

ABSTRACT

Transforming Nursing Education for a Modern Health Care System in Trinidad and Tobago

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In spite of reform efforts in the education and health sectors, nursing education in Trinidad and Tobago seems to lag behind that in developed and in some developing countries as well. Obsolete legislation exists and traditional structures and processes are being perpetuated and maybe associated with the negative public perceptions and outcomes of the health care system. The purpose of this study was to explore the historical development as well as the key stakeholders' views of the nursing education system in Trinidad and Tobago towards determining a framework for its future delivery in a modern health care system. A case study design in the qualitative research tradition was employed. The methods entailed content analysis of documents detailing the historical development of nursing education in Trinidad and Tobago from its inception through to the first decade of the 21st century. Fullan's New Meaning of Educational Change model guided the purposeful sampling of key stakeholders and data collection from fundamental areas of the nursing education system. Key stakeholders' views on nursing education for a modern health care system were captured through individual and focus group interviews. Qualitative data analysis revealed themes which were further classified into analytic categories. The categories were representations of the changes that were deemed necessary for the modernization of the nursing education system. They included *responding to health care demands, collaborating to fix the brokenness, heeding nurses' voices, instituting global standards and resourcing the system*. The study suggests that it is crucial to re-engineer the nursing education system so that it can fulfill its mandate to prepare an adequate number of nurses with the requisite competencies to work in a modern health care system. This would redound to the benefit of the population with improved health care outcomes.

Keywords: Daisy Shama Rampersad; nursing education; nursing history; key stakeholders; modern health care; educational change.