

## **ABSTRACT**

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### **EVALUATION OF SWEDISH NURSING EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE**

**Key words:** nursing education, nurses' professional work, educational evaluation, evaluation model.  
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The overall purpose of this thesis is to report on evaluations which had as a goal the investigation of the nursing education's relevance to the practice of the profession. In addition to a short historical background the concept of evaluation is discussed. A review is also made of different elements which must be taken into consideration when setting up and implementing evaluations. An interactional model of evaluation has been used to introduce both a process and a product perspective. This has been done by applying both a program and an individual approach.

Student nurses (634) have responded to a questionnaire on how they experienced their nursing education at the end of their studies. Four years later the same individuals were asked to respond to a second questionnaire, this time on how their previous education had prepared them for their professional duties. Eight other nurses kept diaries for two months after their initiation into professional working life, on how they managed the transition from education to practice. The results of these studies have shown that in general the nurses were satisfied with the education they had received, and felt capable of doing good work in practice. The purpose of these evaluations has been to report on how the educational program is implemented, and what relevance it has to professional practice.

Student nurses (1185) took a mathematics exam which corresponded in difficulty to the 9-year compulsory school level. Results showed that they answered about half of the items correctly. Average scores were also related to the students' earlier educational backgrounds. Nurses (545) and student nurses (197) also took a drug dosage test. No difference was found between the two groups in the frequency of successful solutions. The purpose of these evaluations was to study how nursing students' and nurses' knowledge changed during education and practice, in relation to their earlier educational backgrounds.

It is important to be aware that evaluation should not be an end in itself, nor become a matter of habit. Evaluation can be a propelling force; without it development might stagnate.