

Exploring the basic elements required for an effective educator-student relationship in nursing education

K Froneman
23049847

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree *Magister Curationis* in Health Science
Education at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West
University

Supervisor: Dr E du Plessis
Co-Supervisor Prof MP Koen

May 2014



DECLARATION:

I, Kathleen Froneman student number 23049847, declare that the dissertation entitled: Exploring the basic elements required for an effective educator-student relationship in nursing education is my own work.

I confirm that:

- + This dissertation is my own work and has not been partially or wholly copied from other's work.
- + Each contribution to, and quotation in this dissertation of work of other's has been cited and referenced accordingly.
- + All main sources of help have been acknowledged.
- + This research study has obtained ethical clearance from the North-West University's Ethical Committee, Potchefstroom Campus.
- + This research study complies with the research ethical standards and principles as stipulated by the North-West University manual for post-graduate studies.

Kathleen Froneman

Student number: 23049847

16 September 2013

ABSTRACT:

An effective educator-student relationship is a key factor to ensure a positive learning climate where learning can take place. Educators must work together to build caring relationships with students, provide support to eliminate barriers and create a positive learning climate. This will establish an atmosphere characterised by mutual support, caring and understanding, all of which are fundamental to a sound educator-student relationship. Resilience research consistently points to the importance of positive and supportive relationships between the educator and student as a key protective factor in students' progress. Strengthening students' resilience from the beginning of their nursing career through a positive and supportive educator-student relationship can improve their well-being, as well as improve the quality of education and eventually the patient care delivered.

The overall aim of this study was to explore and describe the basic elements required for an effective educator-student relationship in a private nursing education institution in the North-West Province. The study enabled the researcher to recommend guidelines to strengthen the resilience of nursing students within the educator-student relationship. An explorative, descriptive and contextual qualitative design was followed. This study made use of a non-probability sample and specifically a purposive sampling method. The sample consisted of forty enrolled nursing auxiliary students. The "World Café" method was used to collect data. Data were analysed by using Creswell's steps in data analysis. Five main categories were identified: (1) teaching/learning environment, (2) educator-student interaction, (3) educator qualities, (4) staying resilient and (5) strategies to strengthen resilience.

Conclusions were drawn by looking at the interrelation between the literature review, the theoretical framework chosen for this study, namely Kumpfers' resilience framework, and the findings of the research. It is eminent that students need a caring and supportive learning environment including enough space, lighting and ventilation. Students reported that they need interaction that is constructive, interaction that acknowledges human rights and interaction that makes use of appropriate non-verbal communication. The educator must display qualities of love and care, respect, responsibility, morality, patience, openness to new ideas, motivation, willingness to "go the extra mile" and punctuality. Students reported various ways through which they manage to stay resilient namely: being positive, having a support system, improving study methods, self-motivation, setting personal goals, taking pride, perseverance and determination. Recommendations were formulated for nursing education, nursing practice and further research.

Keywords:

Educator-student relationship, nursing education, nursing education institute (NEI), nursing student, learning environment, resilience.

OPSOMMING:

'n Effektiewe dosent-student verhouding is 'n belangrike faktor in 'n positiewe leer-omgewing om te verseker dat leer kan plaasvind. Dosente moet saamwerk om omgee-verhoudings met studente op te bou, om ondersteuning te bied, om struikelblokke uit te skakel en 'n positiewe leerklimaat daar te stel. Dit sal 'n atmosfeer skep wat gekenmerk word deur wedersydse ondersteuning, omgee en verstaan, wat die fundamentele boublokke van 'n goeie dosent-student verhouding vorm. Navorsing oor veerkragtigheid verwys deurgaans na die belangrikheid van 'n positiewe en ondersteunende verhouding tussen die dosent en die student as 'n belangrike faktor in studente se lewens. Bevordering van verpleegstudente se veerkragtigheid sedert die begin van hul verpleegloopbaan deur middel van 'n positiewe en ondersteunende dosent-student verhouding kan hul welstand verseker, sowel as die gehalte van onderrig en uiteindelik pasiëntsorg verbeter.

Die oorhoofse doel van hierdie studie was om te verken en te beskryf wat die basiese elemente is vir 'n effektiewe dosent-student verhouding in 'n privaat verpleegonderrig instelling in die Noordwes-provinsie. Dit het die navorser in staat gestel om riglyne aan te beveel wat die veerkragtigheid van verpleegstudente versterk binne die dosent-student verhouding. 'n Verkennende, beskrywende en kontekstuele kwalitatiewe ontwerp is gevolg. Hierdie studie het gebruik gemaak van 'n nie-waarskynlikheids-streekproef en spesifiek 'n doelgerigte steekproefneming. Die steekproef het bestaan uit veertig ingeskrewe verpleeghulpstudente. Die "World Café" metode is gebruik om data in te samel. Creswell se stappe van data analise is gebruik om data te analiseer. Vyf kategorieë is geïdentifiseer: (1) onderrig/leer-omgewing, (2) dosent-student interaksie,

(3) dosent kwaliteite, (4) om veerkragtig te bly en (5) strategieë om veerkragtigheid te versterk.

