**The Development of Theory of Spirituality and Nurse’s self –identity in Caring the Patient**

**Abstract**

Nurses are often to care for the patient, the spirituality, hope is as the act by which the temptation of despair is actively overcome. Hope is perceived to be the best resources in giving inner strength as central aspect to patient especially in the end of life time. Spirituality has plays significant roles to the quality of life to the patients. The aspect of spirituality and hope plays major roles in caring the patient. The hallmark of spiritual care is the attention for how the patient’s expressions are related to her or his life as a whole and refer to the patient’s meaning system. This means that the patient’s interpretation of spirituality depends upon his or her personal view of life and existence. In this way, spirituality can be interpreted as a functional concept. Nurse’s perceptions and competences highly influence the import of spirituality and spiritual care in nursing. The study will focus on spiritual cluster to individual’s essence as a person, relationships with others and an infinite being. Development of theory in spirituality will help to create strong framework or approach in promoting spiritual values, norms in the society. This will serve as guide in understanding pertaining to health.

Keywords: theory of spirituality, spiritual care, nursing, nurses, self-identity, spiritual health

**1.0.Introduction**

**“**Nursing is all about holistic care and it is believe that spirituality and spiritual care is consider to be fundamental aspect of holistic nursing approach” (Gu¨lnar et al. 2015; Ramezani et al. 2014). “Spirituality in nursing was started by Florence Nightingale where the exploration of themes related to transcendence and human transience. The physical body was seen as an instrument for the spirit while spirituality was the highest level of human consciousness able to cultivate the divine nature characterized by love”. (Nightingale, 1989).Spirituality has plays significant roles to the quality of life to the patients. The aspect of spirituality and hope plays major roles in caring the patient. “Nurses’ spiritual perceptions are vital when providing spiritual care” (Cockell and McSherry 2012; Ramezani et al. 2014; Asadzandi 2017 ). Nurses are often to care for the patient, the spirituality, hope is as the act by which the temptation of despair is actively overcome. Hope is perceived to be the best resources in giving inner strength as central aspect to patient especially in the end of life time. The study will focus on spiritual cluster to individual’s essence as a person, relationships with others and an infinite being. “The Projections of biological, psychological and social dimensions are expressed in the spiritual dimension and totals in our existence”.( da Silva, de Aquino & Silva et. al, 2016). Mostly person look to the meaning of their life and continue to seek motivation to go forward as they experience challenges in life.

“Spiritual care can be defined as the care nurses provide to meet the spiritual needs and/or problems of patients” (Selby, et. al. 2017). “The hallmark of spiritual care is the attention for how the patient’s expressions are related to her or his life as a whole and refer to the patient’s meaning system” (Garssen, et.al. 2016). “This means that the patient’s interpretation of spirituality depends upon his or her personal view of life and existence. In this way, spirituality can be interpreted as a functional concept” (Selby, et. al. 2016 & Swinton, et.al. 2010). “The challenge is on how the health care workers understand the relationship between spirituality and health and to incorporate the spirituality in caring the patient and to their professional activities. The theory will focus on spiritual care, self-identity and self- character of nurses as a provider of health care. Problems is related to their professional training on how spirituality is approached superficially and subjectively. Also, not knowing how to differentiate religiosity from spirituality interferes in how spiritual care is provided to the individual” (Da Silva et a. 2016). Nurse’s perceptions and competences highly influence the import of spirituality and spiritual care in nursing. “The influence of materialist perspective that values beauty, power and social achievements, hinders the practice of spiritual care, emptying the human being in its values”. (Da Silva et a. 2016)

