Identifying the influence of barriers on research as described by non-tenured nurse faculty

DEBORAH WHITTAKER, EdD, MSN, BSN, RN, RNC –MNN
Faculty disclosure

- **Faculty name**: Deborah Whittaker, EdD, MSN, BSN, RN, RNC-MNN
- **Conflicts of interest**: None
- **Employer**: DeSales University, Center Valley PA
- **Sponsorship/Commercial support**: None
Objectives

1. Why research?
   - Identify 2 reasons why nurses should be conducting research and writing for publication

2. Perceived barriers
   - Identify 3 barriers described by non-tenured nurse faculty in the presented case study

3. Personal barriers
   - Identify his/her top 3 personal barriers to conducting research and writing for publication

4. Support resources
   - Create a list of resources needed to support their own writing and research efforts

5. Strategies
   - Develop a minimum of 3 strategies/interventions he/she can use to obtain the previously identified resources to support writing and research efforts

Whittaker 2016

1 May include those they administer to
The research is based on a qualitative case study on the perceived barriers for nursing research and publication.

- Qualitative case study published 2015
- Identified and described what the perceived barriers are and how they influence non-tenured nurse faculty in conducting research and writing for publication in Eastern PA
- Theoretical framework: Bandura (1977) and Benner (1984)
- Time to share new nursing knowledge
Objective 1: Why research and publish?

- Contribute new knowledge that fills a gap in the existing body of research
- Develop a body of evidence-based academic research that will help improve patient outcomes
- Grow personally and professionally, increasing satisfaction and opportunities for promotion
- Contribute to mission/vision of institution
- Meet and exceed expectations from employer, self, peers, profession
Literature review: What we know

- **Who’s publishing**: The existing body of research has identified nurses that are publishing nursing research, including tenured nurses and research institutions.

- **The barriers to publishing**: The research has identified barriers and support for productivity, as well as the professional implications of the nurse faculty shortage.

- **The importance of publishing**: In general, the importance of nursing conducting and publishing research is well understood, as well as contributing additional scholarship.

*Whittaker (2015) identified and described the barriers and their influence on research and publishing of non-tenured nurse faculty, an unstudied population that requires support.*
Objective 2: Perceived barriers

Identified barriers and their interrelationship

- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of experience
- Lack of comfort/insecurity
- Lack of support/mentoring
- Preference for collaboration and teamwork
- Lack of time
- Nursing culture conflict/clinical to academia
- Lack of support/demotivation

Whittaker 2016
Example: Lack of time

- Clinical Practice
- Teaching
- Service
- Student Related
- Personal
- Committees
- Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Example: Lack of support

- Structured time (e.g., work release, ‘a day a week to write’)
- Mentoring
- Financial Resources
- Institutional Value
- Access
Example: Lack of support

- “I think this is a very important topic to study and I am hopeful that your results will impact positive change in the future. If I had a personal mentor or was invited to be part of a research team I would find it very rewarding. Even staff nurses in my community participate in research - yet I have never been given that opportunity. It seems that I will have to either do it myself or not do it at all…”

- “I think it is important for faculty to maintain development and to publish but since the salaries are frequently lower than in clinical service; time and money greatly impact the ability to do these things. Support must be given in the academic setting just like it is or more so than the clinical setting…”

- Study participant responses (Whittaker, 2015)
Example: Nursing culture conflict/clinical to academia

- There is a culture conflict for nurses between the clinical role and the academic role
  - Publication requirements vary by role – typical clinical roles may not require publication
  - Academic nurses who are not affiliated with clinical sites may find it more difficult to receive access to clinical sites and IRB approval, prerequisites to conduct clinical research
  - Academic nurses have an expectation to conduct research, which may not be part of the role in a clinical setting

Whittaker 2016
Barriers had a negative influence on the ability to conduct research and write for publication.

