

What it means to hold nursing knowledge: An exploratory study towards a novel concept

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Abstract

Nurses are consistently ranked the most trusted professionals with high rankings for honesty and ethical standards. This strength of the profession is a compliment to its knowledge, practice, and experience. Nurses are formal caregivers in practice, but many also provide informal care to family and friends. There is some literature to suggest that nurses engaged in formal and informal caregiving roles may experience role conflict with subsequent impact on their own health. The purpose of this exploratory study is to define an innovative nursing concept that describes the attributes and consequences of "holding nursing knowledge." The specific aims include: 1.) explore the implications of "holding nursing knowledge;" 2.) explore nurses' perception of role conflict when providing formal and informal caregiving; and 3.) understand the challenges nurses face as they relate as informal caregivers to both family and friends. Together these aims will facilitate the advancement of a new concept in nursing science and set the foundation for further research to develop preventative strategies and interventions for nurses experiencing this phenomenon. Qualitative descriptive design with semi-structured in-depth interviews and qualitative content analysis will be used to collect and analyze the data. This study will uniquely use role conflict theory as a framework to guide the interview questions and interpret the data. Defining a novel concept in nursing will not only assist in advancing nursing science but will also contribute to resolving challenges within the nursing discipline. Failure to identify the implications of holding nursing knowledge and its impact on nurses may place nurses at increased risk for physical and emotional consequences in a profession already facing challenges. By continuing to develop this concept, we can assure that nurses will not only be able to care for the well-being of others, but also for the well-being of themselves.