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Experiences of ADN Faculty Transitioning to Teaching in a BSN Program

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Purpose:

The study is an inquiry into the experiences of associate degree in nursing (ADN) faculty as they transition to teaching in a baccalaureate-nursing program, focusing primarily on their perspectives. The study is concerned with the effective transition of ADN faculty transitioning to teaching in a baccalaureate-nursing program. Since the transition of novice faculty involves learning a different set of competencies, it makes sense that another set of competencies would be required of faculty transitioning to teaching at advanced levels. Therefore; the purpose of this study is to explore, capture, and understand the experiences of ADN faculty as they transition to teaching in a baccalaureate-nursing program. The goal is to uncover and appreciate how ADN faculty cope and thrive during the transition, as well as, identify barriers to the transition process.

Methods:

This study will be guided by the main overarching question of: *"What are the experiences of associate degree nursing faculty as they transition to teaching in a baccalaureate-nursing program?"* As such, a basic qualitative research methodology will be used to conduct this study. The intent of this research is to explore, capture, and understand the experiences of ADN faculty as they transition to teaching in a baccalaureate-nursing program. Data collection for this study will include in-depth, open-ended interviews, observation, and document analysis. This exploration will provide a better understanding of faculty members' motivation as well as details on their behaviors and attitudes.

Two conceptual frameworks were chosen as the lens for this study, Meleis's (2010) transition theory and Taylor-Powell and Boyd's (2008) three-component framework for capacity building. Meleis's (2010) transition theory was selected as a conceptual framework in which to relate the characteristics of the individual and from which to describe and explain the effects of the transition process. Taylor-Powell and Boyd's (2008) capacity building framework was selected because of its ability to be applied to a variety of contexts as well as its potential ability to describe capacity building experiences in the context of a baccalaureate nursing program. Hence, building faculty capacity focuses on developing faculty's potential by facilitating their ability to develop their knowledge and skills in pedagogy and scholarship in order to transition to higher levels of teaching in nursing education.

Results:

Expected results of the study include getting a better understanding of strategies that facilitate and barriers that hinder faculty while transitioning from teaching at the associate degree level to teaching at the baccalaureate level in nursing education. Additionally, transition theory has been applied successfully to facilitate healthy transitions in patient care, transition from clinical practice to academia, and transition from new graduate into the professional role. Overall, interventions that are grounded in transition theory assist nurses and nurse educators in facilitating the application of theory into practice. In the context of this study, transition theory will be applied in a new domain of nursing education in that it will be applied to nurse educators who are transitioning to teaching at advanced levels of nursing education. This study may confirm that interventions grounded in transition theory are essential in building faculty capacity to teach at advanced levels of nursing education. Building faculty's capacity and competence based on this information has the potential to improve student achievement and graduate nurse outcomes as well as decrease attrition rates for students and faculty. The exploration of those barriers encountered by ADN faculty, who transition to teaching in baccalaureate programs, may provide information on how nursing

programs can better support faculty during their transition. Implications also include identifying these barriers to either remove or decrease them

Conclusion:

Anecdotally, faculty members transitioning to teaching at advanced levels of nursing education report feelings of inadequacy, are often overwhelmed with the added responsibilities of their new roles, and question their ability to meet expectations. Subsequently, inadequate preparation for the new roles and responsibilities contributes to poor student achievement, graduate outcomes, as well as high attrition rates for both faculty and students. Hence, whether transitioning from clinical practice to or within academia, the process requires the development of new skills and acclimatization of existing skills to new environments. In fact, even experienced faculty transitioning from one setting to the next must not only adapt to new role expectations, they also become novices in the new faculty role. As such, nurse educators who transition to teaching at advanced levels of nursing education should have their new roles clearly defined and intentionally guided to the specific skills needed for the role. Finally, study may identify gaps in our knowledge and determine strategies to better facilitate the transition process. An understanding of faculty's perceptions and experiences as they transition to teaching at advanced levels of education may help schools of nursing adopt and implement supportive strategies and policies that will enhance the transition process.

Title:

Experiences of ADN Faculty Transitioning to Teaching in a BSN Program

Keywords:

Building faculty capacity, Transitioning in nursing education and Transitioning to teaching in baccalaureate education

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Abstract Summary:

This presentation will provide attendees with information about the context of ADN faculty members transitioning to teaching in a baccalaureate nursing program and describe the barriers and facilitators during the transition process.