In caring the patient, cases that encounter which is appeared to be confusing is questioning their religious and spiritual understanding. “The origin of their voices as well as their faith, creating a struggle with their sense of self and the lens through which they viewed the world”. (Lewisa, et. al., 2020). Self-identity and self-character of nurses in caring the patient is necessary in providing strong perspective in the promotion of health to the patient. In order to serve others it is necessary that the nurse is healthy not only physically, mentally emotionally and spiritually healthy. “Through this it will help the patient to achieve optimum level of wellness. Self- identity plays significant role in understanding the different concept like disclosure and seeking support that was ultimately helpful to the process of understanding their experiences”.( Lewisa, et. al., 2020).Through this development of theory it will focus on spirituality in caring, nurses theoretical approach and describing self-character and self-identity of nurses in caring the patient. The spiritual care plays a significant role in achieving this goal, exploring and explaining the patients’ perception of spiritual care concept and it’s significant impact on provision of high quality care and contribute toward providing effective care for the patients in care system and understand concepts that will help in the development of nurses’ identity and character in caring for others

**2.0. Methodology**

**2.1.Basic Definitions**

**Definitions of Nursing**

Nursing plays major role in caring the patient. Health professionals should prioritize patient needs through creating beautiful living sense and reliance on such need and spiritual attention in designing and developing the care plans. It is worth noting that when the

Patient’s health and sense of beauty are not taken into account the patient might feel loneliness, depression and lost meaning of life. That why health care professional should look and deepen different aspect to provide quality of care for their patient

**Definition of Spirituality**

Spirituality is a multidimensional and complex concept which has cognitive, experiential and behavioral aspects. The cognitive or philosophical aspects of spirituality include meaning and purpose in life. The emotional aspect of spirituality is integrated with hope, love and attachment, inner peace, comfort, support and individual experiences; and the inner spirituality and personal beliefs are its behavioral aspects which are integrated with the outside world (Mok et al. 2010).

The foundation of spirituality concept is based on seeking meaning in life and its strange events such as illness. The lack of attention to accurate understanding of spiritual care meaning in patients widens the gap between theory and practice (O’brien 2013; Swinton and Pattison 2010).

**Definition of Spiritual care**

The spiritual care is about self-value, seeking beautiful things and part of divine test.

The spirituality is the heart and center of caring the patient as a whole, it serve as the core of each care program that will focus on spiritual aspect to provide complete patient satisfaction (Mok et al. 2010).

**Self-identity and self-character of nurses**

Nurses self- identify and character is about understanding the process for development of one’s self. The appeal of dividing the self into ‘true’ and ‘false’ parts lies in development process. It about finding character in different situation that encounter critical decision making to be done. As part of it is to deepen the understanding of spiritual health. The spiritual health has two dimensions: vertical and horizontal. Vertical dimension includes the feeling of healthiness in a relationship with God (religious health), and its horizontal dimension includes the sense of satisfaction and purposefulness in life (existential health) (Eslami et al. 2014)

**Main Concept of theory of spirituality and nurses’ self-identity in caring the patient**

* The spiritual knowledge is meant to assist the creation of new understanding approaches in caring the patient to promote healing.
* Spirituality plays major role in achieving holistic process of caring and in self-development of nurses which simultaneously touches the patient when caring,
* The technique in caring is best facilitated in an atmosphere of openness and prayer.
* spirituality at the core of psychological maturity that plays key role to identity, transcending binary thinking in establishing the true self

**2.2. Philosophical framework**

This construct addresses the volitional and ontological substrate of human nature; the currency of this meaning is spirituality. A spiritual need, and left the door open for practitioners and clients to apply their own religious overlay to the existential raw material he uncovered ( Frankl 2006). In the epistemology of nature which is the world of time, place and movement, spirituality is to be consider as realm of heavens and earth with presence of God. Reason base reason-based logical cognition is regarded as deep and capable of infiltrating the depth of phenomena and understanding the nature of intangible relations (Asadzandi, 2017). Health means having a sound heart that will help to calm spirit with a sense of hope and love, security and happiness which is achievable through faith and piety. Human beings are able to purge their inside (heart) through establishing a relationship with God and then take actions to reform the outside world. Nurses must recognize the patient’s spiritual response to illness that can appear as symptoms of an unsound heart like hear, sadness, disappointment, anger, jealousy, cruelty, grudge, suspicion, etc.) Due to the pains caused by illness and then alleviate the patient’s suffering by appropriate approaches. Nurses help the patient to achieve the sound heart by hope in divine mercy and love, and they help the patient see good in any evil and relieve their fear and sadness by viewing their illness positively and then attain the status of calm, satisfaction, peace and serenity in their heart and being content with the divine fate.( Asadzandi, 2017).

