

# The Experience of Registered Nurses Returning to School for the Baccalaureate: A Metasynthesis

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# Presentation Objective



- ❧ Discuss the utilization of research to describe and expand best practices that support the educational advancement of Registered Nurses (RNs) to the Baccalaureate in Nursing (BSN)

# What's the Research Problem?



## Background:

- ❧ The 2010 IOM Report, *The Future of Nursing: Focus on Education* acknowledges multiple educational pathways to the Baccalaureate in Nursing (i.e. Associate Degree, Diploma)
- ❧ The need to increase the approximate 21% rate of advancement to the Baccalaureate among Diploma & Associate Degree nurses is essential (DHHS, 2010)
- ❧ Research reveals the need for improvement so that returning to school is more appealing to RNs



# What's the Research Problem?



- ❧ Variables that may support nurses in their quest for educational advancement have been identified
- ❧ Academic/Practice Partnerships can increase the relevance of educational advancement
- ❧ The review of the literature reveals that educational advancement of experienced Associate Degree Nurses (ADNs) enhances the impact of Baccalaureate education on practice

# 80% BSN by 2020



- ❧ Planning for the Institute of Medicine (IOM) charge to reach 80% BSN by 2020 will take efforts from all areas of nursing and beyond
- ❧ Support for nurses to advance to the BSN is needed from all of us
- ❧ Evidence Based educational approaches are necessary to ensure appropriate utilization of precious resources
- ❧ Educational Advancement of all Nurses has the potential to enhance the health of all

# Beginning A Research Trajectory in Nursing Education



- ❧ Beginning with PhD Program in Nursing
- ❧ Interest in supporting seamless educational pathways for ADN graduates to achieve 80% BSN by 2020
- ❧ Commitment to help meet the 2012 -2015 *National League for Nursing (NLN) Research Priorities in Nursing Education to Lead Reform in Nursing Education* (NLN, 2012)

# Making Progress on the Research Trajectory



Laying the foundation for the Metasynthesis through a combination of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Experiences as a PhD in nursing student:

- 1. Qualitative PILOT study:** Descriptive Phenomenology (Colaizzi, 1978)  
*The Experience of Registered Nurses Working in Acute Care After Earning a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing*
- 2. Quantitative PILOT study:** Descriptive Study of ADN Students' perspective on their advancement to the BSN  
*Promoting the Educational Advancement of Registered Nurses Prepared at the Associate Degree Level*



# Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Metasynthesis



## ❧ Qualitative Metasynthesis

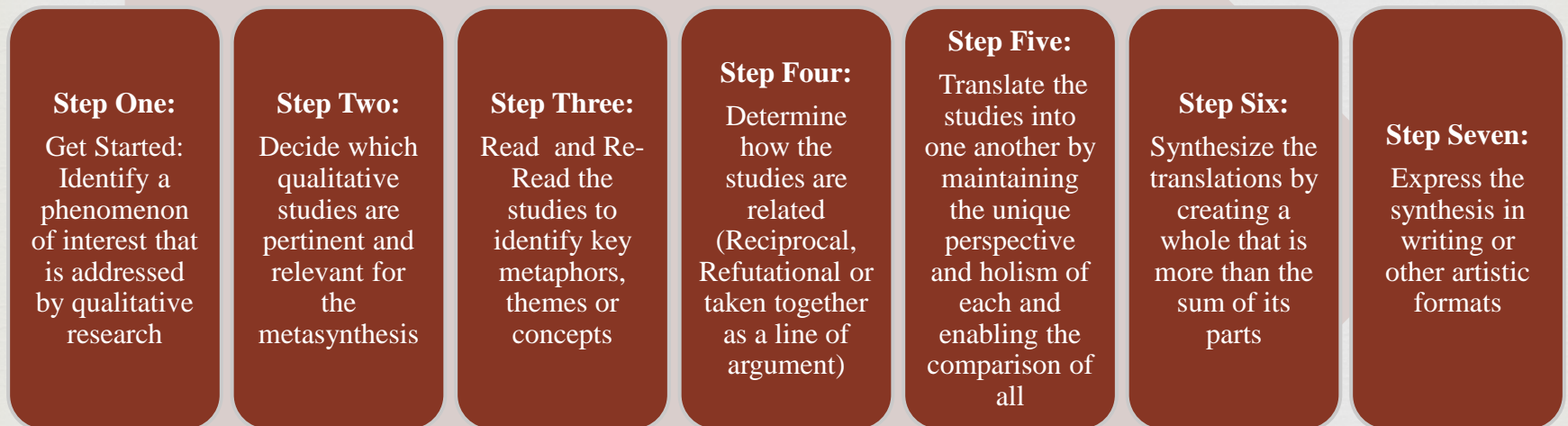
- ❧ An interpretive qualitative research method that seeks to synthesize individual qualitative studies on a particular topic, in this case

### *The Experiences of RN to BSN Students*

- ❧ The resulting end product is a whole that represents more than the sum of its individual parts
- ❧ To elucidate these experiences in an effort to understand and perhaps improve them
- ❧ Ultimate Goal: to increase the proportion of ADN nurses that return to school to attain a BSN



# Developing a Metasynthesis using the method of Noblit & Hare, 1988



Perfetto, L. (in Press). Facilitating Educational Advancement of RNs to the Baccalaureate: What are they telling us?.  
*Nursing Education Perspectives.*

*Goal of a Metasynthesis: to collectively synthesize individual qualitative studies into a whole that represents more than the sum of its individual parts*

# Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Metasynthesis



- ❧ Inclusion criteria for the metasynthesis were:
  - ❧ The focus of the study was educational advancement from RN to BSN
  - ❧ The study was undertaken between January 2000 and February 2013
  - ❧ The research design was qualitative or included a qualitative component

# Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Metasynthesis



❧ Thirteen Studies were included in the sample, representing:

❧ 324 RN to BSN students; ages 19-62 years

❧ All US studies with one Canadian study

❧ Incomplete gender and ethnicity information

# Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Metasynthesis



- ❧ Data Analysis: Applying the technique of *Reciprocal Translation* (Noblit and Hare, 1988)
  - ❧ The studies are read and re-read
  - ❧ Metaphors that portray the essence of each study are chosen by the researcher
  - ❧ The studies are translated into one another
  - ❧ The translations are synthesized
  - ❧ The Synthesis is expressed in writing or other artistic formats



## *RN to BSN Education: 7 Overarching Themes from the Student Experience*



Perfetto, L. (in Press). Facilitating Educational Advancement of RNs to the Baccalaureate: What are they telling us?. *Nursing Education Perspectives*.

# Continuing the Research Trajectory: Instrument Development



- ❧ An instrument was developed and piloted based upon two of the seven themes discovered through the Metasynthesis
  - ❧ Please Value what I Bring and Help Me Get Ready
  - ❧ I Need Help to Get There
- ❧ Pilot provided direction to apply the instrument further during Dissertation phase

# Conclusion



- ❧ Continuing the research; planning to finish the PhD!
- ❧ Always more research to do...
- ❧ Statewide, Regional & National efforts to reach 80% BSN by 2020 abound through partnerships among academe and practice!
- ❧ More research and exploration will assist our journey in meeting the goal!
- ❧ Thank you for your attention...
- ❧ Questions?? For additional information contact Linda M. Perfetto; [linda.perfetto@uconn.edu](mailto:linda.perfetto@uconn.edu)

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# *Thank you!*



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- ❧ Perfetto, L. (in Press). Facilitating Educational Advancement of RNs to the Baccalaureate: What are they telling us? *Nursing Education Perspectives*.
- ❧ References for specific studies used in the metasynthesis are available upon request