The Mentoring Experiences of Adjunct Nursing Faculty: A Phenomenological Inquiry

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Barry University
Objectives

- Present background of the study
- Identify who are adjunct faculty members
- Define mentoring
- Discuss the problem statement and purpose of the study
- Identify the research questions & philosophical underpinnings
- Review the literature
- Describe access, recruitment & data collection
- Discuss ethical considerations & research methodology
- Analyze the study results
- Identify significance of the study
- Explain the strength & weakness & study recommendations
Background of the Study

- Nursing & faculty shortage
- Limited student enrollment
- An aging nurse educator workforce
- Limited pool of doctoral faculty
- Budget constraints
- Non-competitive salaries
Who are Adjunct Faculty?

- Part-time, non-tenured clinicians
- Hold a minimum of BSN degree
- Contracted on a temporary or semester basis
- Teach didactic, online, or clinical courses
- Expert clinicians but novice teachers
Mentoring

- Traditional one-to-one reciprocal
- Dynamic, collaborative, interactive process
- Formal or informal
- Career development
- Psychological support
- Role modeling
Mentoring is a recommended strategy to assist in the transition of clinicians to the faculty role.

Given the critical shortage of nursing faculty, many academic institutions have turned to adjunct nursing faculty to teach undergraduate students.

However, many of these adjunct faculty are expert clinicians but novice teachers who experience numerous challenges as educators.

Failure to explore the mentoring experiences of adjunct faculty may negatively affect not only the career success of nurse educators, but may also impact students’ learning and compromise patient safety.
Purpose of the Study

- The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the lived mentoring experiences of adjunct faculty in undergraduate nursing programs.
Research Questions

- What is the lived mentoring experiences of adjunct nursing faculty in undergraduate nursing programs?
- How do adjunct nursing faculty describe their formal and informal mentoring experiences?
- What mentoring strategies do adjunct nursing faculty identify as being effective as they transition from clinician to nurse educator?
Philosophical Underpinnings

- Interpretivism
- Constructivism
- Constructionism
Transcendental Phenomenology

- Moustakas (1994)
- Everything is perceived freshly for the first time
- The world is transformed to a phenomena
- Noema
- Noesis
- Epoche
Review of the Literature

- Historical Context
- Types of Mentoring
- Mentoring Across Disciplines
- Adjunct/Part-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty in Academia
Historical Context

- Nursing Faculty’s Role
- Adjunct Nursing Faculty
- Mentoring in Nursing
# Types of Mentoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Research Design</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Findings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Augustiniene &amp; Ciuciulkience (2013)</td>
<td>Identify aspects of reverse mentoring</td>
<td>Qualitative Interpretive</td>
<td>Miles &amp; Huberman (1994)</td>
<td>62 teachers</td>
<td>Mentoring increases IT skills, shared goals, mutual learning &amp; career development</td>
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<td>Pololi &amp; Evans (2015)</td>
<td>Identify the effect of peer mentoring</td>
<td>Quantitative &amp; Qualitative</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics &amp; inductive process</td>
<td>51 medical faculty</td>
<td>Mentoring Increases professional goals, trust &amp; confidence</td>
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<td>Alward et al. (2012)</td>
<td>Determine use of multiple mentoring relationships in psychology</td>
<td>Quantitative study</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics with NodelXi</td>
<td>286 members from the Society of Pediatric Psychology</td>
<td>Multiple mentors enhanced professional success and development</td>
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<td>Hunter, Lewis &amp; Ritter-Gooder (2012)</td>
<td>Determine how dieticians become leaders</td>
<td>Grounded Theory</td>
<td>Axial and selective coding, using Atlantis Ti, version 5.3</td>
<td>25 dieticians</td>
<td>Mentoring is segue or enhances transition &amp; is a significant component of successful leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desimone et al. (2014)</td>
<td>Compare mentoring between novice &amp; their mentors</td>
<td>Quantitative Longitudinal study</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics and t-test</td>
<td>57 middle school math teachers</td>
<td>Formal &amp; informal mentoring was compensatory &amp; complimentary</td>
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<td>Boddy (2012)</td>
<td>Explore community based mentoring for women in social work</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>NVivo computer software</td>
<td>11 mentees</td>
<td>Mentoring is reciprocal, provided support, trust &amp; empowerment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moorehead et al. (2015)</td>
<td>Describe the status of adjunct faculty</td>
<td>Quantitative descriptive study</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics &amp; ANOVA</td>
<td>125 department chairs</td>
<td>#1 reason for hiring adjuncts was insufficient full-time faculty, increase student enrollment &amp; budget constraints</td>
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<td>Levin &amp; Hernandez (2014)</td>
<td>Identify academic identity among part-time faculty</td>
<td>Qualitative Interpretive study</td>
<td>Miles &amp; Huberman (1994)</td>
<td>14 part time faculty members</td>
<td>Adjuncts felt undervalued, isolated &amp; alienated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ackroyd &amp; Engle (2014)</td>
<td>Examine organizational commitment</td>
<td>Quantitative, cross sectional</td>
<td>Analysis of variance (ANOVA)</td>
<td>645 full-time &amp; 168 part-time faculty</td>
<td>Full-time faculty had higher level of commitment. Part-time faculty had poor socialization</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Experiential Context

