

PERCEPTIONS OF NURSING STUDENTS ON GRANDPARENTS AND THEIR INCLUSION ON THE CARE FOR THE FAMILY OF THE HOSPITALIZED CHILD

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of nursing undergraduate students regarding grandparents, and their inclusion in the care for the family of the hospitalized child. It is a qualitative research, in which data were collected in a School of Nursing of a Public University of São Paulo, with 32 undergraduate nursing students, through questionnaires and interviews. The data were analyzed by content analysis. The results indicate that students describe grandparents depending on the emotional aspects are derived from living with them in the past and present. Regarding their inclusion in the care of hospitalized children, the students consider the grandparents as an important source of support and safety for the child and family. Understanding the perception of students on this topic will help to develop educational activities within the perspective of child and family centered care, aiming to strengthen the assessment and care of the third generation in the context of a grandchild disease.

Key words:

Nursing Students, Pediatric Nursing, Family Relations.

Introduction

Currently, we have observed that the third generation is present in families with greater participation and involvement. It is not uncommon to find grandparents as caregivers of hospitalized children. Recent studies have been developed in order to understand the impact of the disease of a grandchild on the grandparents, as well as the functions and roles they play in this context⁽¹⁻²⁾. In these studies, is unanimous the lack of support that grandparents refer in caring for their grandchildren, inside and outside the hospital setting, showing that the health team still tends to consider only the parents and siblings in the family child care, despite changes in family structure that our society experiences today. We believe that one of the important factors for teaching the process of caring for the child's family in illness situations is to comprehend the students' perceptions regarding the grandparents. Thus, the aim of this research was to explore the perceptions of nursing undergraduate students regarding grandparents, and on their inclusion on the care for the family of the hospitalized child.

Results and Discussion

In total, 32 students participated in the study by answering a questionnaire with open ended questions. Of these, 8 have expressed interest in participating in a semi-structured interview that was scheduled and conducted by the researcher, with an average length of 15 minutes. Data were analyzed using content analysis proposed by Mayan⁽³⁾.

Data analysis revealed that students describe their grandparents depending on the emotional aspects that living with them provided and provides. Mostly are positive aspects of emotional and instrumental perspectives, and grandparents appear as prominent figures in the family background of students, converging with the literature regarding the increased participation of the third generation in the present families⁽¹⁾.

Regarding the inclusion of grandparents in the care of hospitalized children, students who were cared for by their grandparents when they were sick as children were

more sensitive to describe situations in which children can benefit from their presence in the hospital. They are keen to consider grandparents as an important source of emotional and practical support to families, and also a source of security and trust for the child. Also, they point out that they feel uncomfortable about dealing with grandparents in family conflict situations, for example, when parents and grandparents disagree with any action to be taken with the child.

Conclusions

We believe that understanding the perception of nursing students about grandparents, and how they perceive their integration into the family care of the sick child, will help in developing educational activities aimed at strengthening the importance of evaluation and care for the grandparents while they suffer in the midst of the disease of a grandchild.

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