The Experience of Registered Nurses Returning to School for the Baccalaureate: A Metasynthesis

STTI/NLN Nursing Education Research Conference
April 3-5, 2014
Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Linda Perfetto, MS, RN, CNE, CNOR
PhD in Nursing Student
University of Connecticut
Discuss the utilization of research to describe and expand best practices that support the educational advancement of Registered Nurses (RNs) to the Baccalaureate in Nursing (BSN)
What’s the Research Problem?

Background:

- The 2010 IOM Report, *The Future of Nursing: Focus on Education* acknowledges multiple educational pathways to the Baccalaureate in Nursing (i.e. Associate Degree, Diploma)
- The need to increase the approximate 21% rate of advancement to the Baccalaureate among Diploma & Associate Degree nurses is essential (DHHS, 2010)
- Research reveals the need for improvement so that returning to school is more appealing to RNs
What’s the Research Problem?

- Variables that may support nurses in their quest for educational advancement have been identified.
- Academic/Practice Partnerships can increase the relevance of educational advancement.
- The review of the literature reveals that educational advancement of experienced Associate Degree Nurses (ADNs) enhances the impact of Baccalaureate education on practice.
Planning for the Institute of Medicine (IOM) charge to reach 80% BSN by 2020 will take efforts from all areas of nursing and beyond

Support for nurses to advance to the BSN is needed from all of us

Evidence Based educational approaches are necessary to ensure appropriate utilization of precious resources

Educational Advancement of all Nurses has the potential to enhance the health of all
Beginning with PhD Program in Nursing

Interest in supporting seamless educational pathways for ADN graduates to achieve 80% BSN by 2020

Commitment to help meet the 2012-2015 National League for Nursing (NLN) Research Priorities in Nursing Education to Lead Reform in Nursing Education (NLN, 2012)
Laying the foundation for the Metasynthesis through a combination of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Experiences as a PhD in nursing student:

1. **Qualitative PILOT study:** Descriptive Phenomenology (Colaizzi, 1978)
   The Experience of Registered Nurses Working in Acute Care After Earning a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing

2. **Quantitative PILOT study:** Descriptive Study of ADN Students’ perspective on their advancement to the BSN
   Promoting the Educational Advancement of Registered Nurses Prepared at the Associate Degree Level
Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Metasynthesis

Qualitative Metasynthesis

An interpretive qualitative research method that seeks to synthesize individual qualitative studies on a particular topic, in this case 

The Experiences of RN to BSN Students

The resulting end product is a whole that represents more than the sum of its individual parts

To elucidate these experiences in an effort to understand and perhaps improve them

Ultimate Goal: to increase the proportion of ADN nurses that return to school to attain a BSN
Developing a Metasynthesis using the method of Noblit & Hare, 1988

Step One: Get Started
Identify a phenomenon of interest that is addressed by qualitative research

Step Two: Decide which qualitative studies are pertinent and relevant for the metasynthesis

Step Three: Read and Re-Read the studies to identify key metaphors, themes or concepts

Step Four: Determine how the studies are related (Reciprocal, Refutational or taken together as a line of argument)

Step Five: Translate the studies into one another by maintaining the unique perspective and holism of each and enabling the comparison of all

Step Six: Synthesize the translations by creating a whole that is more than the sum of its parts

Step Seven: Express the synthesis in writing or other artistic formats

Goal of a Metasynthesis: to collectively synthesize individual qualitative studies into a whole that represents more than the sum of its individual parts

Perfetto, L. (in Press). Facilitating Educational Advancement of RNs to the Baccalaureate: What are they telling us?. Nursing Education Perspectives.
Inclusion criteria for the metasynthesis were:

- The focus of the study was educational advancement from RN to BSN
- The study was undertaken between January 2000 and February 2013
- The research design was qualitative or included a qualitative component
Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Metasynthesis

Thirteen Studies were included in the sample, representing:
- 324 RN to BSN students; ages 19-62 years
- All US studies with one Canadian study
- Incomplete gender and ethnicity information
Data Analysis: Applying the technique of Reciprocal Translation (Noblit and Hare, 1988)

- The studies are read and re-read
- Metaphors that portray the essence of each study are chosen by the researcher
- The studies are translated into one another
- The translations are synthesized
- The Synthesis is expressed in writing or other artistic formats
Please value what I bring and help me get ready...

Though this is part of my plan, it may create feelings that I may not be ready for

It has to fit with my life...

I need help to get there!

I am growing professionally and beginning to look at my work differently.

I don’t want to do this alone...

I am ready to assume responsibility for this challenging, life altering journey.

Perfetto, L. (in Press). Facilitating Educational Advancement of RNs to the Baccalaureate: What are they telling us?. Nursing Education Perspectives.
An instrument was developed and piloted based upon two of the seven themes discovered through the Metasynthesis.

- Please Value what I Bring and Help Me Get Ready
- I Need Help to Get There
- Pilot provided direction to apply the instrument further during Dissertation phase
Conclusion

- Continuing the research; planning to finish the PhD!
- Always more research to do…
- Statewide, Regional & National efforts to reach 80% BSN by 2020 abound through partnerships among academe and practice!
- More research and exploration will assist our journey in meeting the goal!
- Thank you for your attention…
- Questions?? For additional information contact Linda M. Perfetto; linda.perfetto@uconn.edu
Acknowledgements

The support of Cheryl Tatano Beck DNSc, CNM, FAAN of the University of Connecticut (Uconn) School of Nursing

The support of my doctoral committee, E. Carol Polifroni EdD, CNE, NEA-BC, RN; Thomas Van Hoof MD, EdD both of the UConn School of Nursing and Liana Orsolini Phd, RN, ANEF, FAAN of Bon Secours Health System

The support of the UConn PhD program in Nursing & the UConn Institutional Review Board (IRB)

The Connecticut League for Nursing for their undying support of nursing education in CT

The contribution of the 23 ADN students, and the 327 RN to BSN students and 13 nursing research teams that provided the foundation for my inquiry
Thank you!

For Further Information please contact Linda Perfetto at linda.perfetto@uconn.edu
References


References, con’t.

- Perfetto, L. (in Press). Facilitating Educational Advancement of RNs to the Baccalaureate: What are they telling us? *Nursing Education Perspectives*.
- References for specific studies used in the metasynthesis are available upon request.