Fighting for the otherness
Student nurses' lived experiences of growing in caring

av

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Abstract


In Swedish nursing education, student nurses should gain a bachelor degree in the main field of study. However, five designations of the main field of study exist among the higher education institutions and the present thesis focuses on the main field of study caring science. Former studies show that the acquisition of knowledge in caring by student nurses is characterized by troubles, uncertainty and confusion. The aim was to describe how growing in caring is experienced by student nurses during education.

The theoretical perspective was caring science with focus on caring science didactics, while the epistemological frame constituted of a phenomenological lifeworld approach. Data was gathered with interviews and written narratives at different occasions during the education in order to grasp the general structure of growing in caring.

The findings illuminated that growing in caring means a struggle for one’s own caring beliefs to exist and survive in a world filled with diverse expectations of caring. Through recognizing expectations of caring, student nurses discover the complexity of caring. In this complexity, they understand themselves as being different and the otherness appears. The otherness consists of unique beliefs about caring based on former experiences. In order to give evidence for the otherness, concepts from caring theories that agree with one’s own caring beliefs are found, which transform the concepts from being meaningless to being essential in caring. The concepts strengthen the student nurses’ growth in caring and constitute a support in their discussions about caring. In this struggle for gaining access with their otherness, they become convinced that they can make changes for the patient and strength arises to fight for their otherness.

The study showed that the otherness appears as the hub in the student nurse’s world, which gains nourishment to discover paths to think, feel and act in a caring manner. This gives an incentive that innovative learning strategies that both grasp the student nurses’ lifeworld as well as bring knowledge in caring into awareness for them are needed to be developed.

Keywords: caring, caring science, growth, otherness, phenomenological lifeworld approach, Swedish student nurses.

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