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The perceptions of professional nurses on student mentorship in clinical areas: A study in Polokwane municipality hospitals, Limpopo Province, South Africa

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Statement of the Problem: Mentoring in the practice of nursing is detached as a supportive teaching strategy from the process of student training. This in turn leads to a decline in skills acquisition and leading to feelings of inadequacy in clinical competence and poorly prepared for clinical practice. If mentoring is not intensified at student level, a transition into professional role where independency is highly expected is a challenge. There is a conflict of interest in the professional nurses' roles between rendering of care and facilitating professional aspirations of students. This is further compounded conflict of values between education and management that prevails in units where students do their clinical practice. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of professional nurses on student mentorship in clinical areas.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: A qualitative, explorative and hermeneutic phenomenological design following Heiderggerian approach was used as the researcher intended to assess and understand the participants' understanding and experiences of mentoring. The three domains of mentoring by Yoder were adopted as focus of the study.

Findings: Mentoring was perceived as a valuable tool to apply in preparation of student nurses for future professional role. In the process of mentoring, the caring attitude is important. Factors that affected mentoring process were communication, time and available resources.

Conclusion & Significance: Mentoring is an important tool in the nursing profession for student development. It is a mutual and reciprocal responsibility. Recommendations made were that adequate formal training for professional nurses be introduced to best prepare them for mentoring role.

Biography

Setati Chokoe Mable has her passion in teaching to build the young generation of nurses into proficient, confident health practitioner to improve the well-being of the society at large.

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