

# PERCEPTIONS AND WRITING EXPERIENCES OF NURSING STUDENTS:

## A MIXED-METHODS EXPLORATION OF WRITING SELF-EFFICACY

Presented by  
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*Prepared for the 26<sup>th</sup> International Sigma  
Theta Tau Research Congress*

# Introduction to the Problem: Challenges with Competent Academic Writing

- Essential academic skill (Giddens & Lobo, 2008)
- Disseminate research and EBP findings (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2008; Newton & Moore, 2010)
- Ensure safe nursing practice (AACN, 2008)

## Theoretical Framework (Bandura, 1986, 1997)

- Self-efficacy (SE):
  - **Belief** in one's **capability** to **manage** future situations and **accomplish** tasks
- Self-confidence: Strength of a SE belief

# Reciprocal Determinism



Reciprocal determinism. From *Overview of Social Cognitive Theory and of Self-Efficacy* (p. 1), by F. Pajares, 2002. Copyright 2002 by Emory University. Reprinted with permission.

# Theoretical Framework (Bandura, 1977, 1986)

## Self-Efficacy Influenced by Reciprocal Determinism

- **Behavioral:** skills and actions
- **Personal:** beliefs, personality, attitudes
- **Environmental:** physical surroundings, family

# Literature Review

Self-efficacy: General SE and writing SE

Academic writing in nursing education

- Writing abilities of nursing students
- Writing educational strategies and interventions

Gap: Writing SE specific for nursing education

# Problem

- For prelicensure BSN students: Identify facilitators
- Barriers to competent academic writing
- By examining
  - Writing self-efficacy and
  - Academic writing experiences

# Purpose

- Empirically determine writing self-efficacy
- Qualitatively explore academic writing experiences



# Methodology

Research Method: Mixed methods

Research Design: Concurrent triangulation

Population: Pre-licensure BSN students,  
Midwestern U.S

Sample: Same, but in Midwestern state

## Data Collection and Instrumentation

**Quantitative:** Non-probability convenience sample

- Demographic Survey--researcher designed
- Writing SE Survey (Shell, Murphy, & Bruning, 1989)

**Qualitative:** Purposive with interview protocol

- Three focus groups (audio and video taped)

# Quantitative Tool: Demographic Survey

- Age, gender
- Nursing student status, employment status
- Primary care provider status
- Evidence of a support system
- Prior level college course, first speaking language

**Quantitative Tool:  
Writing SE Survey ( $\alpha = .95$ )  
(Bruning, Murphy, & Shell, 1989)**

- Spelling and punctuation
- Use parts of speech, write a simple sentence
- Use plurals, verb tenses, prefixes, and suffixes
- Write compound and complex sentences
- Construct a paragraph with a theme sentence
- Construct organized paper with transitions

# Research Questions: QUAN and QUAL

**QUAN:** What is the writing self-efficacy of entry-level BSN students?

**QUAL:** What has hindered or facilitated past writing experiences of entry-level BSN students? (including events, resources, issues, relationships)

# Research and Null Hypotheses

Focused on correlations between

- Eight demographic variables
- Writing SE scores

# Data Analysis: Quantitative Component

- Descriptive statistics:  $M$ , SD, median, and range of demographic data and SE scores
- Inferential statistics: ANOVA & Kruskal-Wallis; determined correlations between demographic variables and SE scores

# Data Analysis: Qualitative Component

- Self-transcription of interviews
- Open coding: To find answers to interview questions
- Analytical coding: Detailed coding for interpretation
- Identified categories and themes
- Reciprocal determinism: Determine categories





## **Results: QUAN Component**

### **Main QUAN Research Question:**

What is the writing self-efficacy of entry-level BSN students?

## Results: QUAN Component

- Total mean writing SE score: 67 out of 80 (possible)
- Writing self-efficacy scores for eight writing skills
  - Range 7.989 to 8.945 (10 highest)
  - Lowest score: 7.989, punctuation
  - Highest score: 8.945, write simple sentence

## Research Subquestion 1

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and their **age**?

**Results:** Differences noted but NS

## Research Subquestion 2

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and their **gender**?

**Results:** **Statistically significant**  
**Females more self-efficacious**

## Research Subquestion 3

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and **nursing student status**?

**Results:** One report of part-time student status; unable to do correlation based on this study's data set

## Research Subquestion 4

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and their **employment status**?

**Results:** Differences were noted, but NS

## Research Subquestion 5

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and their **primary care-provider status**?

**Results:** Differences were noted, but NS

## Research Subquestion 6

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and their **support-system status**?

**Results:** Only one subject report no access to a support system; correlations could not be determined



## Research Subquestion 7

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and completion of a **prior college-level writing course**?

**Results:** Differences were noted, but NS

## Research Subquestion 8

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and **first-speaking language**?

**Results:** Differences were noted, but NS

# Results: Qualitative Component

## **Main Qualitative Research Question:**

What has hindered or facilitated past writing experiences of entry-level BSN students?

## Results: Qualitative Component

What events, resources, issues, and relationships do entry-level BSN students perceive to be **significant** in their nursing education writing experiences?

- Significant resources
- Significant events, issues, and relationships

# Conclusions: Quantitative Component

## **Sufficient data to answer**

- Main research question—What is writing SE....
- Six of the eight sub questions about correlations

**Insufficient data to answer two sub questions:**  
Student status and support-system

## Conclusions: Qualitative Component

- Many factors facilitated and hindered competent academic writing of this study's sample....
  - Environment (physical surroundings): about 1/2
  - Personal (feelings, perceptions): about 1/3
  - Behavior (skills, actions): about 1/4

# Recommendations for Future Research

- Increase sample size, multistate research sites
- Longitudinal study over several years
  - Assess writing SE at enrollment--and
  - At end of each semester until graduation
    - After writing interventions and assignments

## Limitations

- Quantitative sample--convenience sample
- Sample distribution—not normal bell-shape, left skewed, participants self-reported high scores
  - Ten perfect writing SE scores of 80
  - Misunderstood scoring on writing SE scale



## **Discussion:**

**This study's data may influence nurse educators to--**

- Decrease hindrances
- Increase facilitators
- Initiate collaborative writing interventions
- Understand impact of competent academic writing
  - Sustain rigor of nursing profession



**Thank you!**

Questions

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