

## NET conference Abstract 2019

Title – Spiritual intelligence as a method to improve spiritual care in nursing students

Spiritual care poorly addressed within nurse education (Cone & Giske 2018) but is important for person-centred practice (McCance & McCormack 2017). This study used a phenomenological approach (Van Manen 2014) to explore the experiences of nursing students that transformed their understanding of spiritual care. Ten students were interviewed and analysis used portraiture to paint a picture of each participant (Lawrence-Lightfoot 1997). Interpretation used phenomenological existential themes. Results highlighted that students needed components of spiritual intelligence to develop understanding of spiritual care and develop the virtues needed to achieve this. A Spiritual Intelligence in Nurse Education framework is proposed.

Background 200 words (1400 characters) international relevance

Student nurses find the topic of spiritual care challenging and they feel unprepared to deal with issues (Cone & Giske 2018). The societal context of religious affiliation is changing across the globe and some countries are becoming more secular. Secularisation has led to religious belief being privatised (Paley 2009), meaning that faith beliefs are discouraged in public life (Neagoe 2013). A more secular approach to nursing is evident in the United Kingdom as the Nursing and Midwifery Council Code (NMC 2015) actively discourages expression of personal beliefs. However, person-centred care is promoted (McCance & McCormack 2017) including spiritual care. This can lead to challenges for nurse educators about addressing spiritual care in an effective and sensitive manner.

A meta-narrative literature review was undertaken to outline current knowledge of the topic area when commencing this research study. This produced papers from an international context and four key themes were developed: integrating spiritual care into the curriculum, self-awareness around spiritual issues, spiritual care as part of holistic care, and competency in spiritual care.

*Aims (200 words) The aim of this research study was to Explore undergraduate nursing students' lived experiences that develop their understanding of spiritual care. The study focused on a number of areas including how students described terms such as spirituality and religiosity, experiences that had informed their understanding of spiritual care and factors that had helped or hindered their learning.*

Research methodology, methods, analysis, ethics (200 words)

An interpretative phenomenological approach, based on Van Manen's work (2014) has been utilised for this study. This methodology was chosen to explore experiences and Van Manen (2014) has a pragmatic focus to provide insights that are useful in a variety of nurse educational contexts. Data was collected using a semi-structured interview strategy which were recorded and transcribed. Ethical approval was agreed through Canterbury Christ Church University Ethics Committee Reference 16/FHW/16 003. Data was collected between September 2016 and May 2017; all university confidentiality procedures were adhered to.

Analysis involved descriptive and interpretative phases. The conversations were described using portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot 1997) and interpreted using lifeworld phenomenological existential themes (Van Manan 2014) of lived body (corporeality), lived time (temporality), lived space (spatiality), lived relations (relationality), materiality (lived things) and Technology (lived cyborg relations). Data from participants, literature and theory was used to produce a creative writing of the phenomenological insights to offer a different perspective into the topic area explored.

Key findings, recommendations (200 words)

A purposeful sample of ten undergraduate nursing students took part in the study. The findings showed that there were significant similarities with current literature as presented in the meta-narrative literature review. New insights from this study was the need to develop student nurses' spiritual intelligence as a way to combine the cognitive, emotional and spiritual aspects (Zohar & Marshall 2000) when providing spiritual care. This included using a variety of teaching and learning strategies that enable student nurses to construct learning and deal with the complexity of spiritual care.

A Spiritual Intelligence in Nurse Education Framework is proposed and discussed as a method to educate student nurses about the topic. The framework includes elements of meaning & purpose, transcendence, goals & decision making, and character, which builds on Emmons (1999) work, as key in developing understanding about spiritual care. Spiritual intelligence is poorly addressed in nursing literature with limited evidence available; such as Karimi-Moonaghi (2015) looking at clinical competency of nurses in Iran and Kaur et al (2015) relating spiritual intelligence to caring behaviours. This study suggests that spiritual intelligence may build the student nurses' personal and professional values so may have implications for character and virtue development.

Key points for knowledge development of selected theme (humanising education) (100 words)

This paper discusses a spiritual intelligence in nurse education framework as a way to enhance personal and professional character to provide person centred care. Spiritual intelligence may be used to develop character virtues, such as courage, that are important in nursing practice.

This spiritual intelligence in nursing education framework could be used as a scaffold to ensure a variety of teaching and learning strategies are used to enhance the attributes of nursing character and enable effective spiritual care delivery.

References

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