



The Doctoral Journey:

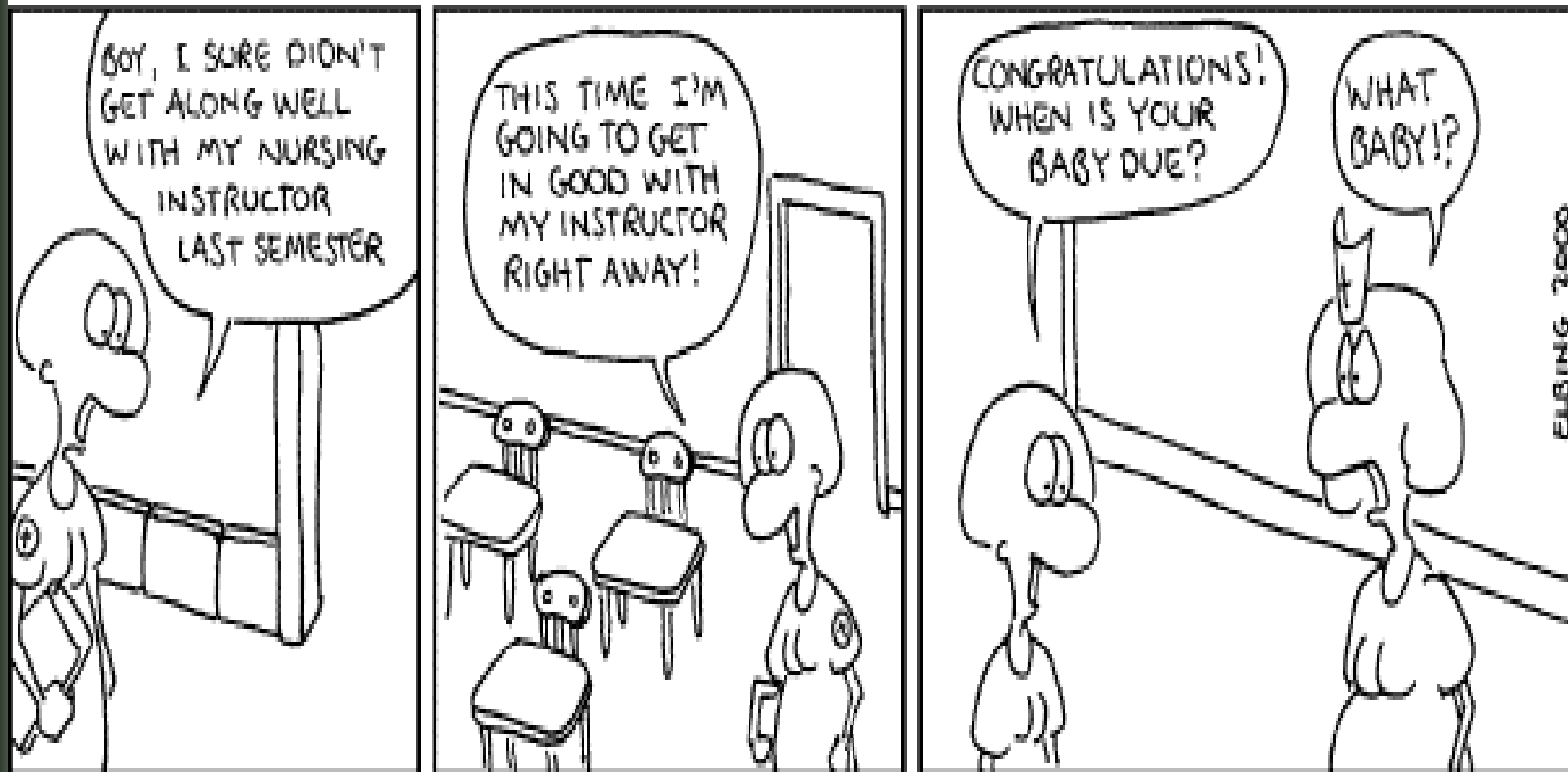
Exploring the relationship
between workplace
empowerment of nurse
educators and successful
completion of a doctoral degree

Lisa Anne Burrell, PhD, MSN, RN-BC, CNE

A bit of Nurse Educator Humor.....

Nurstoons

by Carl Elbing




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Presentation Objectives:

- Describe current trends in nursing education and practice
- Discuss the need for nurses with a doctoral degree
- Discuss three types of barriers to earning a doctoral degree
- Identify workplace strategies to support nurses/nurse educators seeking a doctoral degree



Have you ever thought about
enrolling in a doctoral
program????

