



Work-Life Balance of Doctoral Nursing Program Faculty and Implications for Nursing Education

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Conflicts of Interest and Disclosures:

The presenter, Suzanne Smeltzer, has no any real or perceived vested interests that relate to this presentation.



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Objectives:

At the completion of presentation conference participants will be able to

- **Describe issues associated with work-life balance among doctoral program faculty.**
- **Summarize the qualitative and quantitative findings on work-life of study participants.**



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***Impact of Teaching Demands on Doctoral Program Nursing
Faculty Members' Scholarship and Productivity and
Work-Life Balance***

Context of Project

- **Project was 1 of 5 in 3rd cycle/cohort of RWJF's Evaluating Innovation in Nursing (EIN) Education Program**
- **RWJF's EIN Program focused on research to address nursing shortage and nursing faculty shortage identified in IOM report.**
- **All five 3rd cycle / cohort projects addressed doctoral nursing education and the production of nurse faculty**

Background Of Overall Project

**Calls for increased number of BSN graduates and nurses
with doctorates**



**Calls for nurse researchers to contribute to the scientific base of
nursing and to the health of the nation.**



**Proliferation of doctoral programs with increased workloads of all
faculty including doctoral program faculty**



**Competing demands on doctoral program faculty and less time for
research and scholarship**

Background...

Increased competing demands on doctoral program nursing faculty:

- **Often the most seasoned faculty in schools of nursing** (have significant teaching, research, professional and institutional expectations)



- **Faced with heavier work loads with research, teaching, mentoring, and service responsibilities**



- **Expected to prepare the next generation of faculty and researchers to address the shortage of nurses and faculty**

Background...

Increased competing demands on doctoral program nursing faculty:



- **Face diminishing numbers with approaching retirements of large number of faculty members**

Prior studies of doctoral nursing program faculty several years old and did not examine faculty roles and work-life balance

Recent Growth in PhD and DNP Programs

	Numbers at Baseline Years	Numbers in 2013 / 2014	% Average Annual Increase	% Total Increase
PhD Programs	103 (2006)	133 (2014)	3.64%	29.13%
DNP Programs	20 (2006)	225 (2014)	128.12%	1,025%
PhD Students Enrolled	3,439 (2004)	5,124 (2013)	5.44%	49.00%
DNP Students Enrolled	70 (2002)	14,699 (2013)	1,899.9%	20,898.6%
PhD Graduates	412 (2002)	626 (2013)	4.72%	51.94%
DNP Graduates	0 (2002)	2,443 (2013)	∞	∞

More recent Growth in PhD and DNP Programs

	Numbers at Baseline Years	Numbers in 2015 / 2016	% Total Increase
PhD Programs	103 (2006)	134 (2015)	30.1%
DNP Programs	20 (2006)	289 (2015)	1,345%
PhD Students Enrolled	3,439 (2004)	5,035 (2015)	46.4%
DNP Students Enrolled	70 (2002)	21,995 (2015)	31,321.4%
PhD Graduates	412 (2002)	709 (2015)	72.1%
DNP Graduates	0 (2002)	4,100 (2015)	∞

Work-life Balance of Doctoral Nursing Program Faculty

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Work-Life Balance of Doctoral Program Faculty

Purposes of the study:

- ❖ To build on the researchers' previous focus group study of doctoral program faculty.
- ❖ To examine work-life balance among faculty teaching in doctoral nursing programs.
- ❖ To identify factors that predict work-life balance among doctoral program faculty.

Background of Study on Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is considered a potentially modifiable factor, among many non-modifiable factors, that has an impact on job satisfaction and the faculty nursing shortage.

Focus group study of PhD- and DNP-program faculty at CANS and DNP Organization conferences, respectively, conducted to aid in developing study's on-line survey...

