

Experience of Foreign-Educated Physicians Transition to Family Nurse Practitioner Role in the United States

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United States University

- Located in San Diego, California
- Diverse Student Population
- Small Size, 15-18 Student Cohorts
- Entry Level Masters
- FNP Board Eligible



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Background and Significance

- ❑ Shortage of PCP from 25k to 45k by 2020.
- ❑ NPs provide 80% primary care services.
- ❑ Several studies on NPs performance on quality measures are comparable with MDs.
- ❑ FEPs have medical knowledge and clinical skills to transition to new role as NPs

Challenges for Foreign Educated Physicians

- ❖ Adapting to a New Culture, Workplace Values & Family Support.
- ❖ Report discrimination, poor treatment within the medical hierarchy, difficulty with communication related to languages differences, and misinterpreted verbal cues from patients and peers.

Foreign Educated Physician Programs

- ❖ Florida International University (2004) - BSN
- ❖ University of Nevada (2006), FNP
- ❖ United States University (2008), FNP

Methods

- ✓ Non-experiential, descriptive, quantitative and qualitative approach
- ✓ Grounded theory to explore the facilitators and barriers experienced by FEP in the transition from medical provider to advanced practice nurse provider

Research Questions

1. What are the characteristics of foreign-educated physicians who graduated from a family nurse practitioner program in the United States
2. What are the facilitators and barriers that promote or impede foreign-educated physicians' success as family nurse practitioner students and health care practitioners?

Focus Group Questions

- ❑ Tell us about your experience as a student in the FNP program?
- ❑ What would you recommend to enhance the experience of future FNP students?
- ❑ Tell us how your medical education and training helped or hindered your transition to the FNP role?
- ❑ Tell us about changes you would recommend to improve the FNP curriculum?
- ❑ What were the barriers you have encountered as a new family nurse practitioner?

Quantitative Results

Table 1. Sample Characteristics (N=38)

Variables			
Age (Years)	Number (%)	Marital Status	Number (%)
30-40	6 (16.6)	Single	3 (8.3)
41-50	15 (41.7)	Married/Domestic Partner	32 (88.9)
51-60	14 (38.9)	Divorced	1 (2.8)
61-70	1 (2.8)	Years in the U.S.	
Gender		6-10	7 (19.4)
Male	23 (63.9)	11-15	16 (44.5)
Female	13 (36.1)	16-20	7 (19.4)
		21-25	4 (11.1)
		26 or more	2 (5.6)

Focus Group Questions

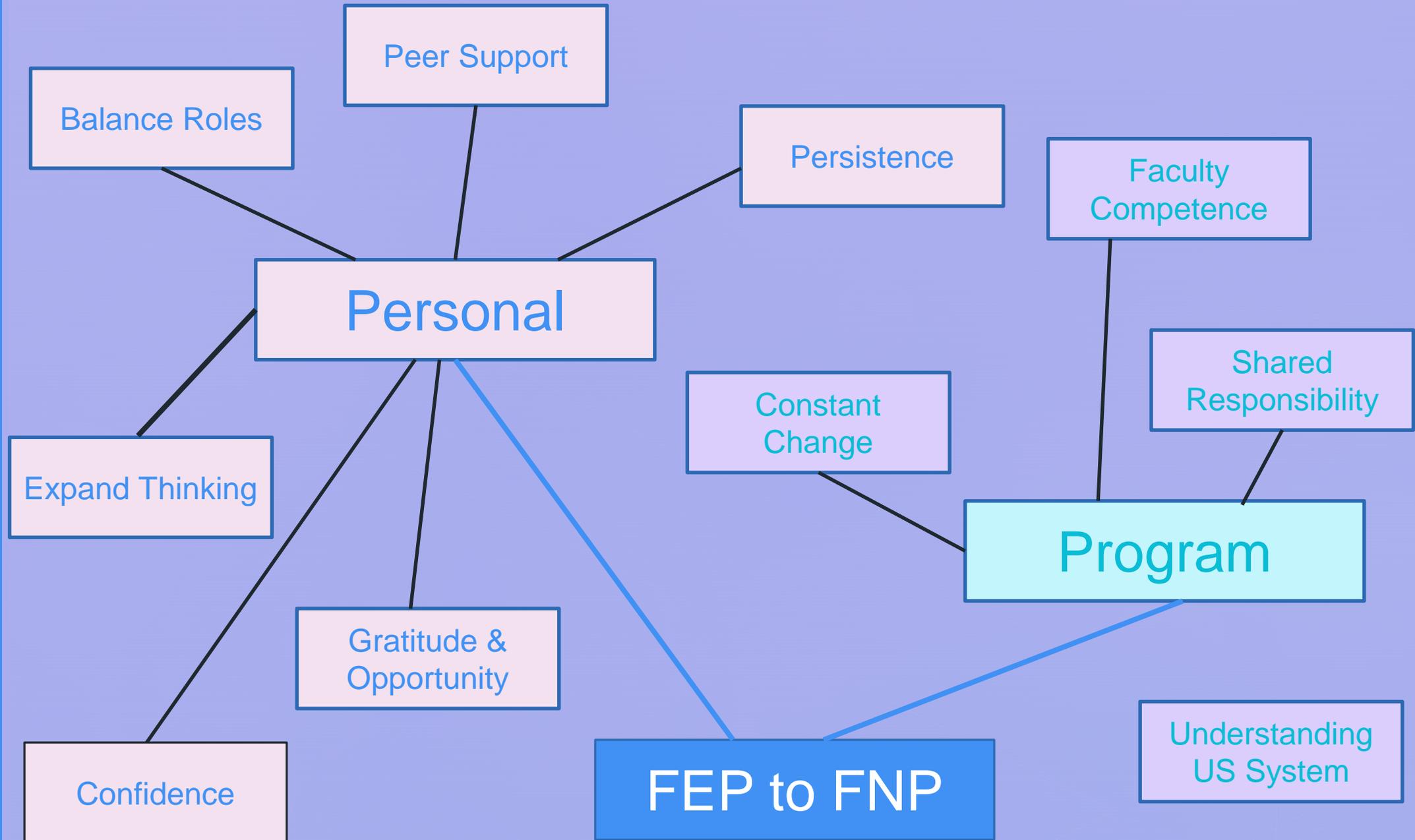
Countries of Origin	
Mexico	45.8%
Philippines	37.5%
China	4.17%
Iraq	4.17%
Pakistan	4.17%
Russia	4.17%
Practiced as Physicians <7 Years	
Yes	52.8%

