Challenges in the professional care encounters
Nursing students' experiences of a hospital unit
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Nursing students’ experiences of patient care encounters: A qualitative systematic review and meta-synthesis

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INTRODUCTION:
In a hospital unit, the learning environment presents obstacles that may leave the nursing students with feelings of nervousness and concerns when they enter into relationships with patients during their clinical periods.

AIM:
To identify, appraise and synthesize the best available evidence exploring nursing students’ experiences of patient care encounters in a hospital unit.

METHODS:
The Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) guidelines were followed and a meta-synthesis was conducted. Qualitative research articles were considered for inclusion in the review and the meta-aggregative approach to synthesizing qualitative evidence from JBI was followed (6). The data extracted from the studies included specific details about nursing students’ experiences of professional patient care encounters in a hospital unit, using the JBI-Qari data extraction tool.

RESULTS:
A total of five research articles met the inclusion criteria and were included in the review (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). Figure 1 shows the process of identification and selection of studies for inclusion in the review in a Prisma flow diagram. A meta-aggregative approach was used by identifying findings, grouping the findings into categories, and synthesizing the categories into themes (2). The review process resulted in 46 study findings that were aggregated into 13 subcategories (figure 2). The categories generated four synthesized findings (figure 3):

CONCLUSION: Nursing students experienced personal inadequacy and vulnerability and a possible transformation in their professional patient care encounter.

FIGURE 1: PRISMA FLOWCHART OF INCLUSION PROCESS

FIGURE 2: THE CORRELATION BETWEEN META-SYNTHESIS, MAIN CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES IN THE REVIEW

FIGURE 3: SYNTHESIZED FINDINGS OF NURSING STUDENTS’ EXPERIENCE OF PATIENT CARE ENCOUNTERS

NURSING STUDENTS’ PERSONAL EXISTENCE
Emotions attached to the interaction with another human being
Feelings connected to the patients’ vulnerable situations
Feelings and thoughts related to the impact of the nursing interventions

NURSING STUDENTS’ LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
Strengthen clinical skills and potential professional development
Seek acknowledgement and wants to make a difference
Tension between ethical, moral positions and evidence
Hesitant to acknowledge professional responsibilities

BEING AF PROFESSIONAL FELLOW HUMAN
Putting themselves in the patient’s situation
Worries of what might happen
Relates the situations of illness to themselves or their family members

CLINICAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
Feeling of incompetence
Lack of professional nursing skills and knowledge to take care of various patients in a hospital unit
Concerns about the possibility of harming a patient

REFERENCES: