Lived Experience of US Faculty Teaching Online Korean Nursing Students

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Background: As global barriers are shrinking, the world has seen an increase in the immigration of foreign nurses to the U.S., as they seek expanded professional opportunities and an improved lifestyle for themselves and their families. Campbell (2009) noted that with the increasing diversity of the U.S. population, there is a corresponding need to employ a diverse nursing workforce to complement the population.

Purpose: This study explores the lived experience of U.S. faculty teaching Korean nursing students in an online RN-BSN program. Search of the literature revealed a paucity of evidence related to the faculty experience in teaching foreign nursing students in an online environment. A few studies focused on educating foreign students on a U.S. campus, but none focused on online nursing students (Ahn, Kim, Cho, Kim, Kang, Nam, & Sohn, 2015). Some literature identified perceptions of faculty teaching Chinese, Japanese, and Korean students in traditional U.S. classroom settings in relation to cultural and language barriers (Roy, 2013; Jung, Nam, & Han, 2015; Otto, 2016). Campbell (2009) provided the only relevant discussion, with a description of the experience of faculty teaching South Korean nursing students on one U.S. campus. Campbell also cited an increase in development of nursing courses structured for specific cultural cohorts of students, designed to enculturate nurses to role expectations of a nurse in the U.S.

The U.S. university developed a registered nurse education model that includes offering an online RN-BSN completion program for South Korean registered nurses. In this model, U.S. faculty travel to Seoul, South Korea during the first course of the RN-BSN program, offering a two-day, face-to-face orientation to the university, the program, and the online learning management system. The remainder of the BSN coursework is offered fully online. From 2015 to 2017, over 100 nurses have participated in this program, with over 30 faculty involved in their education.

In development and execution of the program, some barriers were anticipated, while others surfaced during program implementation. Online instruction in general has not been widely implemented in Korea, and there is a sense of unease and discomfort with this delivery method, much as occurred in the U.S. when distance learning was first initiated. Limited research is available on the use of the Internet in Korean nursing programs, though the use of blended learning and flipped classrooms has been identified (Choi, Kim, Bank, Park, Lee, & Kim, 2015; Park, 2017).

Methods: This qualitative, phenomenological study was designed to examine the lived experiences of the faculty teaching in this program. A survey instrument, developed by the researchers, includes open-ended questions about faculty perceptions in teaching online Korean nursing students. The use of follow-up interviews with select participants supports validity and data checking.

Results: Data collection and analysis continue, but early results have indicated an overwhelmingly positive response to the experience, with one faculty member stating, "This has been my best experience at the university!"

Conclusions: Findings of this study have multinational implications to other populations of nurses who are closing the global divide. This educational model may be replicated and strengthened based on the research findings of this study.

Title:
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Keywords:
Faculty Experience, International Nursing Students and Online instruction

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Abstract Summary:
This qualitative, phenomenological study examines the lived experiences of U.S. faculty teaching online Korean RN-BSN students. Research includes a survey instrument with open-ended questions about faculty perceptions in teaching these students, and follow-up interviews for data validity. Findings of this study have multinational implications for nursing education.

Content Outline:
I. Introduction

   A. Global migration of nurses has grown exponentially.

   B. Broadened educational opportunities are needed to support global migration of nurses.

   C. Educational opportunities for nurses desiring to work in the U.S. are limited to U.S.

      campus-based programs.

II. Body

   A. A U.S. university developed a model for offering South Korean nurses an online RN-BSN program

      1. Korean nurses want to migrate to the U.S. and the BSN degree helps them to attain employment in the U.S.

      2. Courses in the online BSN program help to socialize the Korean nurses to health care systems, cultural expectations, and theoretical foundations.

   B. The RN-BSN completion program is offered online, with local support to complete courses

      1. Online learning is rare in Korea, and barriers must be overcome.

      2. Socialization to the online environment occurs through some face-to-face instruction, as U.S. faculty travel to Korea for program orientation.

   C. Faculty teaching in the U.S. BSN program have unique experiences with this population of students.

      1. Communication methods have to be altered to meet the needs of Korean nursing students.

         a. The program is offered in English.

         b. Students struggle to understand abstract concepts.

         c. Scholarly writing in English is challenging to students.

         d. The concept of plagiarism related to scholarly citations is difficult to explain to students.

         e. Faculty are required to tailor their announcements, emails, and feedback to be explicit and clear to students.

      2. Cultural aspects need to be considered by faculty

         a. Korean students often work more hours than U.S.students, and take more time to complete coursework. Faculty have to adjust expectations, while reinforcing the U.S. standard of timeliness.

b. Faculty have found that Korean students need more frequent contact with the teach than U.S. students

        c. Faculty have discovered great personal satisfaction in working with Korean nursing students, and admire their diligence and strong work ethic

    3. Transactional distance must be addressed in online instruction

        a. Faculty and students have to adjust to time zone differences

        b. Online, text-based communication needs to be personalized to address transactional distance.

III.   Conclusion

    A. Students have successfully attained the BSN degree online and have migrated to the U.S. to work

    B. Faculty have found the experience to be both fulfilling and challenging. Faculty express satisfaction with the diligence and work ethic, and the desire of the Korean students to do well. Challenges have included managing timeliness, English language proficiency, and scholarly citations.

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Professional Experience: Dr. Gail Baumlein has been a nurse for over 35 years, and taught nursing for over 25 years. She was an early adopter of online instruction in nursing, and has numerous publications and presentations on the use of technology in nursing education. She holds a doctorate in education, with a focus on instructional technology and design, as well as a master's degree in nursing education. She has developed several nursing colleges and programs.
Author Summary: Dr. Gail Baumlein is well known for innovations in teaching and online instruction. With over 100 presentations on the use of technology in education, active teaching strategies, and online instruction, she has expertise in the topic of this research. She has acted as a consultant to numerous programs on program development, accreditation, and regulatory processes.

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Professional Experience: I have over ten years teaching in nursing and related healthcare field programs. During this time I have taught online programs at the baccalaureate, masters level, and PhD level. I have experience as a research consultant and have been the PI for research projects funded by AHRQ and private organizations.
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