Title: The Relationship Between Senior Practicum Site Placement and Academic Outcomes in Prelicensure Baccalaureate Nursing Students

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Abstract Summary: This study explored the relationship between senior practicum placement on academic outcomes in an advanced senior level medical surgical course and on NCLEX pass rates.

References:
Abstract Text:

**Purpose:** Many nursing schools in the United States require students to complete a senior practicum experience in the last semester of a Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program. This experience typically serves as an immersive experience for students to gain additional clinical experience under the supervision of a professional nurse and is designed to facilitate transition to practice. Although senior practicum experiences have become a best practice in BSN education, the required number of hours and the unit selection process vary widely between nursing programs. In our institution, students identify their top three desired clinical practice areas and are often placed in their top area choice. Students view the senior practicum as an opportunity to gain focused clinical hours in a specialty area and believe it to be beneficial in obtaining a new graduate nursing position in that specialty. However, anecdotal information from our institution suggests that non-specialty clinical placements may be more beneficial to students with regards to success in a senior-level medical-surgical nursing course and the NCLEX. This can have important implications for advising students about senior practicum site placement selection. To our knowledge, there is no literature currently available on this topic. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the student’s senior practicum site placement and academic outcomes including: 1) the final grade in an advanced medical surgical course; 2) first time score on a comprehensive NCLEX predictor exam, and 3) first time NCLEX pass rate.

**Methods:** This study utilized a descriptive correlational design. Four cohorts of accelerated and traditional Baccalaureate pre-licensure nursing students were included (n=292). Data collected includes: 1) senior practicum unit placement, 2) final course grade in the advanced medical surgical nursing course, 3) probability of passing NCLEX on a comprehensive practice exam, and 4) First NCLEX attempt outcome (pass or fail).

**Results:** Results are pending at this time. Data will be analyzed by a statistician to include descriptive statistics and correlations between variables.

**Conclusions:** Results from this study will be used to advise students in senior practicum site selection and placement.