Background...Work-Life Balance

Previous focus group study of PhD and DNP-program faculty identified 3 themes:

- ❖ **Increasing demands on doctoral program faculty and accelerating pace of academic life**
- ❖ **Growing expectations of doctoral program faculty**
- ❖ **Need to sustain themselves, their institutions, and the nursing discipline**

Background....Work-Life Balance

- ❖ **Heavy time commitment and demands imposed by doctoral program faculty position and high expectations for research and scholarship.**
- ❖ **Long working hours, weekends, and beyond the months of their academic contract with encroachment of their academic role on personal and family time.**
- ❖ **Both PhD and DNP program faculty questioned their ability to sustain the current level and pace and their commitment while sacrificing time for personal and family-related activities.**

Background....Work-Life Balance

Retirements of faculty, pressures to enroll and graduate more PhDs and DNPs for faculty positions, and expectations for teaching, research, and service, need to mentor new faculty, and contribute to nursing science



Possible negative effect on work-life balance, job satisfaction and willingness to remain in faculty position



Possible departure of faculty and worsening of faculty shortage and of work-life balance of faculty who remain

Definition

Work-life balance:

- ❖ **Equilibrium between one's paid / professional work and one's personal life.**
- ❖ **Ability to achieve and maintain “balance” between one's paid work and life outside work, whatever “life” is for the individual.**
- ❖ **Identified as element of a healthy work environment for nursing faculty (NLN, 2005).**

Inclusion Criteria

- **Full-time faculty member teaching in PhD or DNP programs**
- **Teach in either PhD or DNP programs or both \geq 2 years**
- **Identified and verified by doctoral program directors**
- **Indicated consent to complete the online survey.**

Amazon gift certificates offered at completion

Procedures

- **Following IRB approval, random sample of 2011 PhD and DNP programs was drawn with proportional stratification by type of program and geographic distribution.**
- **Doctoral program directors contacted and asked for names of faculty teaching in PhD or DNP program.**
- **Faculty teaching in PhD or DNP program were contacted and invited to complete the online survey.**
- **Dillman's Tailored Design Method for Internet Surveys guided procedures; up to 4 reminders sent.**

On-line Instrument

Survey, based in part on results of 2 focus groups and an extensive review of literature, included 73 items:

- Demographics**
- Commitments of time to facets of faculty role**
- Components of doctoral faculty role**
- Productivity scale (Warner & Karni (1999))**
- Work/life balance scale (Hayman, 2005)**

The average item-level CVI was used to calculate the overall scale CVI of .86.

The survey was piloted with 10 nursing faculty, resulting in no changes to the survey.

Instrument

73-item included a 15-item Work-Life Balance Assessment Scale (Hayman, 2005) with 3 subscales.

Respondents indicated frequency of behaviors related to WLB in past 3 months using 7-point time-related scale:

(1 = not at all, 4 = sometimes, 7 = all the time)

Lower scores = better work-life balance

Reliability of Work-Life Balance Assessment Scale: $\alpha = .885$

Analyses

Data were downloaded to SPSS v. 22

Analyses included

- **Descriptive statistics**
- **Chi square**
- **Correlations**
- **ANOVA**
- **Hierarchical regression**

Sample

1,197 doctoral program faculty invited to participate
554 (46.3%) completed the entire survey (representing
100 PhD programs, and 124 DNP programs)

Type of doctoral program teaching

147 (26.8%) teach in PhD program
210 (38.3%) teach in DNP program
191 (34.8%) teach in both PhD and DNP programs

Age

$\leq 40 = 7.4\%$
41-50 = 14.4%
51-60 = 44.4%
 $> 60 = 33.8\%$

Sample (continued)

Educational Preparation

PhD = 77.8%

DNP = 11.2%

EdD = 3.2%

Other or multiple = 7.8%

Academic Rank

Instructor = 1.1%

Assistant Professor = 36.3%

Associate Professor = 33.8%

Full Professor = 28.9%

Sample (Continued)

Tenure Status

Tenured = 49.1%

Tenure track = 31.6%

Non-tenure/clinical track = 19.3%

Results

Work-life balance scores

	M \pm SD	Range
Total sample:	3.53 \pm .97	1.00 – 6.60

Scores differed significantly by

- **Age** (faculty age < 40 yrs had poorer WLB than other age groups)
- **Faculty rank** (full professors had better WLB than other ranks)
- **Tenure status** (non-tenured faculty had poorer WLB than tenured, clinical track and nonTT faculty)
- **Clinical practice involvement** (faculty not engaged in clinical practice had better WLB than those in clinical practice)

Results (continued)

WLB scores did not differ significantly by

- **Type of doctoral program faculty**
- **Type of academic institution**
- **Intent to leave academe in next year**

WLB scores were not correlated with research and scholarship productivity.

