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Lifelong learning: A constructivist grounded theory study

Erin Bennion
Brigham Young University-Idaho, USA

Lifelong learning has been established as an essential component of nursing culture, yet there continues to be substantial obstacles to implementing lifelong learning into nursing practice. The research questions were: What are the perceptions of nurses regarding lifelong learning, what experiences describe the nurse's pursuit of lifelong learning and what theory, grounded in data explains lifelong learning of acute care nurses? The sampling and data collection took place in a southern Utah health care organization and data saturation occurred after 15 interviews. The conceptual base for the study was The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and Association of American Medical College's (AAMC) lifelong learning in medicine and nursing final conference report (2010). A constructivist grounded theory method was chosen and theoretical sampling methods were used to collect the data. Theoretical sampling and constant comparative analysis were the primary methods of data analysis. The theory that emerged from the data was confined learning, which is a descriptive theory depicting lifelong learning of acute care nurses. This theory describes how nurses have become dependent upon hospitals for lifelong learning opportunities. Some of these opportunities are provided by the hospital and others were experienced within the hospital and occurred at the patient bedside or by interacting with coworkers. The implications of the research findings expose an over dependence for nurses upon hospital provided learning resources. This overdependence upon a hospital for providing learning opportunities decreases the nurse's opportunities to explore learning resources, become familiar with current research and develop information literacy.

Biography

Erin Bennion has earned her PhD in Nursing and she is a Nursing Faculty Member at Brigham Young University-Idaho. She currently teaches nursing research and maternal/child nursing. She specializes in lifelong learning efforts in medicine, using a unique learning model where understanding of the learning and teaching process grows as one pursues inquiry and innovation.

bennione@byui.edu

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