**2.3.Major assumptions**

* Spirituality is one of the most important dimensions of human life which play a fundamental role in a person’s health. It refers to the perception of the surrounding world beyond its material aspects.
* Nursing is a profession a caritas that is profoundly spiritual. In the care of patients, the licensed professional nurse recognizes that death is a normal occurrence that co-exists within the natural order of the continuum of life (ANA 2019).
* Nurses self-identity mold through caring the patient. The ideal profession to provide spiritual assessments in healthcare facilities.
* When patients’ spiritual, emotional, and physical health needs are met, patients can gradually begin to discuss their end-of-life journey with family, significant others, healthcare providers, and chaplains (Green, 2021).

**2.4.Meta-Paradigm**

**2.4.1.Person**

This pertains to God’s creature on earth which give him existence. Human are have authority to choose but accompanied with responsibility. A person should held accountable for choosing their relationships with God, people, themselves and nature. Perception, feeling, movement, consciousness and will of human being are capabilities that originate from his soul. Human beings shape their different ethical conditions by making their choices.

**2.4.2.Health**

The highest level of health is having a sound heart that originates from faith. This is examination of one heart that give the people a sense of security, peace, trust, hope, love and energy and happiness. Helps one get rid of fears and anxiety about future and regret about the past and live in the present time. Health focus on one’s people examining their spiritual health through relationship with God. It on how they communicate and offers everything to God. In order to be healthy a person should have the aspect of physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually healthy.

**2.4.3.Environment**

The relationship between an individual and God shapes his internal environment and eliminates such vices as jealousy, grudge, hunger for vengeance and pessimism. The

External environment involving inanimate objects, plants, animals and other human beings

(tangible world) and the unseen world (souls and angels) has surrounded human beings.

Any stimulation from the outside world is from God and originates from His mercy and

Prudence and is a test for humans and those around him; a human’s reactions to such tests

vary according to his spiritual growth (Asadzandi 2003).

**2.4.4.Nursing**

Nursing aims to change reactions caused by fear and sadness to feelings of love, trust, security, calm, peace, hope and energy. The patient should not think that he is a victim of fate and that he is involved in the surrounding environment. Instead, he should accept that his choices and lifestyle impact his illness and health (Asadzandi 2013). The nurse initiates relationships with patients and gives them advice throughout the treatment as a counselor. The core of nursing care is the patient and his family. The nurse tries to make it possible for the health care to be provided mainly at home where the patient feels calm and safe.

**3.0. Result**

**THEORETICAL ASSERTIONS**

***3.1.Theoretical Approach To Promote health***

Spirituality promotes health and health care seeking behaviors. The spirituality in the community or society have clearly rely on spiritual values and nurses provides adapting framework that will help to encourage healthy spiritual expression and increase the comfort level of individual.

***3.2.Provision of health care***

“Spiritual care is considered as actions such as embraces, respect, offering comfort, listening to the patient, instilling hope, prayer, and holding the patient’s hand”.( McSherry,& Jamieson, 2011). “Spiritual needs are less tangible than physical needs as they are multifaceted and hard to measure” ( Kaddourah, et. al, 2018). Outside of a religious context, spiritual needs are very likely to go unobserved. Thus, to recognize spiritual needs and provide spiritual care, it is necessary to understand the nature of spirituality and how different individuals may express it.

