Poster Session III: Poster 3

An Analysis and Comparison of the Works of Peplau and Travelbee

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Background: The nurse-patient relationship is considered the essence and core of nursing. Moreover, the nurse-patient relationship is a central component to the overall health and wellness of a patient. The connection or disconnection to nurses is an important element in the hospitalized patient's view on received care.

Purpose: The purpose of this poster is to critique and compare Hildegard Peplau's (1952) well-known theory of Interpersonal Relations in Nursing, and Joyce Travelbee's (1971) lesser known theory of the Human-to-Human Relationship Model.

Methods: The two nursing theories were critiqued using Fawcett's (2005) criteria for critiquing a theory. Fawcett's (2005) strategy consists of six criteria: significance, internal consistency, parsimony, testability, empirical adequacy, and pragmatic adequacy. Additionally, both theories were compared for application to nursing education, practice, and research.

Results: Both Peplau (1952) and Travelbee's (1971) theories are congruent with Fawcett's (2005) criteria. Both theories are similar in abstraction; consider the nurse-patient relationship to be the heart of nursing; and allow the researcher to test only the phases or roles of each theory, as well as the theory in totality. Both theories require the nurse and patient to be actively involved in the relationship, which excludes those who are unresponsive, individuals with significant cognitive impairments, and those who don't feel that they have a need. Major differences between the two theories include: Peplau's (1952) theory has been tested over a long period of time; has wide applicability in the clinical setting; and has the goal of the patient achieving forward movement in personality development. Travelbee's (1971) theory is limited in that the recipient of care must be ill or suffering, and the theory has the goal of development of rapport. Both theories have applicability to nursing, education, and research.

Conclusions and Implications: Patients who are not satisfied with the care they receive seldom follow-up with their health care providers, and are less likely to adhere to medications, directions, and advice. Nursing education programs should be charged with introducing various interaction theories as this initiation of the nurse-patient relationship is required before any further progress can occur with the patient. Further testing and application of interaction theories that develop the nurse-patient relationship is needed.

Learning Objectives: At the conclusion of this presentation the participants will be able to:

- State two similarities of the two nursing theories
- State two differences of the two nursing theories