A systems orientation to research capacity development: A South African perspective

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Introduction and background

- Capacity development is an investment in human capital
- Need for research capacity development in nursing education
  - Under supply of research
- Criteria:
  - Application criteria and process
  - Group work 9-12 months
  - Conference presentation
  - Publication
- Research supervision and oversight
Problem statement

1. Programme first implemented in 2010
2. Seventh programme running during 2017
3. No formal evaluation of the programme conducted previously
Purpose

• To understand the contribution and sustainability of the programme it has become necessary to assess the outcomes of the program

• To improve the program and assess the value and net impacts (outcome evaluation) of the programme
How does the novice researcher programme contribute to research capacity development in South Africa?
Key concepts

• *Novice Researcher Programme* – planned series of workshops to execute a small research project under supervision of expert researchers

• *Novice Researcher* - nurse educators with less than eight years’ experience without a Masters’ degree

• *Research capacity development* - improvement of abilities of individuals to conduct research and disseminate quality reports
Research methodology

Case study
* Single case
* Exploratory design
* Embedded units (6 programs)

Data collection
* Annual reports
* Conference presentations
* Reflection workshops (mind maps, reflective essays)

Data analysis
* Case analysis
* Literature on capacity development
* Cooke’s integrated framework
Cooke’s Integrated Framework
Trustworthiness

• Dense description drawn from case
• Credibility – prolonged engagement over six years
• Confirmability – audit trail of individual sub units
Ethical considerations

- Permission from Research Ethics Committees: custodian organisation and university
- Permission from program participants and organizations
- Anonymity and confidentiality
  - names of organisation, chapters and participants not mentioned
  - No personal data included
Findings
Cooke’s Integrated Framework

Eight dimensions of the structural context of Cooke’s integrated framework

- National Research
- Network and Support
- Health Services
- Teams
- Individuals
- Research applicability
- Continuity and sustainability
- Linkages, partnerships, and collaborations
- Dissemination and knowledge translation
- Empowerment
- Leadership
Skills and confidence

• Engagement of participants in research activities of the programme
• Presentations skills at national and international conferences
• Scientific writing skills
• 26 of 28 participants entered post graduate programs
Research applicability

- Employer permission
- Results taken back to workplace
- Postgraduate enrolments and presentations at conferences
- Custodian supportive of topics selected
- Research ethics committee approval
- Qualitative and quantitative exposure
- Funding support
Linkages, partnerships and collaborations

- Custodian of project
- Academics facilitate program
- Support from NEIs and hospitals
Dissemination and knowledge translation

- Results disseminated
- Useful relevant and informative to practice
  - Oral presentations
  - Posters
- Articles written
- Knowledge translation – guiding own students
- Implementation of peer support strategies (2015)
Continuity and sustainability

- Initiated with full funding at national level
- Devolved to provincial level
  - Funding
  - Access to larger numbers
  - Ethics approval
- Shadowing of project facilitators
- Funding remains a threat
Infrastructure

Facility and human resources

Dedicated and motivated supervisors

Continue to explore funding opportunities
Leadership

• Value of servant leadership approach
• Volunteer expert researcher lead project
• Employers allow time to attend
• Custodian remains committed
Empowerment

- Novices have control over their research topic
- Work in groups taking ownership of project
- Take turns in leading tasks
- Universities facilitate ethics clearance
Discussion
Measuring success

Criteria:

• Presentation and publication rate
• Change in organisational culture
• Positive impact on community
• Entrance into Masters degrees
• Selection of topics adding value
Challenges

• Sustainability remains a challenge
• Lack of time
• Agreement on a topic for research
• Funding of page fees
Recommendations
• Selection important
• Icebreaker
• Further research to explore research career of participants
• NEI support to implement
• Involve more universities
• Sustainability through mentorship
• Dedicated person to drive programme
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• Stewart, R. 2015. Theory of change for capacity building for the use of research evidence by decision makers in southern Africa. *Evidence & Policy* • vol 11 • no 4 • 547–57 • © Policy Press 2015 • #EVPOL