

Evolution of Nursing as a Health Profession in Italy: Metaphors and Paradoxes

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Abstract

This study explores the perceptions Italian nurses have of their developing culture as a health profession, defined as necessary changes to become an intellectual discipline on par with the other health professions in Italy. In 2010, the Regulatory Board of Nursing known as IPASVI established a Centre of Excellence (CoE) to build evidence-based practice, advocate for interdisciplinary health care, and champion health profession reforms for nursing. This study utilized focus groups involving 66 nurse-participants from various educational, clinical and administrative backgrounds to ascertain the evolution of nursing as a health profession in Italy during the past ten years. “Deductive Jungle” comprised of “Leopard Spots” and other metaphors including the Italian “Coraggio”, (Italian metaphor of courage) signifying the depth of psychological resilience necessary to traverse negative forces encountered, were used by participants to explain the different dimensions that characterize the expression of professional identity and autonomy issues for nurses in Italy.

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