- These barriers adversely impacted:
  - Personal and professional development
  - Ability to get tenure
  - Job opportunities
  - Making a difference in their field
  - Adding to current body of knowledge

Whittaker 2016
These barriers not only limit publication, but also personally impact non-tenured nurse faculty.

“The impact of these barriers is that I am not professionally developing as faculty in other departments of the university are. So I am therefore deemed inadequate. Also that I will not be able to obtain tenure and will need to either find an alternative way to stay at the university or find another job. Additionally, if I were to apply for a position at another university I would be lacking in this area and this may hinder my ability to be hired. Lastly, I am not making a difference in my field because I am not adding to the body of knowledge.”

- Study participant response (Whittaker, 2015)
The research identified the following personal feelings:

- Inadequacy
- Frustration
- Anxiety
- Stagnation
- Pressure to Publish
- Needing Time and Support; A Lack of Support...Demotivation
Objective 3: Personal barriers

- Take a moment, reflect, and identify your top 3 personal barriers that hinder you from conducting research and/or writing for publication
Objective 4: Support resources

- This population studied (and perhaps other nursing professionals) requires additional support to increase their knowledge, experience, comfort level, motivation, and ability to conduct research and write for publication.

- Support includes time, resources, finances, experienced mentors, access to sites, population, or documents needed to conduct their research.

- Support may decrease anxiety, fear, and provide the needed skills and encouragement.
Objective 4: Support resources

- Given your identified barriers (Objective 3), now take some time to list 3 or more resources that you need to support your research/writing efforts.
Objective 5: Strategies

The following are a list of strategies that can help secure support for nursing research and publication:

- Developing mentorship opportunities
  - Creating formal mentorship programs with regular touchpoints
  - Enabling broader informal mentorship opportunities with academic leaders and research professionals

- Obtaining institutional support
  - Securing finances to conduct research in clinical environments
  - Creating a culture that supports personal research goals

- Increasing skills and confidence
  - Taking a research class to refresh skills
  - Attending professional research workshops
  - Finding a ‘writing team’ and coach

Whittaker 2016
Example: Conducting an institutional assessment

- An institutional assessment can be completed with discussions at both the institutional and departmental level.
  - **Institutional discussions**
    - Vision and mission
    - Priorities
    - Structured support
  - **Departmental discussions**
    - Departmental support (e.g., mentoring, collaboration, workshops)
    - Workload
    - Scholarship
For discussion: Your strategies

- What are 3 strategies or interventions that you can use to obtain the resources that you have now identified to support your research/writing efforts?
Actively identifying and removing barriers to nursing publication will help support two key nursing priorities:

- **Increase the number of nurses who inquire, research, write and disseminate**
  - AACN (2006) priorities for research
  - Add to evidence-based practice
  - Meet personal and professional goals
  - Job opportunities, promotions, rank, tenure
  - Increase job satisfaction, recruitment and retention
- **Support a new blended nursing culture**

Goals should include discussions regarding improvements in undergraduate and graduate research education.
Let’s get started

- Need for all nurses to identify and understand their institutions priorities and values regarding research and publication
  - May contrast with own desires and professional goals
  - Mismatched priorities may result in decreased job satisfaction and inability to meet personal and professional goals
- Need for institutions and nurses to review their current roles and expectations, workload issues...and find a way to support, encourage and recognize all forms of scholarship
- Need for change...we can do this and do it well... find your passion
“One of the ‘goods’ that can come out, one of the things that we're talking about, together, where we are, is looking at our professional development and saying how can we do this differently, and here's the thing where I get up on the podium, but we CAN do it differently, we CAN, we CAN do it differently, and we CAN do it better, we CAN!... we can do this, and our researcher is going to write the discussion part so everyone in the world can see that.”

- Study participant response (Whittaker, 2015)
References


- Whittaker, D.L. (July 2015), "Perceived Barriers Influencing the Conduct of Research and Writing for Publication by Non-Tenured Nurse Faculty in Academia". ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.