Novice Adjunct Faculty → Transition from Bedside to Classroom → Mentoring Opportunities
Access and Recruitment

Access

• Point of Contact: Program Directors from Schools of Nursing in Central and South Florida

• Participants who responded were contacted by email or telephone

• Date and time of Interview were mutually agreed upon
Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

**Inclusion**
- RNs: BSN, MSN or PhD
- 18 years of age or older
- Reside in Central or South Florida
- Read, write & speak English
- Worked or are working in academia
- Have less than or equal to 3 years experience teaching
- Must be available for face-to-face or Skype interviews

**Exclusion**
- Do not meet inclusion criteria
- Licensed Practical Nurses
- Full-time faculty
Ethical Considerations

- Approval from Barry University’s IRB
- Participation was voluntary
- Informed consent
- Permission to audio-tape
- Participants’ choice of pseudonyms
- Transcriptionist agreement
- Storage of data
- Token of appreciation
Data Collection Procedures

- Informed consent
- Demographic questionnaire
- Face-to-face or Skype semi-structured interviews
- Interviews were audio-recorded
- Schedule second interview for member check
- Journaling & self-reflection after each interview
Moustakas’s Methodology

- Formulate the question
- Identify phenomena
- Identify philosophical assumptions
- Select population
- Interview questions

- Data analysis
- Textural & structural descriptions
- Composite of textural description Determines the essence
Moustakas’s (1994) Data Analysis Steps

1. Horizontalizing
2. Reduction of experiences
3. Thematic clustering to create themes
4. Comparison of multiple data sources
5. Individual textural descriptions
6. Individual structural descriptions
7. Individual textural-structural descriptions
8. Composite Description- textural & structural meanings and essences of the experience
Research Rigor

- Credibility
- Dependability
- Confirmability
- Transferability
Sample Description

- Purposeful and snowball sampling
- Undergraduate nursing programs in South and Central Florida
- 20 Adjunct nursing faculty
- Met inclusion criteria
- Saturation was achieved
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<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Professional Affiliation</th>
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<th>Total Years as RN</th>
<th>Total Years as Adjunct</th>
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Emerging Themes and Sub-Themes

- Transferring
- Transitioning
  - Lacking Orientation
  - Lacking Mentorship
- Transforming
Theme: Transferring

- *Transferring of* knowledge and clinical expertise
- Adjunct faculty are intrinsically motivated to teach
- Passionate and committed
- Ryan and Deci’s (2000) self-determination theory (SDT)
- Quotes depicting *Transferring*:
  - “I really love to teach, students because they’re the future nurses.”
  - “My main expectation was to transfer the knowledge that I got over the years.”
  - “My goal is to bridge theory to practice.”
  - “I love, love to teach.”
Theme: Transitioning

