

The Impact of Mentorship on Novice Nursing Faculty

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The current nursing shortage concerns health care professionals and consumers of health care services. Compounding the shortage of nurses are the lack of qualified nursing faculty to educate nursing program students. The National League of Nursing, in a review of data from the academic year 2004-2005, found that close to 44% of qualified nursing program candidates were turned away because of the nursing faculty shortage (as cited in Blauvelt & Spath, 2008). One solution for addressing the nursing faculty shortage includes encouraging nurses to join the ranks of academia. Once the transition takes place, from clinical practice to nursing educator, there are many new procedures and policies to learn and a new culture to understand. The implementation of a formalized nursing faculty mentorship program or lack thereof, can either help or hinder the successful enculturation and role transition.

Novice nursing faculty, and the assignment of a senior faculty mentor versus none, was selected as the focus of this paper because of this author's current status as new nursing faculty. A key determinant of overall job satisfaction was how new nursing faculty perceived their experience. A greater understanding of what elements are needed to affect a positive role transition can be useful for creating, and participating in, new faculty orientation programs.

The Question

Based on the nursing faculty shortage topic, the following question was created using the PICO(T) format; (P) population, (I) intervention, (C) comparison, and (O) outcome (Polit & Beck, 2012, p. 36).

Among novice fulltime nursing faculty at a University or Community College for less than two years, how does the assignment of a nursing faculty mentor, with at least 10 years of

experience, versus receiving a traditional faculty orientation without an assigned mentor affect overall job satisfaction after one year?

Through the formulation of this PICO question, key terms were extracted to conduct a relevant research evidence search.

Research Evidence Search

A literature search was conducted accessing online databases via Regis University's library as follows: CINAHL, MEDLINE (PubMed), and Cochrane Library. The initial search used key terms entered into the MEDLINE database: (*novice nurs**) AND *faculty* AND *mentor** with limiters of: years 2008-2016 and linked to full text. This initial search returned 17 results and four research articles that were applicable to this evidence-based practice (EBP) paper, "Novice Nurse Faculty: In Search of a Mentor" (Cangelosi, 2014); "A Mentor-Protégé Program for New Faculty, Part I: Stories of Protégés (White, Brannan, & Wilson, 2010); "Nurse Educator Orientation: Professional Development That Promotes Retention" (Baker, 2010); and "Passing The Torch: A Faculty mentoring Program at One School of Nursing" (Blauvelt & Spath, 2008). A secondary search in the CINAHL database used the key terms: (*novice nurs**) AND *faculty* AND *mentor** with limiters of: years 2008-2016 and abstract available. Academic journals were selected as the source type to further refine the results. This secondary search yielded 28 results, and in addition to the four articles found previously in the MEDLINE search, two additional appropriate articles were found, "From expert to novice: An exploration of the experiences of new academic staff to a department of adult nursing studies" (McArthur-Rouse, 2008); and "The lived experience of the transition of the clinical nurse expert to the novice nurse educator" (Weidman, 2013). Finally, Cochrane Library was used to search for relevant studies. Key terms entered were (*mentor** AND *nurs**), and the option of "Other Reviews" was selected to exclude

the results of: Trials, Methods Studies, and Cochrane Groups; this yielded six results. Although none of the six results were directly appropriate for this EBP paper, a systematic review was found that related to the application of mentorship programs for newly registered nurses (Chen & Lou, 2014).

Critical Appraisal of the Evidence: Table

Reference the summary of evidence table: Evidence-based Practice Paper Studies/Report Table (submitted separately).

Critical Appraisal of the Evidence: Critique

Participant interviews, phone calls, and teleconferencing were used, based on participant availability, to collect data by the researcher or research assistant in the Cangelosi (2014) study. The researcher used van Manen's approach to human science research, hermeneutic phenomenology, and the interaction of signs and their meanings (semiotics) methodology, which was appropriate to this qualitative study. Credibility occurred through the research subjects reviewing and verifying the narrative summaries procured by the researchers. Confirmability and dependability were established through analyzing the data by four experienced researchers and the notated observations by interviewers of gestures and facial expressions indicating nonverbal communications. The rich descriptive nature of the study lends itself to its transferability.

Audiotaped interviews were used to collect data for the McArthur-Rose (2008) study. The researcher in the study mentioned no specific methodology, but the qualitative nature of the study was apparent. Some direct transcription was done of particularly revealing comments, after the tapes were analyzed, but otherwise the tapes were paraphrased. The study does not elaborate whom, if other than the researcher, reviewed the tapes. This study lacks of trustworthiness, as the participants were not asked to confirm the interpretations of the data.