Nine program/faculty characteristics and eight implications/strategies were correlated with WLB scores; entered into a hierarchical regression in 2 steps to identify best predictors of WLB.

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Predictors of Work-Life Balance

CHARACTERISTICS	B	SE	BETA
Current faculty position	-.106	.035	-.090*
Average # of hrs/week spent on teaching activities	-.010	.017	-.018
Availability of research / teaching assistant	-.013	.057	-.007
MSN program option in school of nursing	-.112	.105	-.032
STRATEGIES / IMPLICATIONS	B	SE	BETA
Routinely sacrifice weekend, down time, etc. to fulfill doctoral faculty role	.173	.033	.175**
Having family responsibilities is incompatible with being doctoral program faculty member	.124	.031	.135
Feeling that time focused on doctoral students is exhausting	.098	.033	.101*
Workload is detrimental to health and wellbeing	.386	.030	.466**
Experience fulfillment, love what I do, knowing my students and in their producing quality work	-.209	.041	-.152**

** $p < .01$; ** $p < .001$

Results on Work-Life Balance

Best predictors of work life balance:

- Routinely sacrifice weekend / down time to fulfill doctoral faculty role
- Feeling that time focused on doctoral students is exhausting
- Workload is viewed as detrimental to health and wellbeing
- Experience fulfillment, I love what I do, know my students and am rewarded by students producing quality work

Summary of Major Findings on Work-Life Balance

Participants reported better work-life balance than expected, given results of previous focus group study.

Factors associated with good work-life balance included

- **higher academic rank**
- **having tenure**
- **older age**
- **years in education**
- **current faculty position**
- **no involvement in clinical practice**

Discussion of Results

Summary, Conclusions and Implications

Current Status of Nursing Faculty in US

Seasoned faculty who have successfully carried out research, teaching, service and professional roles are retiring in increasing numbers.

Pipeline is inadequate to replace retiring faculty and to meet growing need for faculty to address nursing shortage and faculty shortage.

Research, scholarship and teaching missions of schools of nursing are in jeopardy with retirements without replacements and departure of those dissatisfied with current work-life balance.

Current Status of Nursing Faculty...

Growth in number of DNP programs, enrolled students and graduates dwarfs that of PhD programs.

DNP graduates are assuming faculty positions in greater numbers than PhD graduates.

DNP programs prepare graduates for practice positions and not faculty positions, which may have an effect on work-life balance of faculty teaching in DNP programs.

Conclusions

Work-life balance was better than expected. It appears that although doctoral program faculty described being overworked, they love what they do, which contributes to positive work-life balance.

Strategies are needed to ensure continued research and scholarship and positive work-life balance among the next generation of faculty members.

Doctoral program faculty are highly productive; at the same time, they identify barriers to scholarly productivity and work-life balance.

Conclusions

More new DNP graduates than PhD graduates assumed faculty roles in 2015 → efforts needed to ensure that faculty teaching in DNP programs have preparation and supports needed to be successful and to have positive work-life balance.

Although work-life balance of the current sample of faculty was better than expected, as members of the next generation become faculty members, work-life balance may become more of an issue (may value work-life balance more than current group of doctoral program faculty).

Recommendations

Doctoral Programs: Include curricular components in PhD and DNP programs to ensure that graduates are prepared for academic roles to meet the anticipated needs for doctoral program faculty with the fast-approaching retirement of large numbers of senior nursing faculty, with implications for work-life balance.

DNP Programs: Offer coursework / experiences to prepare students for academic positions as an optional track or certificate program; include content and experience to support scholarship and strategies to ensure positive work-life balance.

Recommendations...

Deans and Program Directors: Engage in thoughtful discussion about how they will deploy PhD and DNP faculty, and what programs of support and faculty development they will provide to ensure retention and advancement of tenure track and non-tenure track faculty, including positive work-life balance.

Conclusions

Many senior faculty members who successfully manage competing demands of faculty are approaching retirement; thus, strategies are needed to ensure positive work-life balance and continued research and scholarship among the next generation of faculty members.

More new DNP graduates than PhD graduates assumed faculty roles in 2015; therefore, efforts are needed to ensure that faculty teaching in DNP programs have supports needed to be successful and to have positive work-life balance.

Conclusions...

Although work-life balance of the current sample of faculty was better than expected, as members of the millennial generation and those that follow become faculty members, work-life balance may become more of an issue.





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