Content Outline:

1. Introduction

1. A broad problem impacting the ability of schools of nursing to keep pace with the increasing demands and changes in the healthcare landscape is faculty's capacity to transition to teaching at advanced levels of nursing education.
 1. How does faculty transition from teaching at the associate degree level to teaching at the baccalaureate level?
 2. How can this process be facilitated?

2. Current trends in nursing education indicate that nursing curricula is being reformed and nurses are being pushed to seek advanced levels of education. Two major influences make this transition important.

1. First, the baccalaureate degree has become the minimum required education for nurses entering into practice. This shift has brought into question the future of associate degree nursing education.

2. Secondly, many new graduates of ADN programs have difficulty finding employment, because more and more health care institutions are requiring baccalaureate prepared nurses.

In light of these trends, transitioning to teaching at advanced levels of education may be unavoidable for many faculty members of ADN programs.

1. Background/Scope of the Problem

1. Since its release, the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) (2010) report has called for many changes to be made to nursing practice and nursing education. More specifically, the IOM (2010) issued a call to action that all nurses achieve higher levels of education and training in response to increasing demands and changes in the healthcare landscape. In light of this call to action, the nursing profession has taken on the task of transforming nursing education (Benner, Sutphen, Leonard, & Day, 2010; Heller, Oros, & Durney-Crowley, 2010; Tagliareni, 2013). As such, nursing education programs are undergoing significant reform that reflects these demands (Heller, et al., 2010; Tagliareni, 2013).
2. Currently, new and practicing nurses are being pushed to seek higher levels of education (Gerard, Kazer, Babington, & Quell, 2014; Russell, 2010). However, a major area of concern is the call to increase the number of baccalaureate prepared nurses to 80 percent by the year 2020 (Ellenbecker, 2010; Kutney-Lee, Sloane, & Aiken, 2013; Institute of Medicine [IOM], 2010; Sportsman, & Allen, 2011).
3. Historically, there has been an ongoing debate regarding the need for nursing education to set the baccalaureate of science in nursing as the standard for entry into practice (Forbsbrey, 1995; Jacobs, DiMattio, Bishop, & Fields, 1998; Nardi, & Gyurko 2013).
 1. In fact, it has been shown in the literature that higher academic preparation of nurses leads to lower mortality and re-hospitalization rates and better patient outcomes (Aiken, Clarke, Sloane, Sochalski, & Silber, 2002; Cho, Sloane, Kim, Kim, Choi, Yoo, Lee, & Aiken, 2015; Kutney-Lee et al., 2010).
 2. The literature has also shown some degree of correlation between fewer medical errors and mortality rates with higher academic preparation (Aiken et al., 2002; Cho et al., 2015; Kutney-Lee et al., 2010).
4. The broader implication here is that now more than ever ADN programs find themselves in a precarious position whereby they are faced with some very crucial decisions to consider (Aiken, 2011; Jacobs, et al., 1998; Starr, 2010).
 1. Should they retire or eliminate their ADN academic programs? Should they create a baccalaureate program?
 2. If so, which track should be selected, generic BSN, accelerated BSN or RN to BSN?
 3. How do they increase the number of baccalaureate prepared nurses?

4. Will they be able to design nursing curricula that will ensure future graduates are prepared for society's demands?
5. Finally, would ADN programs be able to overcome the challenge of nurse faculty shortages?
5. Subsequently, as these programs and faculty prepare to meet the challenges of designing new curricula, several questions emerge.
 1. What is required of faculty to meet these challenges?
 2. What is required of academic programs to help faculty meet these challenges?
 3. How do academic programs assist faculty in building their capacity as they transition from teaching at the associate degree level to teaching at advanced levels?
 4. How does faculty build their own capacity as they transition from teaching at the associate degree level to teaching at advanced levels?
 5. How does faculty perceive their ability to make these transitions?

These are just a few of the many questions that surface as ADN programs and faculty consider the transition to advanced levels of teaching in nursing education.

