

ABSTRACT

Care and Caring in Nursing: Perceptions and Realities

This thesis examines the perceptions, nature and meanings of care and caring as practised by nurses at Port of Spain General Hospital. The thesis highlights two important periods in the development of nursing education and training, namely the apprenticeship system of training and, more recently, the education of nurses under the college system.

The data for this study were obtained through in-depth interviewing of selected persons who have been employed, and who have gained considerable experience, at the institution. The data-gathering process took the form of participant observation of wards and departments where care and caring activities are undertaken by nurses as they carry out their routine daily caring functions.

This unique case study was undertaken within the framework of the naturalistic practical paradigm using grounded theory methodology. This approach facilitates the discovery of perceptions and meanings of care and caring by nurses and aims to show how those perceptions and meanings have changed over time.

The analysis for this study was both multifaceted and complex and provides a comprehensive framework by which the reader may follow the emergent findings and explanations. The study focuses largely on nurses and their practice and therefore the findings could be relevant in guiding continued developments in nursing education and practice. It identifies areas for further research and makes recommendations for improving the standard of care and caring in nursing practice.

KEY WORDS:

Rupert Jones
Clinical Setting
Grounded Theory
Interviews
Nurses
Nursing
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Participants
Port of Spain General Hospital
Respondents