Gevolgtrekkings is gemaak deur te kyk na die verband tussen die literatuuoroorsig, die teoretiese raamwerk vir hierdie studie, naamlik Kumpfer se veerkragtigheidsraamwerk en die bevindinge vanuit die navorsing. Vanuit die bevindinge van hierdie studie is dit duidelik dat studente 'n simpatieke en ondersteunende leeromgewing benodig wat genoeg ruimte, beligting en ventilasie insluit. Studente rapporteer hulle benodig interaksie wat konstruktief is, interaksie wat erkenning gee aan menseregte en interaksie wat gebruik maak van toepaslike nie-verbale kommunikasie. Die dosent moet eienskappe toon van liefde en sorg, respek, verantwoordelikheid, moraliteit, geduld, oop wees vir nuwe idees, gemotiveerd, bereidwillig om "die ekstra myl" te stap asook stiptelikheid. Studente rapporteer op verskeie maniere hoe hulle dit regkry om veerkragtig te bly naamlik: positiwiteit, 'n ondersteuningstelsel, verbetering van studiemetodes, self-motivering, stel van persoonlike doelwitte, om trots te wees, deursettingsvermoë en vasberadenheid. Aanbevelings is geformuleer vir verpleegonderrig, verpleegpraktyk en verdere navorsing.

Sleutelwoorde:

Dosent-student verhouding, verpleegonderrig, verpleegonderrig instansie, verpleegstudent, leeromgewing, veerkragtigheid.

“What teachers know, do, expect and value has a significant influence on the nature, extent and rate of student learning. The powerful phrase ‘teachers make the difference’ captures the key role that professional educators play in shaping the lives and futures of their students.”

(National Statement from the Teaching Profession on Teacher Standards, Quality and Professionalism, May 2003)

DEDICATION:

*This dissertation is dedicated to the one person who
always believes in me...*

My Mother...

*She is an educator and has been my role model my
entire life. Thank you for showing me all the qualities
of a caring and supportive educator, and investing
those principles in me from my first day of school. You
have been a source of love, endless support,
encouragement and inspiration throughout my life.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Conducting a research study and writing a dissertation involves a lot of dedication, hard work, time, effort, sacrifices, patience and willpower. The success of any research project depends largely on the encouragement, guidance and support of several individuals who, in one way or another, contribute and extend their valuable assistance in the preparation and completion of the study. I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation and gratitude to the people who made this study possible.

- ✚ First and foremost, my utmost gratitude to my Heavenly Father for the wisdom and perseverance that He has bestowed upon me during this research study and throughout my life:

"I can do everything through Christ who strengthens me."

~Philippians 4:13.

- ✚ It is with immense gratitude that I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Emmerentia Du Plessis for her tremendous and continuous support, patience, motivation, enthusiasm and encouragement. Without your valuable insights, steady guidance and persistent help this dissertation would not have been possible. Thank you for challenging me to work harder and for kindly expressing your confidence in my abilities.

- ✚ My sincere thanks to my co-supervisor, Prof Daleen Koen for all her support, guidance and encouragement. Thank you for your contribution and expertise with regard to this dissertation. I appreciate it.

- ✚ I would like to thank my loved ones, especially my three children: Seth, JD and JP, who have supported me throughout the entire process by keeping me balanced and for helping me put all the pieces together. I will forever be grateful for your love, support and encouragement.

- ✚ My sincere appreciation to my mother and brothers who continuously encouraged and supported me despite my several efforts for wanting to give up and throw in the towel. Your love and support kept me going. Love you all.

- ✚ My sincere thanks to my parents-in-law for all their prayers, support and encouragement. Thanks for all your motivation and for believing in me.

- ✚ Dr Vicki Koen, who acted as co-analyst in interpreting and analysing the data collected for the research study. Thank you for your time, help and support.

- ✚ I wish to thank the personnel of the North-West University, Potchefstroom campus, in particular Annemarie Coetzee for transcribing the data and Anneke Coetzee for helping with referencing. I appreciate all your help.

- ✚ My sincere thanks to the participants who willingly shared their ideas and precious time during the World Café. Thank you for your contribution to this study.