- *Transitioning* denotes a role change
- “Paradigm shift”
- From “expert to novice”
- Expert clinician relearns new information as a novice nurse educator
- Role ambiguity, frustration, anxiety and confusion
- Quotes depicting *Transitioning*:
  - “It was sink or swim;” “I was thrown to the wolves”
  - “I felt as if I was drowning... a lone ship;”
  - “I went in cold turkey;” “I felt frightened”
  - “I didn’t know what to do;” “I felt lonely.”
Sub-Theme of Transitioning: Lacking Orientation

- Participants received inadequate orientation
- Vast majority received no orientation
- Deficiencies on the scope, content, and time allocated for orientation
- 1-3 days of faculty orientation is inadequate
- Structured orientation is recommended for a successful transition
- Quotes depicting Lacking Orientation:
  - “I did not have any orientation.”
  - “There wasn’t any structured orientation to the role.”
  - “I expected a more detailed clinical orientation.”
  - “There wasn’t any structured orientation to the role or structured anything.”
Sub-Theme of Transitioning: Lacking Mentorship

- Participants had no formal training in educational pedagogies
- Participants verbalized that mentoring is crucial to facilitate a smooth transition
- Need for mentor connection
- Feelings of being alone, frustrated & disappointed
- The participants requested: “a mentor,” “a go-to person,” “someone to shadow,” or a “buddy system”
Sub-Theme of Transitioning: Lacking Mentorship Cont.

- Quotes depicting *Lacking Mentorship*:
  - “I would have loved to have a mentor
  - “I felt like I should have a mentor but I did not.”
  - “I came in brand new and didn’t know anybody.”
  - “It was less fulfilling a role because a mentor was not available.”
  - “It would have been helpful if had a mentor.”
  - “It’s very important to have a mentor for your success.”
Theme: Transforming

- Learned how to teach
- Absence of a structured orientation and mentorship
- Past experiences provided a foundation for learning new knowledge
- Participants sought out peer mentors
- Over time identities as educators developed
- Willingness to mentor other novices

Quotes depicting *Transforming*:

- “I figured it out, I was just learning as I was going.”
- “I sought out a mentor.”
- “I started to develop my own niche.”
- “I oversee adjuncts and I try my best to prepare them.”
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carlson (2015)</td>
<td>Determine retention of part-time nursing faculty</td>
<td>Quantitative study</td>
<td>Web-based survey</td>
<td>553 part-time nursing faculty</td>
<td>Intrinsic rewards of teaching, culture of academia/mentoring, workload &amp; pay rate</td>
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<td>Lochner et al. (2012)</td>
<td>Explore intrinsic rewards of teaching</td>
<td>Grounded theory study</td>
<td>Open coding</td>
<td>8 healthcare professionals</td>
<td>Love for discipline, student development, &amp; desire to teach</td>
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<td>Gardner (2014)</td>
<td>Describe the teaching experiences of nurse educators</td>
<td>Phenomenology</td>
<td>Colaizzi (1978) &amp; Nvivo 8 software</td>
<td>8 nurse educators</td>
<td>Becoming an educator, finding support, developing teaching styles and competence</td>
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<td>Weidman (2013)</td>
<td>Describe the transition of clinicians</td>
<td>Phenomenology</td>
<td>Cross-case comparative analysis</td>
<td>8 nurse clinicians</td>
<td>Transition creates stress. Mentoring eases transition</td>
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<td>Cranford (2013)</td>
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<td>Simple regression analysis</td>
<td>262 nursing faculty</td>
<td>Role ambiguity and self-assessed competency are predictors of role strain</td>
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<td>McDermid et al. (2013)</td>
<td>Explores the transition of nurse clinicians to academia</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>Thematic analysis</td>
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<td>Role ambiguity and lack of confidence</td>
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<td>Schoening (2013)</td>
<td>Generate a nurse educator transition model</td>
<td>Grounded theory study</td>
<td>Strauss &amp; Corbin open axial &amp; selective coding</td>
<td>20 nurse educators</td>
<td>Anticipation, disorientation, information seeking and identity formation</td>
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<td>Silao (2015)</td>
<td>Examine mentoring outcomes of nurse clinicians</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>Data analysis software program (MAXQDA)</td>
<td>11 clinical faculty</td>
<td>Lack of connection, minimal assistance with role transition</td>
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<td>Davidson &amp; Rourke (2012)</td>
<td>Survey the orientation needs of clinical instructors</td>
<td>Quantitative study</td>
<td>Descriptive analysis</td>
<td>44 part-time clinical instructors</td>
<td>Need to develop teaching abilities, clinical policies, IT support, connection of theory</td>
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<td>Roberts et al. (2013)</td>
<td>Explore needs of nursing adjuncts</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>HyperRESEARCH coding</td>
<td>21 nursing adjuncts</td>
<td>Orientation, role, support &amp; connection</td>
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<td>Elder et al. (2016)</td>
<td>Investigate factors of importance to faculty</td>
<td>Quantitative cross sectional study</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics using SPSS version</td>
<td>80 adjunct faculty</td>
<td>Orientation, resources &amp; Mentoring opportunities</td>
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<td>De Castro et al. (2015)</td>
<td>Determine effectiveness of peer mentoring relationships</td>
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<td>100 academic medicine faculty</td>
<td>Peer mentoring is a two way process, decreases stress and increases friendship and mutual learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illeris (2015)</td>
<td>Interpret the learning needs of part-time faculty</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>Moustakas (1994)</td>
<td>3 part-time clinicians</td>
<td>Development of professional identities and motivation to teach</td>
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<tr>
<td>McCloughen et al. (2013)</td>
<td>Explore the mentoring experiences of nurse leaders</td>
<td>Qualitative, Phenomenology study</td>
<td>Van Manen’s (1997)</td>
<td>13 nurse leaders</td>
<td>Becoming a leader is a life-long transformative process</td>
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<td>Owens (2017)</td>
<td>Explore the learning needs of clinicians transitioning to new roles</td>
<td>Phenomenology</td>
<td>Moustakas (1994)</td>
<td>3 nurse clinicians</td>
<td>Instructor identities, learning needs, motivation to learn, prior &amp; current knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Connection to Theory: Schoening’s (2009) Nurse Educator Transition Theory

