

Nursing students experience of dignity during education

INTRODUCTION

This ongoing PhD-project will explore the qualitative and relational aspects of nursing education. The aim of the study is to facilitate increased understanding of how nursing students experience their own sense of dignity and what significance this may have in their education.

BACKGROUND

Experiencing dignity is fundamental to human beings. In nursing practice, dignity is considered a core value and is expressed through various codes of ethics, which guide the professional practice. During their education, the nursing students shall be formed into this professional practice and learn to promote dignity through experience and good role models.

METHODS

This is a qualitative study with a hermeneutical approach. Nineteen nursing students (4 male and 15 female) in their last academic year, from six different nursing schools in Norway, participated in the study. The students narrated their experiences of dignity during their education, either in writing or verbally, and this served as a starting point for the interview.

Preliminary results

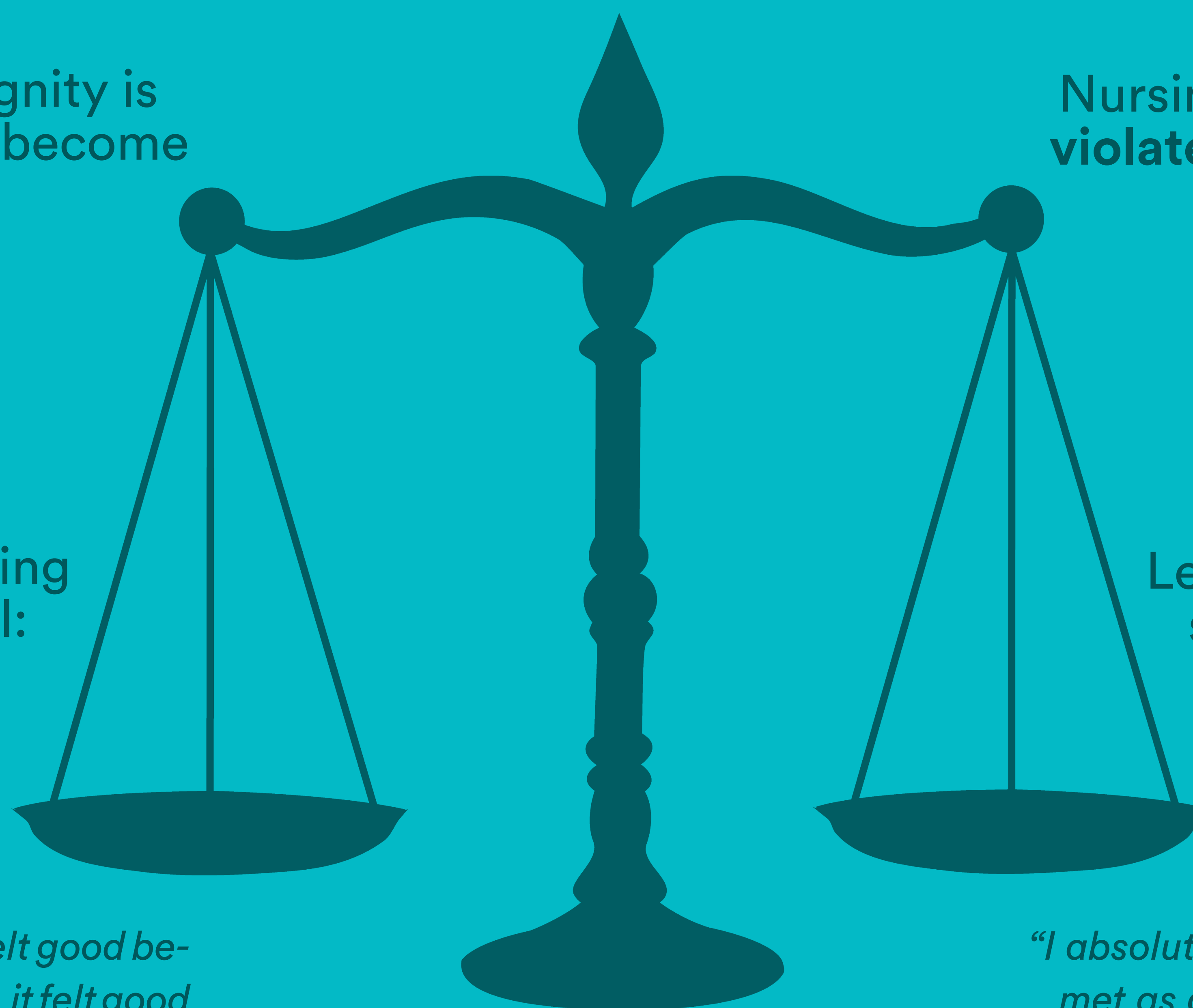
Dignity is at stake in vulnerable relationships, with educational personnel and nurse supervisors. Which way the pendulum will swing for nursing students' sense of dignity, depends on how the relationship facilitates elements that promote their dignity

Nursing student's dignity is **promoted** if students become

Invested in
Included
Seen
Heard
Accepted
Appreciated

Leading the nursing students to feel:

In control
Secure
Capable



Nursing student's dignity is **violated** if students become

Neglected
Excluded
Overlooked
Ignored
Rejected
Undervalued

Leading the nursing students to feel:

Uncertain
Insecure
Powerless

"She made me feel visible. It felt good because when I had a tough time, it felt good not having to carry everything alone."

"I absolutely did not feel respected and met as a person. There was nothing worthy about our conversation. I felt insecure, very weak and very small."

The results show that if nursing students experience dignity, this will influence what degree of courage, self-confidence and what feeling of assurance they will have in their nursing practice. It also affects the development of their nursing identity and their sense of pride in becoming a nurse. On the other hand, lack of dignity experience inhibit their learning process, reduce their motivation to complete their education, and have a big impact on their life and their ability to care for others.

"When I recognize dignity in myself, it's easier to promote dignity in others."

Tone Stikholmen
PhD student. VID Specialized University
Bergen, Norway
tone.stikholmen@vid.no

Dagfinn Nåden
Professor. OsloMet
Oslo Metropolitan University
dagfinn@oslomet.no

Herdis Alsvåg
Professor. VID Specialized University
Bergen, Norway
herdis.alsvag@vid.no