A Focused Ethnography: Nurses Transitioning to a Nursing Specialty

Mary A. Brinkman PhD, RN, CNOR
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MARY A. BRINKMAN PHD, RN, CNOR

THIS PRESENTER HAS NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST OR AFFILIATION WITH ANY OUTSIDE AFFILIATION
Objectives

- Understand Registered Nurses’ transition as they orient to a new specialty area in nursing.

- Knowledge of the importance having an organized, well structured orientation program to promote the retention of nurses who are transitions to a new area of nursing practice.
The purpose of the study was to explore nurses’ experience as they transition to a new area of nursing practice.

For this study:
Nurses transitioning to the Operating Room was explored.
Interest in Conducting Study

- Need to address the impending nursing shortage in recruiting and retaining nurses transitioning to new areas of nursing practice.

- Lack of exposure during undergraduate nursing education to specialty areas in nursing.
  - This study focused on perioperative nursing

  - Sexton, Teasley, Cox, & Carroll, 2007
Nursing Shortage

Issues of nurses retiring Baby Boomers

- Over the next 20 years, the average age of the RN will increase and size of the workforce will plateau as a large number of RNs retire
  - Buerhaus, 2008

- Health Resources and Services Administration projects by 2020 the nursing shortage is expected to grow to over one million nurses
Assumptions of the Study

- Lack of perioperative experience in undergraduate education hinders new nurses preparation for the OR experience.
- New nurses transitioning to the OR are not aware of the multiple responsibilities required in providing safe patient care in the OR.
- Many nurses come to the OR with an unrealistic idea of OR nursing.
- Experience nurses who precept new nurses to the OR may lack knowledge of generational issues that may impede the orientation, learning process, and transitioning of the new nurse to the OR.
Many nursing students base their career choices upon graduation on their past clinical experiences.

Without clinical experience in the OR, perioperative nursing may not be a career choice for graduate nurses.

-Trice et al., 2007
Significance of the Study

The significance of this study was to explore nurses’ experiences as they orient to the operating room to study:

➔ Implications for Nursing Education

➔ Implications for Nursing Practice

➔ Implications for Nursing Science and Research
Statement of the Problem

To meet the future OR workforce requirements and address the projected shortage of OR nurses, it is essential to understand the transitioning of new nurses as they orient to the operating room to become OR nurses.
Research Questions

The following questions were explored

1) What is the process of transitioning to the operating room for registered nurses who are new to the setting?

2) What are the experiences of registered nurses new to the operating room as they transition to the setting?

3) What are the influences that facilitate the transition of the registered nurses to the operating room?

4) What are the influences that hindered the transition of the registered nurse to the operating room?
• A focused ethnography was conducted based on Leininger’s Transcultural Care Theory

  -Leininger, 1978;
Process of Transitioning

• Transition requires a person to incorporate new knowledge by changing behaviors to adapt to a new situation
  - Meleis, 2007

• Situational transitioning experiences include facilitators and inhibitors to the transition
  - Meleis, Sawyer, Im, Messias, & Schumacher, 2000
A Qualitative study using a focused ethnography methodology was performed to examine RNs new to the Operating Room during their orientation and transition learning to become OR Nurses.
Setting for Conduction of this Study

Private, non-profit acute care teaching hospital and level I Trauma Center in an urban, metropolitan area in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States
OVERVIEW OF DEMOGRAPHICS
Data Collection

- Shared the purpose of the proposed study with the OR manager and perioperative educator
- Explained the purpose of the study to the nurses who met the criteria for the study and were transitioning to the OR
- Observed the transitioning process of the nurses who were orienting to the OR
- Field notes were maintained during the observations
- Following the observation phase, researcher conducted individual interviews with the nurses transitioning to the OR
- Final phase was the data analysis portion
Process of Transitioning

Gaining Familiarity
Increasing Knowledge & Skills

Acquiring Knowledge
Gaining Confidence in the Role of an OR Nurse

Attaining Confidence
Emerging Connectedness in the OR Culture

Fitting IN
Committed to the OR
Collegiality
Data Analysis

The data was analyzed from observations, field notes, and interviews with the participants
RESULTS FROM RESEARCH STUDY
Influences that Facilitated the RNs’ Transition to the OR

- Positive Learning Experience
- Belonging & Acceptance
- Stimulating Environment
- Supportive Personal
- Consistency in Preceptors
- Collegiality of Peers
- OR Nursing is Real Nursing
Influences that Hinder the RNs’ Transition to the OR

- Preceptor Inconsistency
- Hostile Environment
- Unprepared
- Overwhelming
IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING EDUCATION
Without nurse educators the nursing profession will be compromised and nursing care will “not be based on strong and up-to-date scientific evidence”

- Meleis, 2005, p. 111
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH
SUMMARY FROM STUDY
Positive Transitioning to a new area of nursing practice, such as the OR, will enhance nurse recruitment, hiring, and retaining new RNs to the OR