

Aiming at culture conscious and tailored nursing

An ethnographic study on the development process towards quality transcultural nursing.

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Aim: The purpose of this ethnographic study is to describe the development process towards quality transcultural nursing from the Finnish nursing education perspective. Leininger's Culture Care Model was used as a framework of this study.

Methods: Data were gathered 1997-2006 in Britain, Spain and Greece on student exchanges. The data consisted of interviews with key informants (N=12), interviews with general informants (N=9), research assistants' diaries (N=6), student nurses' travel reports (N=45), and additional material. Qualitative content analysis method was applied to the data.

Results: The organizational and educational prerequisites of Finnish nursing education provided a chance for student nurses to learn transcultural nursing on exchange. The cultural knowledge gathered from the exchange countries increased the student nurses' cultural knowledge base and in addition, their personal knowledge base increased. All the student nurses went through a cultural change and growth (learning) process and both the increased cultural and personal knowledge bases were utilized in this process. The student nurses wanted to accommodate their own nursing on the bases of their learning experiences in order to improve the quality of it. In this process some of the cultural values and nursing practices of the student nurses were maintained as learned earlier and some of them were repatterned. The cultural change and growth (learning) process produced a new type of knowledge, which is called transcultural nursing knowledge. The use of this knowledge leads to nurses' cultural competence and preparedness to meet the cultural needs of the patient, and therefore nurses will be able to provide culture conscious and tailored nursing to their patients. Culture conscious and tailored nursing means here quality transcultural nursing to patients because the cultural knowledge and experiences are utilized when assessing and implementing the patient's care.

Conclusions: The development process towards quality transcultural nursing described in this study provided one option to meet the challenges of the globalization of nursing. The results of this study can be utilized in nursing education and its further development in transcultural nursing. They also provide ideas for future research.

