

Caring in Nursing Practice: A Concept that Transcends Gender

**Normajeane Colby PhD, RN, CNE
Widener University**

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- Dissertation Committee
 - Dr. Barbara Patterson
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Objectives

- The learner will be able to describe the essence of nursing as perceived by practicing registered nurses who are male.
- The learner will be able to describe two examples of caring for and caring about patients.

The Research Question

“What is the Essence of Nursing as Perceived by Practicing Registered Nurses Who are Male?”



Methodology

- Qualitative Descriptive Naturalistic Inquiry
- IRB approval – human subjects consideration
- Data Collection: Semi Structured Interviews
- Data Analysis: Thematic Content Analysis

Trustworthiness

- Credibility: prolonged engagement, peer debriefing, member checks
- Transferability: use of thick description, purposive sampling
- Dependability & Confirmability: inquiry audit, reflexive journal

Participant Sample

- 11 male practicing Registered Nurses
- Employed Full Time > 1 year: range 3-29 years; M = 16 yrs
- Age: range 34 – 56 yrs; M = 41 yrs
- Practice areas: critical care, emergency, perioperative, medical surgical, nursing education, home care, pediatrics
- Initial nursing degree: 6 BSN, 4 ADN, 1 Diploma
- Highest nursing degree: 5 BSN, 5 MSN, 1 PhD

The Findings – Two Metathemes

Nursing as Caring

Being a Male in the Nursing Profession



The Essence of the Nursing Profession

- Possessing a Certain Personality
- Valuing Patient Recognition
- Experiencing Inequities Based on Gender
- Facing a Double Standard from Others
- Contending With the Challenges of a Predominantly Female Profession

Experiencing Inequities Based on Gender

- Caring from a male viewed as taboo
- Defending the decision to become a nurse



Facing a Double Standard from Others

- Not being perceived as a nurse by society
- Being held to higher expectations
- Being intentional about portraying a more professional image
- Deferring own work to help move colleagues' patients

The Essence of Nursing Practice



Caring for People

Caring about People

Caring for People

- Provision of skilled assessments, interventions, and evaluation
- Physical care
- “caring with the head”
- Based on scientific knowledge, critical thinking, nursing preparation and education, and past experiences in providing patient care
- Includes the scientific and technical aspects of nursing

Caring for People

"Nursing is more than just caring, it's also the technical aspect that really intrigued me. I loved the biological and chemical aspects of nursing. Being able to use what I considered my head, not just my heart. Caring, I think, would be attributed to the heart, but yet using my head was using all that book knowledge." -Jason

Caring about People

- Nurturing
- Psychological presence
- The emotional support offered to a patient
- “caring with the heart”
- Interactive aspects
- Compassion; empathetic approach
- Giving of oneself

Caring about People

"Letting the patient know 'we care about you'..." -Joe

"It's nice to sit and talk to a patient and provide that kind of care rather than the physical hands on care." - George

Caring

“They are intertwined – the technical and interactive or nurturing part”

–Henry

“That’s the essence. Being able to be a competent caregiver, but at the same time look out for the patient on the psychological and that is something that is unique to nursing”

–Sam

“Taking care of the whole person...”

–Jeremy

Caring Theories

- Watson (1979; 1988): nursing as caring; humanistic aspects and caring are stressed
- Leininger (1984; 1995): caring as the central theme in nursing care, knowledge, and practice; the essence of nursing
- Duffy – Quality Caring Model (2010): caring relationships

ANA (2003)

Essential features of professional nursing include:

“The Provision of a Caring Relationship that Facilitates Health and Healing”



The Science & Art of Nursing

Caring for People – Science of Nursing

Caring about People – Art of Nursing



The Science

- Basis of one's competency to practice
- Scientific knowledge base for the discipline
- Requires a devoted and rigid preparation; rigorous training
- Formalized training and experience

The Art

- Nurturance
- Intentional creative use of oneself
- Transmitting emotion and meaning to another



Nursing

“Professional and holistic nurturance based on a scientific body of knowledge and an art providing meaning, that is facilitated within a human to human connection”

- Colby, 2002



Implications for Nursing

- Caring transcends gender
- Recognition that different styles of caring exist
- Presenting guidelines for touch
- De-emphasize the femininity associated with nursing and caring

Men in Nursing-Embrace the Diversity!



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