



The Lived Experience of Graduates who Studied
Nursing in the Context of A Nursing Academic-
Practice Partnership




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April 2018



Background and Literature Review



Student Experience of Nursing
Academic – Practice Partnerships

Background on Nursing Academic Practice Partnerships (NAPP)

- ▶ **Cited as a mitigation strategy for a variety of concerns**
 - ▶ **Clinical and academic workforce development** (Beal et al., 2011; Moscato et al., 2007; Warner & Burton, 2009)
 - ▶ **Research expansion** (Boland et al., 2010)
 - ▶ **Service expansion** (Aponte & Egues, 2010)
 - ▶ **Clinical placement and Dedicated Education Units** (Moscato, et al., 2007)
- ▶ **Calls to explore and implement NAPPs by professional organizations, researchers, and thought leaders** (AACN & AONE, 2010; Beal et al., 2012; Benner, Surphen, Leonard, & Day, 2010; I.O.M., 2011; Kinnaman & Bleich, 2004; Malloch & Porter-O'grady, 2011)
- ▶ **No NAPP concept analysis, consensus definition, or consensus model exists in the current nursing literature**



Conclusions

Learning is facilitated

Highly rated experience

Feelings of belonging and support

No harm to pass rate (NCLEX-RN)

Increase enrollment

Increase workforce numbers



Purpose Statement

- ▶ Informed by the content and maturity of the current literature published on the student experience of learning within the context of a NAPP, the purpose of this study is to:

Describe the lived experiences of graduates who studied nursing within the context of a nursing academic-practice partnership





Methods



Heideggerian Hermeneutic Phenomenology

Phenomenology

▶ Study of phenomena

- ▶ Understand everyday shared practices through narratives about the *lived experience* of the phenomenon of study (Benner, Tanner, & Chesla, 2009).
- ▶ “...the systematic attempt to uncover and describe the structures, the internal meaning structures, of lived experience.” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 10).

▶ Two General Types

- ▶ Descriptive and interpretive



Hermeneutics

- ▶ Refers to the interpretive process and is derived from the science of interpretation of sacred texts (Crotty, 2003)
- ▶ Hermeneutic circle
 - ▶ Interpretation of texts in relation to
 - ▶ The whole
 - ▶ Parts of the whole
 - ▶ Among each other (other texts)
 - ▶ Further questions are developed and new trails of exploration are followed within the process of the interpretation



Heideggerian

- ▶ A philosophic approach to the study of a phenomenon
 - ▶ Martin Heidegger (1889-1976)
- ▶ Ontology (Understanding of existence or what is)
 - ▶ Rejects duality of mind/body or reductionist approaches to the study of experience
- ▶ Attempting to uncover the Dasein (being or existence)
- ▶ Human understanding is a situated endeavor
- ▶ Awareness and description of a phenomenon is always an act of interpretation (Benner, 1994; Cohen, Kahn, & Steeves, 2000; Heidegger, 2010)





Sample Selection



Partnerships of interest
Human participants

Partnerships of Interest

Providence Scholars

- ▶ Providence Health & Services and University of Portland
- ▶ Started in 2002
- ▶ Jr and Sr nursing school tuition is paid and forgiven during work period
- ▶ Legal commitment of 3-years of employment
- ▶ Formal administrative oversight and contracting

Great Nurses / Great Falls

- ▶ Providence Health & Services and University of Great Falls
- ▶ Started in 2007
- ▶ 5 semester RN-BSN completion program for PH&S ADN and Diploma prepared RNs
- ▶ Personal commitment of 2 years of continued employment
- ▶ Formal administrative oversight and contracting




Protection of Participants

- ▶ Institutional Review Boards
 - ▶ University of Hawaii
 - ▶ Providence Health & Services – Oregon Region
- ▶ Consent procedures
- ▶ Email through PH&S
- ▶ Digital encryption and password protection of transcripts and other data
- ▶ Participant codes for analysis
- ▶ Pseudonyms in transcripts
- ▶ Consent in the transcript
- ▶ Digital recording device





Data Collection



Post-modern – unstructured interview
Fontana and Prokos, 2007

Interview Prompts and Questions

▶ Explanation

- ▶ The purpose of this study is to uncover the lived experience, shared meaning, and common practices of those who have studied nursing within a clinical-academic partnership such as the (name of program)
- ▶ The purpose is not to evaluate or critique the program itself
- ▶ Rather, I am interested in learning more about what it was like for you to attend school as a partnership program participant

▶ Questions

- ▶ Tell me about your experience of studying nursing as a program participant
- ▶ How did the partnership between Providence Health & Services and (University of Portland - or - University of Great Falls) impact your experience of being in school?





