

Caring Agent for the Call: The Lived Experience of Nurses as Call Center Agents

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Abstract

A number of registered nurses are working as call center agents instead of practicing their profession. This phenomenological inquiry aimed to understand and provide perspective on the lived experience of seven registered nurses, who worked as a call center agent for at least two years. Through intensive recorded interviews, the responses were initially clustered in ten. The initial five clusters were categorized into textural themes such as a) ceasing opportunities vs chasing pavements; b) learning to adjust; c) deception and false images: seeing from inside out; d) reflection on the derailed career path ; e) self-fulfillment in the chosen path. The final five clusters were categorized into structural theme such as f) making ends meet; becoming the breadwinner; g) change vs tradition; h) gaining strength through challenges; i) eyes on the patient, ears on the phone; j) vulnerability of the strong. In conclusion, the lived experience of nurses working as call center agents provided self-fulfillment, through financial stability that enable them to provide for their family, personality and career growth, and the benefits received. They cope with the challenges encountered on this job by being competitive and having a strong personality, though two of the participants resorted to vices.

Keywords: *nurse, call center, experience*