

Clinical Supervisors Experience of Supervising Nursing Students from a Higher Education Institution

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Abstract : Nursing students' clinical abilities is highly dependent on the quality of the clinical experience obtained while placed in the clinical environment. The clinical environment has amongst other, key role players which include the clinical supervisor. The primary role of the clinical supervisor is to guide nursing students to become the best practice nursing professionals. However, globally literature alludes to the failure of educating institutions to deliver competent nursing professionals to meet the needs of patients and deliver quality patient care. At the participating university, this may be due to various factors such as large student numbers and social and environmental challenges experienced by clinical supervisors. The aim of this study was to explore and describe the lived experiences of clinical supervisors who supervise nursing students at a higher education institution. The study employed a qualitative research approach utilizing a descriptive phenomenological design. Purposive sampling was used to select participants, who supervised first and second year nursing students at the higher education institution under study. The sample comprised of eight clinical supervisors who supervise first and second year nursing students at the institution under study. Data was collected by means of in-depth interviews. Data was analysed using Colaizzi's seven steps method of qualitative analysis. Five major themes identified, focussed on the experiences regarding time as a constraint to job productivity, the impact of the organisational culture on the fluidity of support, interpersonal relationships as a dynamic communication process, impact on the self, and limited resources. Trustworthiness of the data was ensured by means of applying Guba's model of truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality. Reflexivity was also used by the researcher to further enhance trustworthiness.

Keywords : clinical supervision, clinical supervisors, nursing students, clinical placements

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