***3.3.Character and self-identity of nurse in caring***

“Every nurse has the responsibility to be vigilant about patients’ spiritual needs as an aspect of holistic patient care” (McSherry, 2010, Narayanasamy, 2010). “Perception of spirituality among nurses can influence how they act and communicate with patients regarding the delivery of spiritual care. Moreover, spirituality and spiritual care are culturally interrelated and affected by nurse’s ethnicity, religious, educational level, and clinical experience”.( Ozbasaran, 20110.

***Figure 1: the framework of spiritual caring and identity of nurse in caring***

**Spiritual expression**

Integrity

Hope

Love

Caring

**Provision of health care**

Finding the meaning of spiritual care and result of spiritual health

Nurse assesses for "Spiritual Links" and uses the guiding framework to encourage spiritual expression

Nurse self-identity

**Roles of Spirituality in caring**

**4.0.Discussion**

“Spiritual health is characterized by the values that guide human life. Spiritual health include improved health in different dimensions, greater hopefulness, improved quality of life, and spiritual transcendence” (Fisher 2011). Nurses known to be advocate of health, in order to give the best care to the patient it necessary to develop the self-identity or a character nurses in caring the patient. They are the one who greatly influence one’s perspective to achieve optimum level of wellness. “Spiritual health is affected by the knowledge and worldview of the society and is also influenced by different religions and cultural conditions because each culture defines spiritual health from its own point of view” (Ramezani et al. 2016). It somehow influence in responding to different situations or challenges which are every day encounter. “Spirituality is also an integrated manifestation of individuals’ education and experiences, reflecting their attitudes and behaviors in daily life and and is closely associated with health and nursing care” (Meehan, 2012)

“Spiritual care was found to promote spiritual wellbeing. Spiritual care as respecting human dignity itself, not simply confined to religion. This is in line with a previous study suggesting that spiritual care provided to patients who are experiencing life-threatening or life-limiting disease seeks to provide holistic care to maintain human dignity and a high quality of life. The utilization of one’s self is about active listening, treatment relationship, and unconditional acceptance, this also involve intuitive senses like sensing spiritual conversations with patients, searching for a spiritual perspective and evaluating spirituality that will find source of power and hope, and evaluating spiritual needs. This are some of the major roles in providing care to the patient”. (Timmins & Caldeira, 2017).

The development of theory in spirituality will help to create strong framework or approach in promoting spiritual values, norms in the society. This will serve as guide in understanding pertaining to health. “The issues in different worldviews about the concept of spiritual health, health systems, and health-care providers can succeed in the design of more appropriate spiritual interventions with new approaches in the domains of education, policy-planning, care” (Sadat, et. al. 2019). “Spirituality constitutes the core element of a human being and represents the essence and purpose of being human although it is a complex concept that may hold different meanings for different people”.( Puchalski, 2014).

**Implication to nursing**

**“**Nurses should have the experience of self-transcendence by spiritually caring for themselves, in addition to bringing positive changes for patients. Existing studies of nursing students showed that the clinical practice of spiritual nursing gave them the chance to become more mature by realizing weak spots of their spiritual condition and reflecting on themselves. Patient-centered and meaning-centered interventions (building meaningful relationship, hope, and religious interventions), and creating a spiritual environment (respecting spiritual beliefs, ethical treatment, and respecting cultural and spiritual values). This study will serve as guide in developing educational guidance for spiritual nursing to help them learn about spirituality and spiritual care would help build a consistent system across theoretical and clinical settings” (kwon et. al, 2013).

**5.0.Conclusion**

Nurses plays vital roles in spiritual caring, it provide holistic care that include patient, nurses, family members and other member of health team. It’s about the character of nurses in rendering and uplifting others in the time of challenges. Patients who received spiritual care saw positive changes, finding a specific meaning and purpose of life, as well as hope. Just as spirituality and self-transcendence give humans the power to overcome frustrating circumstances, improve confidence in life, and empower self-healing. The provision of care and the expression of spirituality will serve as strong link to facilitate caring. In light of these findings, experience-based help to improve their spiritual sensitivity through spiritual training and experience self-transcendence.

**Data Availability**

All the data generated and analyze are available upon request from the authors.

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