

Exploring Work-Family Balance of Deans of Nursing: A Phenomenological Study

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FACULTY DISCLOSURE

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Conflicts of Interest:	None
Employer:	Northern Kentucky University
Sponsorship/Commercial Support:	None

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Conflicts of Interest:	None
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Sponsorship/Commercial Support:	None

Goals and Objectives

- **Session Goal**: Present qualitative research methods and findings from a study of the lived experiences and shared practices of nursing deans related to work-family balance
- **Session Objectives**:
 1. Describe the qualitative research methodology used to explore the lived experiences and shared practices of female nursing deans related to work-family balance.
 2. Examine results of a qualitative research study that explored the lived experiences and shared practices of female nursing deans related to work-family balance.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

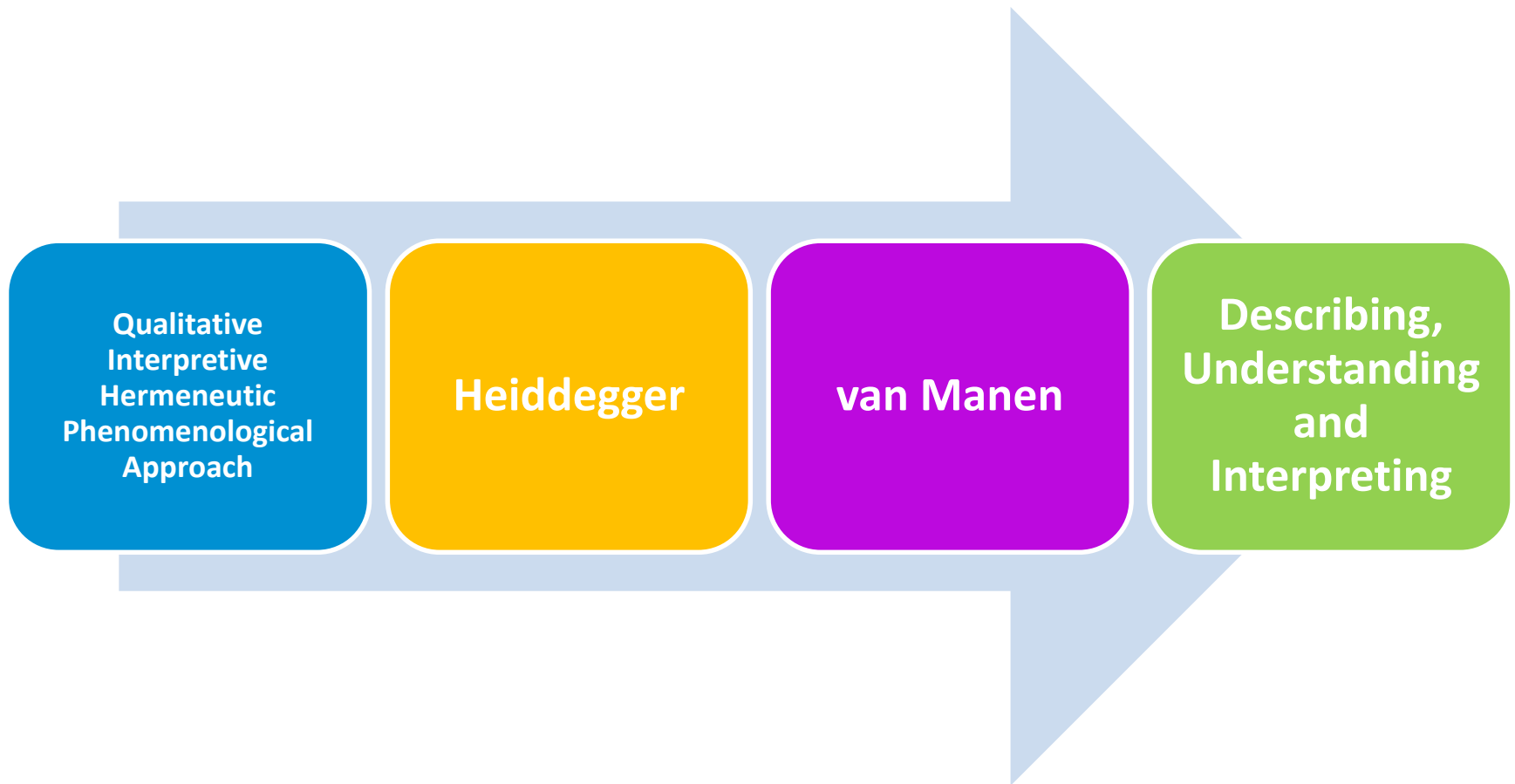
The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences and shared practices of female nursing deans as it relates to work-family balance.



RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the meaning of the lived experience of deans of nursing as it relates to work-family balance?