III. Purpose of the Study

1. Since the transition of novice faculty involves learning a different set of competencies, it makes sense that another set of competencies would be required of faculty transitioning to teaching at advanced levels (Billings, & Halstead, 2009; Billings, & Kowalski; Forsbrey, 1995; NLN, 2005; Zambroski, & Freeman, 2004).
2. Hence, the purpose of this study is to explore, capture, and understand the experiences of ADN faculty as they transition to teaching in a baccalaureate-nursing program. The goal is to uncover and appreciate how ADN faculty cope and thrive during the transition, as well as, identify barriers to the transition process.
3. The study is an inquiry into the experiences of ADN faculty as they transition to teaching in a baccalaureate-nursing program, focusing primarily on their perspectives; and, is concerned with the effective transition of ADN faculty transitioning to teaching in a baccalaureate-nursing program.

1. Literature Review

1. There is evidence that ADN programs are still making the decision to transition to baccalaureate nursing programs and transition for nurse faculty in these programs may be unavoidable (AACN, 2012; Boellaard, Brandt, & Zorn, 2015; Brandt, Boellaard, & Zorn, 2013; Brandt, C. L., Boellaard, & Zorn, 2015; Cangelosi, & Moss, 2010; Kaufman, 2011). However, despite "the" repeated calls for the baccalaureate degree as the required level of entry into practice, there are still ADN programs that find themselves in the position of having to make the decision of whether or not to transition.
2. Subsequently, many concerns arise as a result of having to make those decisions. Most concerned are the readiness of faculty to teach at advanced levels of nursing education and the best strategy for nursing education to facilitate the process (Alteen, Didham, & Stratton, 2009; Benner et al., 2010; Cooley, 2013; Forsbrey, 1995; Roberts, Chrisman, and Flowers, 2012; Zambroski, & Freeman, 2004). In fact, Weiss (1989, as cited in Forsbrey, 1995) asserted those nurse faculties transitioning to teaching at advanced levels of nursing education represent a growing population with a high potential for developing role stress.
3. Throughout the country both new and experienced nurse faculty struggle with transitioning to and within academia (Cooley, 2013; Fontenelle, 2013; Goodrich, 2014; Roberts et al., 2012; Schriener, 2007; Suplee, & Gardner, 2009). Quite often nurse faculty entering academia lack experience in teaching; report feeling inadequate, unprepared, and overwhelmed with their new roles and responsibilities; question their ability to perform; and sometimes need individualized mentoring as it relates to learning the skills of teaching (Cooley, 2013; Fontenelle, 2013; Forsbrey, 1995; Roberts et al., 2012; Schriener, 2007; Suplee, & Gardner, 2009).

4. Consequently, inadequate preparation of nursing faculty contributes to poor student achievement and graduate nurse outcomes as well as high attrition rates for students and faculty (Cooley, 2013; Fontenelle, 2013). As such, nurses who transition into the role of academic nurse educator should have their new roles clearly defined and intentionally guided to the specific skills needed for the role (Fontenelle, 2013; Paul, 2014; Roberts et al., 2012).
5. Factors such as number of years of experience, family status, level of mastery of new skills, highest level of education, orientation, mentoring, peer support; as well as, organizational and situational transition in relation to the transition experience was found to determine whether or not transition was successful for nurses transitioning to the role of academic nurse educators. This was evident in the relationship of time in role as educator and intent to stay (Goodrich, 2014; Paul, 2014; Shapiro, 2016).
6. Other factors that hindered the transition process were the unwillingness of faculty to ask questions that would facilitate the transition and self-imposed expectations for high achievement (Shapiro, 2016). Research specifically related to faculty's transition to advanced levels of teaching in nursing education is relatively absent in the literature. While there have been multiple studies that focused on transition from the practice setting to academia, transition from the practice setting to adjunct, and transition from adjunct to full-time, only one study has focused on ADN faculty transitioning to teaching in a baccalaureate-nursing program.
7. Thus far, only anecdotal notes have discussed the challenges associated with transition, changes in faculty roles, responsibilities and work requirements for faculty during transition, suggestions for adapting to the new role, and strategies for successful transition (Alteen, Didham, & Stratton, 2009; Culleiton, & Shellenberger, 2007; Zambroski & Freeman, 2004). Zambroski and Freeman (2004) also added that even experienced faculty transitioning from one setting to the next must not only adapt to new role expectations, they often become novices in the new faculty role as well.
8. In any case, whether transitioning from clinical practice to academia or between program levels, the process requires the development of new skills and acclimatization of existing skills to new environments (Cooley, 2013; Dowling, & Melillo, 2015; Forsbrey, 1995; Goodrich, 2014; Paul, 2014; Schriener, 2007; Suplee, & Gardner, 2009; Zambroski, & Freeman, 2004).

