Influence of Military Experience on Nursing Education Leaders
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Introduction
Limited research exists regarding the impact military experience has on nursing education leaders.
Considering the impact transformational leadership has, it is important to identify the characteristics individuals with previous military experience retain.
This research study will seek to determine how military experience influences nursing education leaders.

Research Question
How does previous military experience influence the role of nursing education leaders?

Theoretical Framework
Transformational Leadership Theory:
• Role modeling in a way others emulate.
• High expectations linked with inspirational vision.
• Innovative thinking to solve problems.
• Caring about others.
(Avello, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Arnold & Loughlin, 2013)

Study Design
Case Study Research Design
Inclusion Criteria:
At least four years of previous military experience
Nurse educators
Current employment location for at least three years
English speaking
Minimum degree level of Master of Science
IRB Approval was obtained and all study participants signed an informed consent to participate in the research study.

Sample demographics: Both study participants were from a large state university in central Pennsylvania and had a terminal degree of PhD
• Study participant
  • Female
  • Both participants were in their 50’s
  • Military experience: 5 – 10 years
  • Nursing education experience: 10 – 30 years
  • Current Employment Setting: 5 – 20 years

Data Collection
Data Collection
• Face to face interview with verbatim transcription
• Documents: Curriculum Vitae (CV), Summary evaluations, Course Syllabi
• Classroom observation with detailed observer notes focused on the study participant

Analysis – Propositions
Proposition 2: Nurse educators with previous military experience are leaders in both the classroom and the faculty role.
• Multiple leadership positions in the community, profession, and academia as evidenced by their CVs.
• Examples include institutional committee chair positions, members of community boards of directors, and leadership positions in professional organizations.

Analysis – Propositions
Proposition 4: Nurse educators with previous military experience use innovative thinking to develop student learning opportunities.
• Actively use simulation and have developed learning opportunities for students that are innovative, such as the “mass inoculation” opportunity provided by SP2.
• Conducted research regarding innovative teaching strategies as evidenced by their CVs.
• SP1 discussed how the military “gave us kind of a comfort level to go forward in simulation and see how that connection can move nursing forward as a profession.”

Analysis – Propositions
Proposition 3: Nurse educators with previous military experience role model behaviors that emphasize integrity, respect, and caring towards students.
• During the interview study participants provided examples of these behaviors.
  • SP1 identified the importance of “help(ing) (students) work through…fears and yet still get them to be competent in whatever task or skill it is you are trying to teach them.”
  • SP1 also emphasized the importance of “thank(ing) them for coming to the class because you know while they have paid for it, and they are entitled to it, still … a lot of kids have the option to not come to class.”
• During the classroom observations, both participants took time to speak with the students and answer questions further supporting the proposition of role modeling behaviors.
  • Role modeling was evidenced in the participants CV:
    • Members of professional organizations
    • Awards for excellence in field of practice
    • Publications in professional journals

Analysis – Theory
Previous Military Experience
Transformational Leadership
Nursing Education Leaders
Upon comparing the data collected to the four components of transformational leadership, the premise that previous military experience assisted in the development of transformational leadership was supported. Additionally, the influence transformational leadership imparted on each of the study participants’ roles as nursing education leaders was supported.

Discussion
Findings: The findings support the propositions identified. Each study participant identified with values from their military career that impacted their roles as nursing educators.
Recommendations: Further research is needed to validate the results of this study and the impact military experiences of nursing education leaders have on student learning outcomes.
Conclusion: The data analysis supported links with the propositions, but upon review the data obtained better supported the theoretical framework. Both study participants conveyed the characteristics of transformational leadership in academia, community, and the nursing profession.

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