PIII-18: Nursing Faculty Shortage: Nurses’ Perceptions of Solutions

Author List:
Presenting Author: Evelyn Klocke
Additional Author: Linda Spatig

Presenting Author: Evelyn Klocke
Address: 405 Fayette Pike
Montgomery, West Virginia 2536
United States
Ph: 304-442-3020
Fax:
Email: evelyn.klocke@mail.wvu.edu
Institution: Marshall University

Additional Author: Linda Spatig
Address: Marshall University
Huntington, West Virginia 25755
United States
Ph: 304-696-2875
Fax:
Email: spatig@marshall.edu
Institution: Marshall University

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Abstract:
Introduction: The nursing faculty shortage is well documented. Nursing administrators turn away qualified student applicants due to lack of qualified nursing faculty. The purpose of this study was to explore causes of and solutions to the shortage as perceived by: 1) nurses currently in a faculty role and 2) nurses with a master’s degree but not employed in faculty positions.

Method(s): A qualitative study using phenomenological methods was undertaken. Two groups of nurses were interviewed. The faculty group was 8 nurses teaching full-time selected from faculty teaching in schools of nursing in WV. The service group was 8 nurses with a MSN but not in a faculty position selected from nurses licensed in WV. In interviews, participants were asked to describe their current position, perceptions of the nursing faculty role, causes of the shortage, and solutions to the shortage. Interviews were transcribed and common themes were identified. Limitations were the non-random sample selection, small sample size, and single state recruitment. The strength was the in-depth description of the perceptions of the faculty role and the nursing faculty shortage by participants, since most prior research has been surveys.
Results: Participants believed the causes of the shortage included low salaries, lack of nurses with advanced degrees, nurses without training in teaching, and other career options. Their solutions included presenting a positive image of the faculty role, supporting doctoral education, utilizing nurses with MSNs, mentoring new faculty, and networking with nurses in service positions. Those in both groups described a passion for nursing and teaching and viewed themselves as educators. The positive aspects of the faculty role were relationships with the students, watching students develop into nurses, relationships with colleagues, and flexible schedules.

Discussion & Conclusions: Nursing administrators will continue to be challenged with recruiting and retaining qualified nursing faculty. This study found that nurses in faculty and service settings enjoyed teaching but selected positions based on cost-benefit analysis. In other words, for these participants, the costs of pursuing faculty positions are unduly high considering the perceived benefits.

Abstract History:
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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Submitted by:
evelyn.klocke@mail.wvu.edu