Most influential deterrent???

A collection of symbolic objects is arranged on a light-colored, textured surface. In the top left, a portion of a chessboard with a checkered pattern and several chess pieces is visible. Below the chessboard, there are two medals: one with a red ribbon and a circular emblem, and another with a blue ribbon and a circular emblem. A small key lies near the center. A pair of thin-framed glasses is positioned diagonally across the middle. In the bottom left corner, a circular compass with a needle and degree markings is visible.

My Academic Journey



So what does the literature say about
nurses with doctoral degrees?

**IS IT REALLY WORTH THE
*JOURNEY?***



The Doctoral *Dilemma*

- The Institute of Medicine reported less than 1% of nurses hold a doctoral degree (IOM, 2011)
- The Institute of Medicine (2010) recommended that the number of nursing faculty who hold a doctoral degree double by 2020.
- Only one third of nursing faculty hold doctoral degrees (as compared to 60% of all post-secondary faculty) (NLN, 2010)




The Doctoral *Dilemma*

- “U.S. nursing schools turned away 75,587 qualified applicants from nursing programs in 2011” due to nursing faculty vacancies (AACN, 2012)
- “88.3% of the faculty vacancies require a doctoral degree” (AACN, 2012)



The Doctoral *Dilemma*

- In 2011, 1,156 doctoral candidates were turned away due to lack of faculty (AACN, 2012)
- Approx. 200-300 doctorally-prepared faculty are eligible for retirement (AACN, 2012)
- Approx. 60 to 80% of students enrolled in doctoral studies never complete their programs (Smith & Delmore, 2007)

A collection of symbolic objects is arranged on a light-colored surface. In the top left, a portion of a chessboard with a checkered pattern and several chess pieces is visible. Below the chessboard, there are two medals: one with a red ribbon and a star-shaped center, and another with a blue ribbon and a star-shaped center. A pair of round-rimmed glasses with thin frames lies diagonally across the lower left. In the bottom left corner, a small, round, vintage-style compass is partially visible. The text "Why do we need doctorally prepared nurses???" is overlaid on the right side of the image, with the word "Why" in red and the rest in black.

Why do we need
doctorally prepared
nurses????



Current *Trends* in Nursing Practice/Education

- Persistent nursing faculty shortage
(AACN, 2012)
- Nurse leaders in academia are retiring
(AACN, 2012)
- Hospitals are pursuing Magnet recognition
(Lavizzo-Mourey, 2012).
- Healthcare industry reform is leading to an increased need for advanced practice nurses (i.e. DNP)



Current *Trends* in Nursing Practice/Education

- Professional organizations are supporting the push for the baccalaureate (BSN) as the minimal entry level to practice (Spencer, 2008).
- Curriculum reform that promotes and facilitates matriculation into baccalaureate (BSN) programs (from diploma, ADN levels) (Spencer, 2008).
- Increased need for expert nurse clinicians and nurse researchers (Sherrod et al., 2012; Smith & Delmore, 2007).



For those of you who have
thought about enrolling....

What would be your *most*
significant challenge?????

Anticipated
challenges/deterrents of
nurses considering a
terminal degree....





Anticipated Challenges

- End may not justify the means (time & effort involved may not be worth it)
- “Too old”
- Don’t see the value in earning the degree with a short amount of career time left
- Cost of tuition/fees
- Competitive admission criteria



Anticipated Challenges

- Difficulty of advanced graduate courses
- Lack of time for school (inability to decrease teaching workload)
- Courses/practicum scheduling conflicting with work hours
- Time it takes to complete a terminal degree
- Insecurity regarding academic abilities




Anticipated Challenges

- Travel expenses
- Challenges with online programs



For the DNPs, PhDs, and EdDs
in the room....

What was your *number one*
challenge you had to
overcome?????

A collection of symbolic objects is arranged on a light-colored surface. In the top left, a portion of a chessboard with a checkered pattern and several chess pieces is visible. Below the chessboard, there are two medals: one with a red ribbon and a star-shaped pendant, and another with a blue ribbon and a star-shaped pendant. A small, ornate compass is located in the bottom left corner. A pair of thin-framed glasses lies horizontally across the middle of the image. The text "Actual experiences of nurses who have pursued a terminal degree...." is overlaid on the right side of the image in a red, italicized font.

Actual experiences of
nurses who have pursued
a terminal degree....



