during students' clinical training. Without such educational focus, nurses may remain unaware that caring behaviors, like any other skill, need to be developed, practiced and perfected (Labrague, 2012; Loke, Lee, Mohd Noor, 2015). Therefore, a valid and reliable instrument for measuring caring behaviors is needed to help cultivate and motivate nursing students' caring behaviors.

Objectives:

This study aimed at the development and the psychometric evaluation of an instrument to measure nursing students' caring behaviors.

Methods:

The study consisted of two phases and five steps. The first phase concerned with the development of content domains and items, while the second phase focused on the initial psychometric evaluation and data analysis of the Nursing Students' Caring Behaviors Scale (NSCBS). In Phase I, content domains were defined based on a qualitative study conducted by the researcher to examine the meaning of caring for the seriously ill patients. Scale items were generated, the instrument content validity was evaluated, and the instrument was pretested. In Phase II: The instrument was used to measure the caring behaviors of 112 nursing students. The derived data was analyzed to determine the construct validity and internal consistency reliability of the scale.

Results:

The study findings supported the scale’s content validity, construct validity and internal consistency reliability with a Content Validity Index (CVI) of 0.97 and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.93. The resulting scale consists of 28 items in three subscales. Subscale I: Having a relationship as a human being/Presencing, subscale II: Preserving patient's dignity & subscale III: Comforting.

Conclusion:
The Nursing Students Caring Behavior Scale (NSCBS) is a reliable and valid instrument to measure nursing students' caring behaviors. Further research is needed to accumulate evidence for the validity and reliability of the scale.

Title:
Nursing Students' Caring Behavior Scale: Development and Psychometric Evaluation

Keywords:
Instrument development, Measuring caring behaviors and Nursing students

References:


Abstract Summary:
The purpose of this study was to develop a valid and reliable scale for measuring nursing students’ caring behaviors. The study findings supported the scale’s content validity, construct validity and internal consistency reliability with a Content Validity Index (CVI) of 0.97 and a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.93.

Content Outline:

1- Background:

- Caring as the essence of nursing.
- Caring in nursing education.
- The importance of measuring nursing students’ caring behaviors.
- Significance of the study.

2- Objectives of the study

3- Study Methods:

- Study design.
- Sampling plan.
- Data collection plan.
- Study procedures.
- Data analysis.

4- Study results:

- Results of the qualitative analysis of the interview data.
- Results of the content validity analysis.
- Results of the item analysis.
- Results of the factor analysis.
- Psychometric properties of the scale.

5- Description & use of the Nursing Students’ Caring Behavior Scale

6- Study Limitations

7- Conclusion

8- Implications:

- for nursing education.
- for nursing research.

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**Author Summary:** Dr. Gergis is an assistant professor at the Department of Nursing, Towson University. After completing her master and PhD in critical care nursing, she joined the University of Maryland School of Nursing for a 2 years postdoctoral fellowship in palliative care. Her research focuses on devising new strategies for the effective teaching of caring and palliative care to nursing students and establishing educational programs to help practicing nurses integrate palliative care into their day-to-day practice.