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TWELVE TIPS FOR USING PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

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Participant observation is a method of data generation through the observation of activities as it occurs in a natural context. Using the views of participants during observation enabled the researchers to gain an understanding of practices, social views and interaction between people to give meaning to aspects for which little was known prior to the observation. The researchers did 230 hours of participant observations in 11 different critical care units, to gain a deeper understanding of the current workplace culture in the critical care environment. The researchers paired with participants in the critical care units to observe collaboratively. Following the observation session the researcher and the participant shared what they have observed regarding the workplace culture. Clinical practice in nursing is complex and the nature of the context most often influences data collection and research findings. Participant observation is regarded as a method of data collection to observe, explain and understand relationships between team members and normal daily activities of clinical practice. The researchers used direct observation as method to gain contextual understanding of the clinical practice and approach the observations as observer-participants. The aim of this presentation is to share the 12 tips to take into consideration when using participant observation as a data collection method in clinical practice.

Biography

Isabel Coetzee is working as a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Nursing Science at University of Pretoria for the past 19 years. She has published 16 articles since 2010. Her tertiary experience includes teaching Postgraduate Diploma in Critical Care for past 19 years; Medical and Surgical Nursing Science for pre-graduate second year students and Research Methodology for Master's students. She is the Coordinator for PhD programme. She has completed supervising 30 Master's students since 2009, 2 PhD candidates and currently supervising 10 Master's and 7 PhD students. She has done her PhD (UNISA) in 2010. She played a role of an examiner for approximately 25 Masters' degree and 11 PhD candidates since 2011. She received the Critical Care Society of South Africa's Presidents' Nursing Award for outstanding contribution to Critical Care (2013), inaugurated as a Fellow of the Academy of Nursing in South Africa (FANSA) (2015) and South African representative of the World Federation of Critical Care 2017-2020.

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