Results



The Interviews

- ▶ Ten graduates interviewed
 - ▶ Age 22 to 57
 - ▶ Experience <1 yr to 27 years
- ▶ Eight hours of interviews on tape
- ▶ 200 pages of transcripts
- ▶ Verbatim copies used for analysis
- ▶ Edited copies used for manuscript and presentation
- ▶ Summary and analysis shared and validated by participants



Six Themes

Obligation and
Responsibilities

Alliance

Disclosure

Advantage

Emotional
Response and
Regulation

Meaning of
Clinicals



OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- ▶ Obligations and responsibilities refers to the experience of **living up to the expectations** of learning and performance that the graduates felt within these partnerships.
- ▶ The sense of **being accountable** to help future generations is also attributed to this theme.
- ▶ It is evident that one's own expectations are **equally important** as the contractual obligations.



Obligations and Responsibilities

- ▶ *Knowing that there's a connection between the school and the employer, even though they don't necessarily communicate, psychologically I know it's there. And so wanting to do well in both places, is in my mind, they are connected. To me, University of Great Falls and Providence are just connected, and so they do go together, you know? I'm the bridge in the middle and I want it to go smoothly in both directions. (Jennifer - UGF)*
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ALLIANCE

- ▶ Alliance emerged from graduates who spoke of gaining a **deeper understanding** of the clinical partner, noted benefits from **operational efficiencies**, or experienced how the education and clinical **partner influenced** one another.
- ▶ Paramount to understanding the lived experience of alliance is appreciating how **alignment of organizational values impacts the experience** of the learner.
- ▶ Where obligations and responsibilities can be **contractual** and are often tangible, alliance stems from the enduring **relationship** between the academic and clinical partner.



Alliance

- ▶ *I just felt like they were just very connected, like both organizations were incredibly committed to me as a nurse, as a Providence employee, as an individual. I mean, I really felt those were some of the things I experienced that really make me speak in such a positive light in all that I did, all that I experienced. (Mary – UGF)*
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DISCLOSURE

- ▶ All learners shared an experience of **disclosing themselves** to others as a program participant.
- ▶ The experience of disclosure varied depending upon who was told.
- ▶ Disclosure was sometimes prideful and sometimes minimized, but the decision to disclose, and to whom, was made **strategically**.



Disclosure

- ▶ *When I would disclose it to other nurses, it would usually be like, “Oh, you go to University of Portland. I go to University of Portland,” and they would usually say it first, “I was a Providence scholar.” I’m like, “Oh, I’m a Prov scholar too.” Then it would be okay, like I felt they understand, they get it. They’re obviously successful then I’ll tell them I’m a Prov scholar too. (Susan – PSP)*



ADVANTAGE

- ▶ Graduates of these partnerships experienced a variety of advantages such as clinical learning considerations, **access** to systems and processes, and most importantly **insider connections** to the academic and clinical agencies.
- ▶ These factors provided an experience of being **networked** and represented a significant leg-up for career building.



Advantage

- ▶ *It [the program] opens a lot of doors that a lot of other students might not have had access to and that was honestly super helpful coming out of school.... I just think a lot of the people that I've met through this program have been intangibly beneficial for me. (Robert, PSP)*
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EMOTIONAL RESPONSE AND REGULATION

- ▶ The experience of learning within the context of a NAPP influenced and helped **regulate emotions** such as anxiety and stress.
- ▶ The experience was one that provided an opportunity to **feel encouraged and supported.**
- ▶ Universally, participants shared that being selected for the partnerships spawned feelings of **purpose and accomplishment.**



Emotional Response and Regulation

- ▶ *It [being Providence employees] was at least one thing that we had in common, so for me, where I am introverted, a little socially awkward and whatnot, I needed one thing [laughter] to have in common with everyone. It helped to break the ice. We could at least talk about where somebody worked inside and then you kinda have some idea. (Jennifer – UGF)*



THE MEANING OF CLINICALS

- ▶ The experience of being a learner in a partnership reinforced the **relationship between theory and practice** and extended the meaning of clinical into professional **career development**.



Meaning of Clinicals

- ▶ *If the partnership is not there, they are just an observing clinical teacher. Like at [name of the community college she attended] they would go with us to the hospital and watch us pass meds and stuff like that, but they weren't necessarily linked into the hospital. It wasn't all meshed together. (Jennifer – UGF)*





Discussion



Implications For Practice

- ▶ Consideration of the learner
- ▶ There is more to NAPPs than operational details
- ▶ Be deliberate about the operational / design elements of the partnership
- ▶ Intentionally develop the “soft skills” of partnerships such as connection and advantage (i.e. career building)
- ▶ Appreciate the impact on emotional regulation
- ▶ Exploit the connection to clinical learning and relevancy
- ▶ Partnerships **MUST** benefit all parties
 - ▶ The benefits do not have to be equivalent





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