- **Nurse**
  - Nurturing/caring
  - Dependent on structure
  - Content-focused

- **Nurse Educator**
  - Teacher/student boundaries
  - Comfort with ambiguity
  - Learner-focused

**Transferring**
- Anticipation/Expectation Phase
  - Wanting to make a difference
  - Flexible lifestyle
  - Career progression
  - Positive student encounters
  - Scholarship

**Transitioning:**
- Lacking Orientation, Lacking Mentorship
  - Disorientation Phase
    - Role ambiguity
    - Expert to novice
    - Lack of mentorship
    - Lack of structure
    - Negative student encounters

**Transforming**
- Identity Formation Phase
  - Establishing boundaries
  - Keeping a foot in the door
  - Gradually accepting new responsibility
  - Making it your own

- Information Seeking Phase
  - Fact finding
  - Peer mentoring
  - Faculty development
  - Over-preparing
  - Applying past nursing knowledge
Significance of the Study

- Implications for Nursing Education
- Implications for Nursing Practice
- Implications for Nursing Research
- Implications for Health/Public Policy
Strengths and Limitations of the Study

- Rich dialogue from 20 participants
- Diverse sample
- Systematic Approach
- Epoche Process

- Participants were located only in undergraduate nursing programs in Central and South Florida
- Novice researcher
- Complex methodological concepts
- Majority of participants were females & English speaking
Recommendations for Future Study

- Structured orientation with mentor support
- Evidence-based mentorship programs
- Faculty development opportunities
- Education content in master’s level courses
- Online support and resources for adjunct faculty
- Future qualitative and quantitative studies
Conclusions

- Three overarching themes
- Two sub-themes
- Connection to Schoening’s (2009) Nurse Educator Transition Theory
- Provide a mentoring culture for adjunct nursing faculty
Mentoring Dynamics

- Lean on me (Withers, 1972)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYI0AoXlOwE
References


Augustiniene, A., Ciuciulkiene, N. (2013). Reverse mentoring as facilitating factor for the development of a beginning teacher’s self-authorship process. Social Science, 3(8), 73-84. doi.org/10.55755/j01.ss81.3.5791


References


References