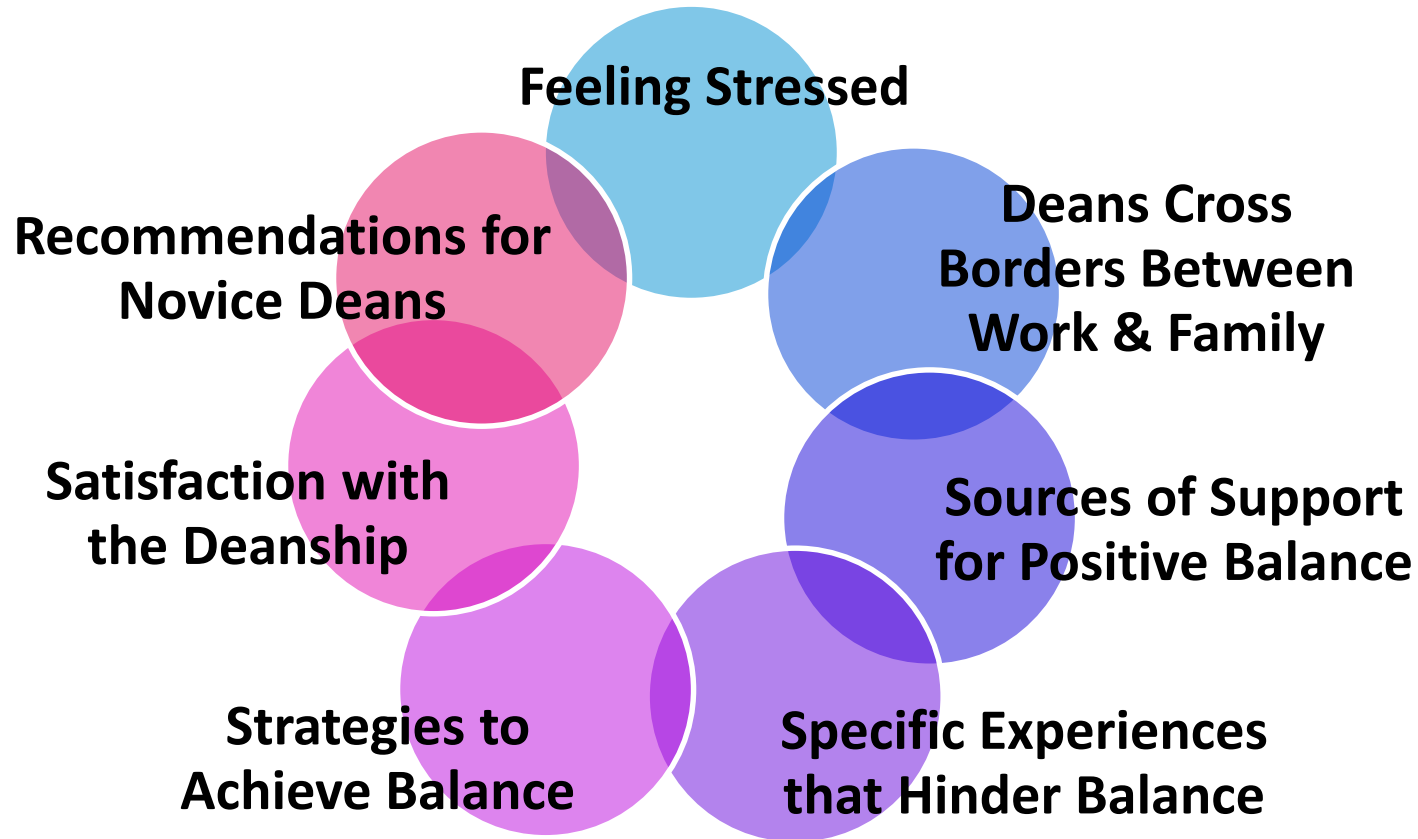
DESIGN OF THE STUDY



PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

- 12 Deans
- Midwestern States
- Age: 81% 50 years or older 54% 60 years or older
- Years in Position: 1.5 to 22 years; 50% in position 5 years or more
- Marital Status:
9 married, 0 single,
1 divorced, 2 widowed
- Children: 2 no children, 10 had children
- Care Responsibilities:
2 participants were caring for loved ones

STUDY FINDINGS: 7 MAIN THEMES



THEME: FEELING STRESSED

- 100 % of the deans
- Factors associated with stress:
- Years of Experience
- Workload
- Hierarchical position
- Time pressure
- Fluctuations in busyness

Dr. L stated, “It is kind of like learning how to drive. If you take your eyes off the road – when your first learning how to drive you just think you’re going to end up in a ditch. And I just feel so responsible of course to everyone, students and faculty and staff alike. And so right now I’m kind of really gripping the wheel pretty tight.”

THEME: FEELING STRESSED

- “Like a marshmallow peanut butter sandwich, you know, those fluff sandwiches, the kids make, and you are kind of you are squooshed,... the faculty are kind of pushing you from the bottom up. You know, they are kind of pushing, and that is okay, and then the administration is kind of pushing from the top.”



THEME: DEANS CROSS BORDERS

- Moving back and forth
- Permeability
- Conscious Choices

“my grandkids are involved with basketball and sometimes I just say the heck with the rest of the place, I’m just going to go to the basketball game and have fun.”

- Technological Devices

THEME: SUPPORT & HINDRANCES

Sources of Support

- Supportive and Understanding Spouse
- Family Support
- Administrative Assistant Support
- Faculty Support
- Mentors
- Spirituality

Hindrances

- Nonfunctioning Faculty Team
- Student Issues
- Caring for Family Members

THEME: STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE BALANCE

- **Prioritizing tasks:**

“When you set a time that you are going to work on something and you set a priority regarding what you are going to work on, you have to have the discipline to stick to it.”

- **Turning Things Off:**

“you have to give yourself the ability to turn off work”

THEME: SATISFACTION

- “I am very blessed, and so for me it is not a big deal to take some work home at night, and you know, read some articles or grade papers or answer my student calls, because I love doing that.”
- “I can say that I, Dr. S. initiated and started the first BSN program at Shasta University (pseudo name). And to me satisfaction-wise, that’s a big chunk in my career as I go to look back on things and I think we’ll feel it more so. So I think from that piece that professional aspect, internal satisfaction that’s been a big plus for me.”

THEME: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NOVICE DEANS ¹⁵

DEANS

- Take time for yourself and family
- Find a mentor
- Prioritize tasks



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- The deanship is stressful
- Workload is perceived as heavy
- Stressfulness depended on years in the position
- Deans shape and transform boundaries
- Despite the stressfulness of the position, satisfaction with the position was expressed
- More research is needed to learn more about the nursing deanship
- Usefulness: to mentor novice deans & improve work environments

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