TRANSITION TO ACADEMIC NURSE EDUCATOR: HOW DOES READINESS, CONFIDENCE, AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN IMPACT CAREER CHANGE?

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The Problem

- Preparedness of new nursing faculty
- Academic Role Expectations
- Financial stability of Colleges and Universities
- Shortage of Doctorally-Prepared nurse educators

Review of the Literature

- Theoretical Framework: Experiencing Transitions (Meleis, Sawyer, Im, Messias, & Schumacher, 2000)

- Passage from one life phase to another

- Entering a new stage in their professional career

- Mixed feelings regarding loss of expert role

- Anxiety, fear, tension, lack of confidence

- Lack of Support, mentoring and organized process

- Financial impact of the career change

- Gatekeepers to the profession

- Opportunity to influence the next generation

Instruments

- Career Transitions Inventory (Heppner, 1991): Readiness, Confidence, Personal Control, Support, Independence
- Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1989)
- Work Locus of Control Scale (Spector, 1988)

Methods

- Investigation of academic nurse educators levels of readiness, confidence, personal control, support, perceived independence, general self esteem, level of locus of control in the work setting

- Demographic Data Questionnaire

- Electronic Survey

- Email sent to administrators of baccalaureate and higher nursing programs in the United States accredited by the CCNE and/or NLNAC

- 880 Surveys Returned

- 541 Final Sample

Data Analysis

- Descriptive Statistics

- Cronbach's coefficient alphas for each of the CTI subscales

- Pearson product-moment correlation to analyze the relationships among the CTI subscales, self esteem scores, and work locus of control scores

- Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to determine if categorical data (1. amount of time in the role of academic nurse educator and 2. intention to stay in the role of academic nurse educator) has an association with the variables of the study

- MANOVA used to determine if the demographic data has a relationship or association with the CTI subscales, Rosenberg SES and the WLCS Scores

Characteristics of the Sample

- Female = 92.1%
- Married = 75.8%
- Age 50 to 59 = 44.7%
- First nursing degree Baccalaureate program = 59.3%
- 55% of sample indicated they had been in the educator role for 10 years or less (32% = 1 to 5 years, 23% = 6 to 10 years)
- 78.9% indicated they had not achieved tenure
- Master's degree as highest degree held

Results: Measures of Central Tendency and Dispersion

Scale	M	SD	Actual Score Range	Possible Score Range	Ranking for Academic Nurse Educators
Readiness	57.19	9.65	18 to 74	13 to 78	Medium
Confidence	47.18	7.00	20 to 63	11 to 66	High
Personal Control	25.35	4.73	8 to 36	6 to 36	High
Support	24.70	3.71	10 to 30	5 to 30	Medium
Independence	16.10	4.72	5 to 30	5 to 30	Medium
Self-Esteem	35.63	4.28	15 to 40	10 to 40	Positive
Work Locus of Control	74.49	10.39	39 to 94	16 to 96	Moderately High

Interpreting the Results: Confidence, Readiness and Personal Control

- Confidence = high
- No relationship between readiness and personal control
- Readiness = medium
- Personal Control = high
- Academic nurse educators who had less than or equal to five years in the role scored higher in the **readiness** subscale
- Academic nurse educators who had greater than 5 years in the role scored higher in the **personal control** subscale
- Increase in level of confidence is part of the transition process
- 88% intend to stay in the role of academic nurse educator (assuming tenure is not an issue)

Interpreting the Results: Marriage and Number of Children

- No children=**Independence**
- Never Married = **Independence**
- One to Two children=**Work Locus of Control**

Discussion

- Confident, in control, internally motivated to succeed, few perceived psychological barriers to their career transition
- Career transition was not a choice that was solely independent, but as part of a larger relational context (family, friends, partners, significant others)
- Ambivalence regarding making a career change versus staying in current roles
- Challenges regarding work-life balance
- Participants felt supported, although the support they received may not be as much as they would have liked or felt they needed

Recommendations

- Support (financial, funding for advanced degrees, human capital, workload, formal mentoring, clinical practice)

- Identification of future academic nurse educators early in their career

- Anticipatory preparation and role supplementation

- Reexamination and enhancement of existing processes that support academic nurse educators and full integration of these processes into the academic culture

Areas for Future Research

- Impact of adult children
- Impact of aging parents
- Transitions for academic nurses in administrative/executive roles in higher education

References

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