Personal Challenges

- Change in sleep patterns, chronic stress, depression, anxiety, and fluctuations in weight
- Time management; managing dual roles (parenting, professional, student)
- Strain of caring for aging parents
- Strained professional, social & personal relationships



Personal Challenges

- Guilt, anger, frustration about not spending time with family
- Lack of support
- Sense of seclusion
- Lack of academic self-discipline
- Maintaining the focus to persevere



Professional Challenges

- Balancing work-school-life responsibilities
- Time demand
- Transitioning from established leadership roles back into the vulnerability of the “student” role
- Developing advanced writing skills



Financial Challenges

- Personal financial obligations (including costs of children's tuition)
- Salary limitations in academia
- Costs of doctoral program (coursework and dissertation pathway)



Financial Challenges

- Limited employer financial support for doctoral degrees
- Lack of government subsidies for doctoral education
- Fewer scholarships available for doctoral work



Creating a Culture of Empowerment: *Workplace*

- Workload adjustment
- Academic days off
- Professional/Research days off
- Deans/Directors promoting a culture of excellence




Creating a Culture of Empowerment: *Workplace*

- Establishing a collaborative networking platform
- Doctoral candidate support groups
- Mentoring (from those that have traveled journey)
- Adapting the NLNs framework of core competencies for nurse educators



Creating a Culture of Empowerment: *Organization*

- Re-allocating funding innovatively (academic financial support for dependents, tuition/grant, assistance)
- Research assistance
- Publishing assistance
- Retention incentives
- Paid work releases for self-care activities



Investing in the future of nursing
through empowering strategies
designed to facilitate completion of
a doctoral degree
is

PRICELESS!!!



Literature Conclusion

- The ***DILEMMA***
- The ***TRENDS***
- The ***CHALLENGES/DETERRENTS***
- The ***EXPERIENCES***
- The ***SUPPORT***

The Research





Problem

- **Attrition and the reluctance to enroll in doctoral programs** will continue to perpetuate the shortage of qualified nursing faculty.
- The problem addressed by the study is the lack of evidence concerning the impact of workplace empowerment of nurse educators on successful completion of a doctoral degree.



Purpose Statement

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between nurse educators' perceptions of workplace empowerment and successful completion of a doctoral degree.



Research Design

- **A quantitative, correlational design**
- **Sample inclusion criteria (nurses in a teaching role while enrolled in a doctoral program)**
- **Web-based survey platform**
- **Psychological Empowerment Instrument (PEI)**



Research Questions

Question #1: What is the relationship between perceived workplace empowerment of nurse educators enrolled in a doctoral program and successful completion of the degree?

Question #2: What is the relationship between nurse educators who perceive lower levels of workplace empowerment and time it takes to complete a doctoral degree?



Results

Research Question #1: No significant relationship found between workplace empowerment of nurse educators and completion of a doctoral degree ($p > .05$).

The lack of a significant correlation between the variables suggests that empowerment on the job is not a predictor of whether or not a nurse educator will complete a doctoral degree.



Results

- **Research Question #2:** No significant relationship found between levels of workplace empowerment of nurse educators and time to degree completion
- The concept of empowerment was also measured within each subscale (competence, meaning, self-determination, and impact).

“Competence” (highest scored)

“Impact” (lowest scored)

Limitations

- **Narrow recruitment method**
- **Low response rate; sample size (n=80)**
- **Self-report nature of PEI instrument (potential for response set biases)**
- **Survey item logistics eliminated some of the participants who met the inclusion criteria**





Research Implications for Nursing Practice

- Encourage conversations about the doctoral journey of nurses
- Inspire nursing scholars to explore aspects that may support nurses as doctoral learners
- Evaluate & develop more matriculation programs in nursing education that result in advanced degrees (RN to PhD)



Recommendations for Further Research

- Replicate study with expanded recruitment methods to capture a larger sample
- Explore link between workplace empowerment of nurse educators and type of program (i.e. Diploma, ADN, BSN)



Recommendations for Further Research

- **Examine correlation between age and workplace empowerment**
- **Qualitative approaches to investigate motivating factors that might encourage nurses to enroll in doctoral programs**



If you felt empowered in
your department or
organization.....

*Would you be more likely to
consider enrolling or
encourage others to enroll in
a doctoral program??*



**SOMETHING TO THINK
ABOUT !!!**

A vertical strip on the left side of the slide shows various military medals and a compass rose. At the top is a circular medal with a blue ribbon. Below it is a large, ornate cross-shaped medal with a blue ribbon. At the bottom is a circular compass rose with a needle pointing towards the top right.

QUESTIONS????

Reference list available as a handout