The researcher used one-on-one interviews and an established set of questions for the Weidman (2013) study. Phenomenological methodology was used in this qualitative study, and this method was appropriate. All data was assigned numerical coding that was solely known to the researcher. The participants verified the researchers' transcribed data, establishing credibility. Dependability and confirmability were achieved through the recurring concepts and patterns. Transferability could be inferred through the extensive description obtained.

Data was gathered via focus groups for the White, Brannan & Wilson (2010) study. All study participants selected pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality. Credibility of the data gathered was done through member checking and peer debriefing. Journaling conducted by the research teams during data analysis established dependability and confirmability. The nature of this highly detailed data alluded to the transferability of the study. These overall findings indicate a level of evidence QII, which is rated a fair quality of evidence rating.

Evidence Analysis

The findings from the selected studies that are supported consistently are that mentor programs are beneficial to novice nursing faculty. All studies but one found the impact of mentorship to be beneficial to the new nursing faculty. However, McArthur-Rouse (2008) found inconsistency in the reception of the mentor-protégé relationship, as some novice nursing faculty felt insecure about opening up to their mentor with concerns or revealing their angst. This finding is compelling because there is likely some validity to this finding due to the fact that the nature of human relationships are complex. Much like when student nurses are assigned clinical preceptors – there can be a poor match. The studies are inconsistent when it comes down to the structure of the mentorship programs. Additionally, it was difficult to find consistent populations of nurses that have similar enough backgrounds to compare and contrast. Melnyk and Fineout-

Overholt (2011) ranks the level of evidence associated with these findings as, “Level V: Evidence from systematic reviews of descriptive and qualitative studies” (p. 12). The onus of the associated findings becomes how to reliably structure and measure mentorship programs for new nursing faculty.

This EBP paper offers a thorough analysis of the posed question regarding novice nursing faculty and their perception of mentorships’ impact on their role transition. Greater than half the studies found that in that novice nursing faculty at a University or Community College for less than two years, greater job satisfaction was experienced (after one year) when assigned a nursing faculty mentor.

Conclusion

The majority of nurses transitioning from expert clinical practice to the role of novice nursing faculty lack formal educational training that post graduate level nurses receive. The introduction of a senior nursing faculty mentor can ease the transition and perceived job satisfaction can be realized.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.3928/0148434-20100630-04>

Evidence-based Practice Paper Studies/Report Table

Name	Level of Evidence	Hypothesis	Design	Sample	Data Collection Instruments/Procedures	Statistical Results/Findings	Implications/Conclusions
<p>Cangelosi, P. R. (2014). Novice nurse faculty: In search of a mentor. <i>Nursing Education Perspectives</i>, 35(5), 327-329.</p>	<p>Level V: Evidence from systematic reviews of descriptive and qualitative studies (Melnyk & Fineout-Overholt, 2011).</p>	<p>Purpose of study was to discover what strategies could be employed to recruit and retain qualified nursing faculty.</p>	<p>Interpretive Phenomenological Qualitative Research Design</p>	<p>Sample size: (n=20) 15 Caucasian, 3 Asian, and 3 African American; 18 female and 2 male, ages 34-52. Purposive sampling method. Inclusion criteria (IC): Two years maximum teaching experience. No exclusion criteria were identified. The researcher's university human subjects' review board granted approval.</p>	<p>The researcher or research assistant conducted individual interviews. Fourteen participants were interviewed face-to-face, five by telephone, and one by teleconference. Each participant was asked to reflect on their teaching in an undergraduate nursing program with emphasis on an incident that best exemplified their experience as a new faculty member. Confidentiality was maintained by assigning a pseudonym to each participant. The respective participant, for validation of data obtained, reviewed narrative summaries of each interview.</p>	<p>One theme was identified by consensus: searching for a mentor. All participants expressed frustration about lack of structure and guidance. All expressed that they need help learning the faculty role and feel an assigned mentor would help them learn, as well as feel less flustered.</p>	<p>The inclusion of mentoring program is essential. However, added emphasis on formal teaching preparation in graduate programs would also be advantageous in preparing the future nursing faculty workforce.</p>

