Qualitative multi-method study to explore the relevance of Benner’s ‘novice to expert’ nursing theory in contemporary post-registration wound care higher education

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A qualitative multi-method study to explore the relevance of Benner’s ‘novice to expert’ nursing theory in contemporary post-registration wound care higher education. Jane Munro. EdD Candidate.

Research Problem

Current cost of NHS wound management (£5.3 billion pa.)
unwarranted patient wound care inequality
expectation for HE to produce ‘expert’ wound care practitioners

Benner’s 1984 ‘novice to expert’ general nursing theory and its set learning and teaching strategies at each of its five stages portrays an uninterrupted and time limited path of knowledge and competence acquisition. It has been the preferred choice to inform wound care curriculum design. Yet, significant debate now exists over optimal curriculum design to realise expertise. Standardisation is favoured, incorporating ever more diverse complex topics to accommodate ever increasing multidisciplinary involvement in wound care e.g. podiatrists & physiotherapists.

Research Methods

Engaging in reflective practice realised a personal teacher activist\(^{(s)}\) position and shift towards an advocacy-participatory world view.

A qualitative multi-method 3 phase sequential design was used. Its origins were rooted in my position on equality, fairness, and collaboration in education. Methods in each phase retained their own research paradigm to address policy, practice and participation respectively.

- Phase 1 CDA of five government/regulatory policies
- Phase 2 DCA of secondary data eLearning platform student discussion posts
- Phase 3 extractive summary of DD online student deliberation

Bricolage\(^{(s)}\) methodology enabled research objective of ‘knowing more’, facilitating multi-perspective meta-interpretation between each phase. Findings from each phase behaved as ‘torque’ by means of integrative strategies\(^{(s)}\) to drive the research forward.

Mechanisms to assure research trustworthiness

- Credibility: theoretical and investigator triangulation; respondent validation
- Transferability: ‘thick description’
- Confirmability: methodological reflexivity (ethics amendment was required to enhance ontological alignment)
- Authenticity: impact of research on students

Analysis & Findings

Phase 1 CDA (Greckhammer \(^{(8)}\) & Fairclough \(^{(9)}\))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSTRUCT</th>
<th>SUB-CONSTRUCT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambiguity or Opportunity?</td>
<td>(\text{variations; inconsistency in implementation; flexibility; personal interpretation; professional liability; professional vulnerability; ambiguous personal decision-making; versatility versus variation; adaptability.})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility without Accountability</td>
<td>(\text{non-enforceable; hierarchical power relationship; professional exposure; dominance; power and control; fear; uncertainty and doubt; autonomy; role ambiguity; flexibility; trust; quality control of education; no guarantees; professional liability; lack of role definition.})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 1-2 (Professional Body/Government Policy)</td>
<td>(\text{Application and Resolution.})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 3-5 (IME Regulatory Policy)</td>
<td>(\text{The public face of the regulator.})</td>
</tr>
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Phase 2 DCA

"It’s all a bit ‘hit and miss’."
"A question of judgement."
"Coaches and players."
"Know your ‘rights’."
"New Matin Categories."
"The professional and personal cost of ‘ouch-pull’ in wound care practice."
"One of a kind." "Learning communities as: ‘Safe Spaces’" "Marketization of wound care education."

Phase 3 DD

We all have our own way of doing it. We are all different and multi-factorial just like wound care and that ranges from "systematic and logical" to "just react and don’t plan ahead."

Discussion & Conclusion

Contemporary curriculum must therefore also furnish MDT practitioners with the necessary, cognitive, meta-cognitive and attitudinal skills, similar to those described by Wood’s\(^{(s)}\) Build-Bridge-Extend pedagogy, to help develop practitioners ability to, for example:

- Monitor and adjust processes as they solve problems
- Speak as much generation as the subject/situation permits
- Be willing to take risks and search for more alternatives
- Defer judgement, overcome negative self-talk, build on other ideas

Benner’s theory will now be developed at University of the West of Scotland to reflect thesis findings. Curriculum design will also be improved using B-B-E pedagogy to achieve the ‘best answer’ and one subject to constraints, to assist professional accountability.

References:
\(^{(1)}\) https://www.slideshare.net/diluliddlodi/bikini-fact-sheet-2
\(^{(3)}\) https://www.micra-ss.com/novice-to-expert-based-in-2018-
\(^{(4)}\) https://www.slideshare.net/peaceprofessor/lity SWITCHES BETWEEN THEORY-EXPERT-5C
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\(^{(8)}\) https://www.slideshare.net/peaceprofessor/lity SWITCHES BETWEEN THEORY-EXPERT-5C
\(^{(9)}\) https://www.slideshare.net/peaceprofessor/lity SWITCHES BETWEEN THEORY-EXPERT-5C

Specific cognitive challenges: B-B-E pedagogy Skills: problem solving, teamwork, understanding, critical thinking, critical assessment, understanding, problem solving.