1. Methodology

1. The intent of this research is to answer the research question; *"What are the experiences of associate degree nursing faculty as they transition to teaching in a baccalaureate-nursing program?"* by getting a better understanding of what is happening from the perspectives of ADN faculty members during the transition process. Given the significant gap in the literature on the topic and the objectives of this study, it is appropriate to begin with a qualitative inquiry.
2. Hence, the qualitative research design is a basic qualitative inquiry with an exploratory focus to capture and understand the experiences of ADN faculty as they transition to teaching in a baccalaureate nursing program. This study will also explore what ADN faculty members perceive as facilitators and barriers in the transition process.
3. Data collection for this study will include in-depth, semi-structured, open-ended interviews.

1. Theoretical Framework

1. Two conceptual frameworks were chosen as the lens for this proposed study, Meleis's (2010) transition theory and Taylor-Powell and Boyd's (2008) three-component framework for capacity building. Meleis's (2010) transition theory was selected as a conceptual framework in which to relate the characteristics of the individual and from which to describe and explain the effects of the transition process.
2. Taylor-Powell and Boyd's (2008) capacity building framework was selected because of its ability to be applied to a variety of contexts as well as its potential ability to describe capacity building experiences in the context of a baccalaureate nursing program (Owens, 2014). Transition theory has been applied successfully to facilitate healthy transitions in patient care, transition from clinical practice to academia, and transition from new graduate into the professional role.

3. Thus far, transition has been studied in the nursing education literature from the perspective of new faculty to the role, but not from the perspective of new or experienced faculty to advanced levels of nursing education (Alteen, Didham, & Stratton, 2009; Culleton, & Shellenberger, 2007; Fontenelle, 2013; Zambroski & Freeman, 2004). Moreover, the experiences of how ADN faculty cope and thrive during the transition, as well as the barriers associated with transition have not been reported. Addressing these factors may help identify gaps in our knowledge related to transitioning to teaching at advanced levels of nursing education.
4. Overall, interventions that are grounded in these theories assist nurses and nurse educators in facilitating the application of theory into practice. Transition theory will be applied in a new domain of nursing education in that it will be applied to nurse educators who are transitioning to teaching at advanced levels of nursing education.

VII. Implications

1. This study may identify gaps in our knowledge and determine strategies to better facilitate the transition process. This study may confirm that interventions grounded in transition theory are essential in building faculty capacity to teach at advanced levels of nursing education. Additionally, building faculty's capacity and competence based on this information has the potential to improve student achievement and graduate nurse outcomes as well as decrease attrition rates for students and faculty. The exploration of those barriers encountered by ADN faculty, who transition to teaching in baccalaureate programs, may provide information on how nursing programs can better facilitate the process. Implications also include identifying these barriers to either remove or decrease them (Blaine, 2015; Cooley, 2013; Fontenelle, 2013).

VIII. Conclusion

1. Anecdotally, faculty members transitioning to teaching at advanced levels of nursing education report feelings of inadequacy, are often overwhelmed with the added responsibilities of their new roles, and question their ability to meet expectations. Subsequently, inadequate preparation for the new roles and responsibilities contributes to poor student achievement, graduate outcomes, as well as high attrition rates for both faculty and students. Hence, whether transitioning from clinical practice to or within academia, the process requires the development of new skills and acclimatization of existing skills to new environments. In fact, even experienced faculty transitioning from one setting to the next must not only adapt to new role expectations, they also become novices in the new faculty role. As such, nurse educators who transition to teaching at advanced levels of nursing education should have their new roles clearly defined and intentionally guided to the specific skills needed for the role.
2. An understanding of faculty's perceptions and experiences as they transition to teaching at advanced levels of education may help schools of nursing adopt and implement supportive strategies and policies that will enhance the transition process.

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