- Eleven of the 38 (28.9%) agreed and participated in the focus group.

Qualitative Results

Themes

- **Personal** – were the personal attributes that influenced the participants being successful in the FNP program and in FNP practice.
- **Program** – were the program qualities that influenced the participants being successful with the FNP program.



Balancing Roles

I think going to school here in the U.S. in this program is harder than medical school...we were all immigrants from different backgrounds, different countries, and going here we cannot just stop working, we had to work at the same time we're going to school. In medical school we could concentrate on school, we would just go to school and study and study.

Personal

Peer support

I would call one of my peers and say 'I can't go on like this, I am tired' and she would say keep going, you can do it. It's ok just hang in there. I would call another peer...she would say you are not quitting.

Personal

Persistence

I think we have the same personality. We never give up for anything. We are doctors in our countries and then every time we have a hard problem, we continue because we focus on your goal.

Expand Thinking

From the perspective that I got in medical school was...straight forward learning while nursing expanded my thinking, so we have a very unique perspective. I think it opened up our world.

Personal

Confidence

When you are in medical school it is extremely competitive...so you have to strive, I think that personally moves you forward...you already have a degree you already knew you could do it. You knew you had the smarts, because you finished it [medical school].

Personal

Gratitude and Opportunity

When I first came here [U.S.] the options offered to foreign medical physicians was a certified medical assistant, so when we heard about the college offering a pathway to become a nurse practitioner - it was awesome. The FNP certification was a big opportunity given to us.

Program

Constant Change

In the beginning [sic] it was a constant, a different thing. The consistency wasn't there for students and we needed consistency.

Being in the first cohort...I think we were the victims of change. At that time staff kept changing and the program underwent several changes.

Program

Faculty Competencies

I think a good idea that before you hire [clinical faculty] to check for background and everything, their passion and love for medicine.

Look for professional...nurse practitioners who can bring the reality to the classroom...because she [sic] is still working and can bring the reality to the classroom.

Program

Understanding the US Educational System

I always think back on how difficult it was coming from a foreign educational system to the American educational system. I didn't know anything about the loans, financial aid that was all so difficult to understand the concept, how everything worked.

Program

Shared Responsibility

Because we are with this school, we are the representatives of the school...we are the school. It's the people inside school who are the school, it's not really the physical layout of the place--it is us.

For future students maybe we can get them into our clinical practices...each and every one of us take a student...

Limitations

- ❖ Small Size, For-Profit University, located in Southern California
- ❖ Small Size for Quantitative data
- ❖ Single Measure/Lack Longitudinal Data Points

Implications

- ❖ FEP-FNPs have a vital role in providing access for culturally diverse populations.
- ❖ Bridge their extensive medical knowledge and experience with FNP role.
- ❖ They will contribute to reducing the PCP shortage.
- ❖ FNP programs would benefit on focusing on educating FEP to promote capacity and a diverse workforce.

Research

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