- ✚ I would also like to acknowledge my principal, and friend, Mrs Moekie van Wyk for all her support, advice and encouragement throughout the entire research study.

- ✚ Many thanks to my work colleagues for all your continual support and encouragement throughout this year.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
OPSOMMING	v
DEDICATION	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
SECTION 1: OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH	1
1.1 Overview	2
1.2 Background	2
1.3 Problem statement	8
1.4 Research questions	9
1.5 Aim and objectives of the study	10
1.6 Paradigmatic perspectives	10
1.6.1 Meta-theoretical perspectives	10
1.6.1.1 Person	13
1.6.1.2 Environment	14
1.6.1.3 Health	14
1.6.1.4 Nursing	15
1.7 Theoretical perspective	16
1.7.1 Theoretical framework	16
1.7.2 Central theoretical statement	18
1.7.3 Conceptual definitions	18
1.7.3.1 Educator-student relationship	18
1.7.3.2 Nursing Education Institution	20

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED):

1.7.3.3	Learning	20
1.7.3.4	Resilience	20
1.7.3.5	Stressors	21
1.7.3.6	Barriers to learning	21
1.8	Methodology	22
1.8.1	Research design	22
1.8.1.1	Explorative	22
1.8.1.2	Descriptive	23
1.8.1.3	Contextual	23
1.8.2	Research Method	24
1.8.2.1	Population and Sampling	24
1.8.2.2	Data Collection Plan	25
1.8.2.3	Data Analysis	29
1.8.2.4	Measures to ensure rigor	30
1.9	Ethical considerations	32
1.10	Literature review	33
1.10.1	Search strategy	33
1.10.2	Overview of the literature	34
1.10.2.1	Teaching/learning environment	36
1.10.2.2	Educator/student interaction	41
1.10.2.3	A caring and supportive educator	44
1.10.2.4	Conclusions	48
1.11	Layout of the study	49
1.12	Conclusion	50

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED):

1.13 Bibliography	51
SECTION 2: ARTICLE	61
2.1 Introduction	62
2.2 Guidelines for authors	62
2.3 Exploring the basic elements required for an effective educator-student relationship in nursing education	70
Keywords	71
Abstract	71
Introduction	73
Background	74
Research aims and objectives	80
Research design	81
Setting and sample	81
Ethical considerations	82
Data collection	83
Data analysis	86
Findings	88
Category 1: Components needed in the teaching/learning environment to improve the relationship with the educator	91
Category 2: Type of interaction that will improve your relationship with the educator	99
Category 3: Qualities displayed by educator and student to improve the relationship between the educator and the student	104
Category 4: Stay resilient	112

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED):

Category 5: Suggestions to be implemented in the educator-student relationship in order to strengthen resilience in students	119
Limitations of the study	121
Discussion	121
Recommendations	129
Conclusion	131
References	132
SECTION 3: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	144
3.1 Introduction	145
3.2 Realisation of data collection	145
3.3 Conclusions	146
3.3.1 Barriers threatening the relationship	149
3.3.2 The physical- and emotional environment	150
3.3.3 The educator-student interaction	152
3.3.4 Educator-student qualities	154
3.3.5 Educator-student resilience	156
3.3.6 Effective educator-student relationship	157
3.3.7 Protective factors in resilience	159
3.4 Limitations	162
3.5 Recommendations	162
3.5.1 Recommendations for nursing education	162
3.5.2 Recommendations for nursing practice	163
3.5.3 Recommendations for research	163
3.6 Bibliography	165

LIST OF ANNEXURES:

Annexure 1: Ethical application	169
Annexure 2: Letter of authorization from NEI	173
Annexure 3: Informed consent form	174
Annexure 4: Power point informed consent	182
Annexure 5: The “World Café” copyright	192
Annexure 6: “World Café” method	193
Annexure 7: “World Café” guidelines	196
Annexure 8: “World Café” setup	197
Annexure 9: Work protocol for data analysis	198
Annexure 10: “World Café” posters	199
Annexure 11: Field notes	204
Annexure 12: Transcriptions	207
Annexure 13: Declaration of Language Editing	220

LIST OF FIGURES:

Figure 1: Meta-paradigm in nursing	13
Figure 2: Predictors in resilience	16
Figure 3: Main categories	88
Figure 4: Conceptual framework of the basic elements needed for an effective educator-student relationship	147
Figure 5: Relationship between major predictors of resilience, elements of educator-student relationship and protective factors of resilience	148

LIST OF TABLES:

Table 1: Steps in data analysis	29
Table 2: Themes: “World Café” posters and discussions	89