Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Students' Perceptions of the Three P's in the Preparation for Clinical Practice

Michael Moon PhD, MSN, RN, CNS-CC, CEN, FAEN
University of the Incarnate Word Ila Faye Miller School of Nursing
San Antonio, Texas

INTRODUCTION

In 2008 advanced pathophysiology, advanced physical assessment, and advanced pharmacology (3 P's) were mandated as separate courses in APRN education as part of the joint consensus model (AACN & NCSBN, 2008). What is missing in the literature is any evidence other than expert opinion that supports completion of these courses as improving the performance of APRNs in practice.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this pilot project was to investigate whether the completion of the three "Ps" increases APRN students' confidence prior to completing their first year clinical courses.

RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE

The NACNS developed core competencies for CNSs in 1995 (Baldwin, Clark, Fulton, & Mayo, 2009). In 2008 the three "Ps" were mandated as separate courses in APRN education as part of the joint consensus model (AACN & NCSBN, 2008). Currently there is a lack of evidence in the literature that supports completion of the three "Ps" as improving APRN performance. Furthermore, there is virtually no literature that identifies whether students in APRN programs feel that the three "Ps" have helped prepare them for implementation of the APRN role early in the nursing curriculum prior to completing their first year of clinical practice hours.

METHODS

A self-assessment survey tool addressing the three P's and clinical reasoning/decision-making was adapted from Andrusyszyn et al.'s (1999) original survey and was used to survey a convenience sample of APRN students in their first year of clinical courses. A 1-6 Likert scale, with 1 being least confident and 6 being most confident, was used. Content and face validity of the original tool was derived from the literature and experts in the field (CHSRF/CIHR Chair Program in Advanced Practice Nursing, 2017)

DATA ANALYSIS

A Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to determine if there was statistically significant differences between the courses and participants' confidence. This test is used when assessing significant differences on a continuous dependent variable by a categorical independent variable and does not assume the data is normally distributed.
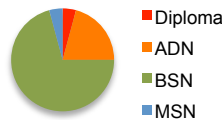
DEMOGRAPHICS/RESULTS

N=24

Prior APRN Experience	Yes 4.2%	No 95.8%
Currently Working as RN	Full-time 68.2%	Part-time 31.8%

	Range	Mean
Age	23-52 yrs.	37.33 yrs.
RN Experience	3-34 yrs.	8.79 yrs.
No. Hrs/Week Working	12-60 hrs/week	34.15 hrs/week

Ethnicity

- African American
- Hispanic
- Caucasion
- Asian

Initial RN Prep

- Diploma
- ADN
- BSN
- MSN
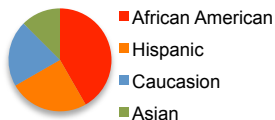
Overall Score All Categories: Median = 5

Category	Category Median	Kruskal-Wallis
Advanced Pathophysiology	Median = 4	0.37
Advanced Health Assessment	Median = 5	0.584
Advanced Pharmacology	Median = 4	0.385
Other	Median = 4	0.344

CI: 95% Significance: 0.05

CONCLUSIONS/PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS

Median findings suggest that the three "Ps" have some influence on the confidence levels of APRN students, although not statistically significant. This project's findings support the three "Ps" as contributing to increased confidence in APRN students' clinical abilities and provides some support to the premise of the consensus model that mandates the inclusion of the three "Ps" in APRN education. Confidence in clinical practice is essential for an APRN working in an emergency setting.

LIMITATIONS

This project consisted of a small sample size from one university program. The results are not generalizable to the larger community. However, this project serves as a starting point to address a gap in the literature regarding APRN education.

References

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IRB # Moon- Ex- 788 - 1 788
moon@uiwtx.edu