What is the purpose of nursing theories?

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Utilizing a consistent and coherent structure of values, hypotheses, and ideas, nursing theories aim to serve as a foundational structure of professional development, nursing practices, associated research and education in the domains of nursing. The most conspicuous function of these theories is to illuminate the phenomenon of ‘nursing’ through various research paradigms and methods of reasoning. The direction in which this field and phenomenon should develop in the future is also steered by the nursing theories and the growing body of these theories enables personnel associated to distinguish between necessary and irrelevant knowledge. The professional boundaries can also be fabricated and maintained by these theories. Some common examples of theories upon which the profession majorly relies are: General system theory, Developmental theory, and Adaptation theory (Brandão, 2019).

More often than not, nursing is regarded as both a science and an art. Nurses are very well able to relate to this widely prevailing belief. Nurses are thoroughly aware of the patient care plans and disease mechanisms, along with the dynamics of medications and management practices on several fronts. The operationalization of various equipment pre and post-surgery is also critical to know for the members of the nursing and this can be encompassed in the science of nursing. On the other hand, the art of nursing refers to the humanistic qualities and the core principles that guide the practices of nursing. Some of these values are compassion, care, and communication. Additionally, the art of nursing also entails that the nurses should be aware of the cultural, spiritual, and biopsychosocial needs of the patients and should never forget to incorporate these elements in their day-to-day practices (Barrett, 2017). The experience of any patient in a hospital is greatly influenced by the behavioural attitude of the nurse who takes care of the patient. The nursing programs and associated courses offer a plethora of advanced techniques of nursing practices that can enable the interested individuals to reach the zenith of this profession, but in the contemporary era, nurses should also learn to teach and adapt the humanistic qualities through observation, experience, and role modeling.

There has been extensive research on the conception and prevalence of the public image of the nursing profession. A great deal of diversity and incongruity has been observed in the image of this profession as held by the general public. The identity and public image are significantly based on the traditional cultural and social values, work values and the prevailing environment, and the level of education of the specific region. The nurses can promote the image of this esteemed profession by being more visible in every role and place of employment. There should be a promotion of their accomplishments and researchers and educators should collaborate with the nursing administrators to recognize their efforts and professional contributions. A unified entry into the academic horizons for those individuals who are interested in the profession will be instrumental from an educational perspective. Nurses should also participate in the political arenas to reshape the public image. The increased representation of nurses and their associated issues in healthcare will only be possible if more personnel from this profession are present at the tables of policymaking.

The goals of effective healthcare delivery can only be realized if communication is regarded as an essential and crucial component in all the steps of the healthcare processes. The need for the dissemination of concise and accurate information and communication is present at all times, irrespective of the participants of the communication. If the scenario involves a nurse communicating with her fellow at the shift rotation, or a nurse recording the important bits and pieces of medical history from her patient, if there will be loopholes in the communication process, medical errors will significantly increase. The healthcare institutions that implement and observe strong communication policies have a credible repute for healthcare delivery in sheer contrast to those hospitals and facilitates, where communication strategies and policies are weak. The sincere intention displayed by a nurse to understand the concerns of the patients is a part of effective communication. In a multi-cultural environment, effective communication automatically takes the role of a prerequisite.

There are many reported instances where communication has created a barrier between the nurse and the patient. Communication can be perceived as a barrier between the patient and nurse if there are issues associated with a misinterpretation or if there is a reinterpretation of messages (Norouzinia, 2016). It has been observed that nurses tend to use a lot of medical jargon, and overload information for the patients who are already in distress and their medical condition does not enable them to prioritize accuracy in communication with their healthcare providers or nurses. Using a lot of clinical acronyms and technical jargon can also pose problems for the delivery of accurate information and ambiguity can be avoided. Patients also tend to assume based on their cultural traditions and biases. For instance, if a young doctor briefs the extended family of the patient about his or her diagnosis, chances are that the information may be misinterpreted or even ignored.

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