<p>McArthur-Rouse, F. (2008). From expert to novice: An exploration of the experiences of new academic staff to a department of adult nursing studies. <i>Nurse Education Today</i>, 28, 401-408.</p>	<p>Level V: Evidence from systematic reviews of descriptive and qualitative studies (Melnyk & Fineout-Overholt, 2011).</p>	<p>Purpose of study was to explore the experiences of new academic staff to understand what they found difficult about adapting to their new roles and to evaluate the effectiveness of the mentorship system in addressing these issues.</p>	<p>Interpretive Phenomenological Qualitative Research Design</p>	<p>Sample size: (n=6) Gender(s)/ages not disclosed. Purposive sampling method. IC: New academic staff that had been employed in the department of adult nursing studies for a period of two years or less. Exclusion criteria equated the exclusion of the researcher's own mentee. One eligible academic staff member chose to self-exclude out of the total possible. Approval was obtained from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.</p>	<p>Data were gathered using semi-structured individual, audiotaped interviews. Three main areas were addressed in the questioning: prior experience and reason for applying to this position, formal induction mechanisms and the mentorship system, and main concerns upon beginning their new role as educator. All interviews were collected in a private office setting. Not all tapes were transcribed, but were analyzed and paraphrased. Some direct translation did occur of illuminative comments. Preliminary analysis identified inconsistencies and common themes were noted.</p>	<p>Participants did not feel that their prior clinical experience translated well to their new role. The mentorship system was not viewed the same by all study participants. Some did not find their mentor to be a trusted confidant, while others did. Some participants also grappled with the lack of clarity and structure in their new role, and were concerned if they were performing effectively.</p>	<p>Discussing the reality of role transition with those entering academic staff positions would be beneficial to explain that it is normal to undergo a period of adjustment – and to plan for this with peer-to-peer interactions, as well as peer-to-mentor. More structure to the mentor system, with specific areas of weakness or concern addressed by offering additional training opportunities. Fostering an atmosphere of collegiality is important to staff retention and perceived overall satisfaction.</p>
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<p>Weidman, N. A. (2013). The lived experience of the transition of the clinical nurse expert to the novice nurse educator. <i>Teaching and Learning in Nursing, 8</i>, 102-109.</p>	<p>Level V: Evidence from systematic reviews of descriptive and qualitative studies (Melnyk & Fineout-Overholt, 2011).</p>	<p>Purpose of study was to describe and interpret the experience of nurses without any educational theory as they transition from the role of clinical nurse expert to the novice nurse educator.</p>	<p>Interpretive phenomenological Qualitative Research Design</p>	<p>Sample size: (n=8) 8 Caucasian; 6 females and 2 males, ages 27-60. A convenience sampling method. IC: Participant was in the nursing education role for no greater than 2 years. Exclusion criteria included all novice nurse educators who were currently enrolled in an MSN program in a nursing education track and those who have teaching experience > 2 years. IRB approval was obtained through Kutztown University.</p>	<p>The researcher completed all interviews and data collection. The tool was a composite of questions developed by the researcher to elicit discussion of their experience in the transition. The raw data were identified by a numerical coding system, known only to the researcher. The data were transcribed by the researcher and verified by the participant.</p>	<p>Analysis yielded 3 themes: (a) clinical nurse experts have expert knowledge to share and have a desire to educate the next generation; (b) the transition process elicits feelings of stress related to not having educational theory; (c) consistent mentoring contributes to an easier transition to the role.</p>	<p>Recommended that clinical nurse experts contemplating the role change seek to discover the challenges that are presented by meeting with seasoned nurse educator to review expectations of the nurse educator role. Nursing school administrators need to examine the mentoring program and develop one if not already established with specific education on test writing skills, analysis, and student evaluation. A long-term option is to encourage the clinical nurse expert to complete a postmaster's degree.</p>
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<p>White, A., Brannan, J., & Wilson, C. (2010). A mentor-protégé program for new faculty, part I: Stories of Protégés. <i>Journal of Nursing Education</i>, 49(11), 601-607.</p>	<p>Level V: Evidence from systematic reviews of descriptive and qualitative studies (Melnik & Fineout-Overholt, 2011).</p>	<p>Formalized mentorship programs will support and encourage faculty as they move from the role of novice to expert educator.</p>	<p>Descriptive Phenomenological Qualitative Research Design</p>	<p><i>Sample size:</i> (n = 23) 19 Caucasian and 4 African American, ages 32-65. No data on gender(s) Purposive sampling method. IC: Novice faculty in a school of nursing who were protégés for the project and had been teaching for an average of 1.8 years at the university where the study occurred. Approval was attained through the university's IRB.</p>	<p>Focus groups were used for data collection. Consent for participation in the study and pseudonym selection were obtained via audiotape from each informant at the time of the interviews. Member checking and peer debriefing were used to establish credibility. Dependability and confirmability were achieved through journaling by research teams during the data analysis process. Transferability can be inferred through the rich description of the findings.</p>	<p>Three main themes were found: 1) Creating a Meaningful Mentor-Protégé Relationship, 2) Transitioning as a New Nurse Educator, and the Mentor-Protégé Program—Lessons Learned.</p>	<p>Developing mutually beneficial relationships that encourage open communication is key for effective mentoring. Nursing educators with less than two years experience require support and guidance to tackle the challenges in their new role. Scheduled activities paced out within a formal program improve novice faculty development.</p>
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Reference

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