

# Relationship between professional identity and clinical leadership in novice registered nurses

Colloquium

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# BACKGROUND

- The Institute of Medicine (2010)
- The current healthcare environment calls for nurses to be clinical leaders (Benner, Sutphen, Leonard, Day & Shulman, 2010)
- Multiple pathways to becoming a registered nurse (Nelson, 2002; Institute of Medicine, 2010)
- Questions persist on whether current curricula accurately prepares nurses for leadership roles in diverse practice settings or instills a strong sense of professional identity (Benner et al., 2010; Dwyer, 2011; Institute of Medicine, 2010).

# PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the study was to explore and compare the perceptions held by novice nurses who graduated from diploma, associate, baccalaureate, masters' entry, and accelerated programs in a Midwestern state in order to assess the relationship between their self-perceived clinical leadership ability and their self-perceived sense of professional identity and what role, if any, academic preparation plays.

# LITERATURE REVIEW – CLINICAL LEADERSHIP

- No consensus on attributes necessary for clinical leader
- Clinical leadership – skills present in staff nurses providing patient care at the bedside
- Quest to clearly define what clinical leadership is , who clinical leaders are, and how best to prepare nurses for the role of clinical leader
- Development of clinical leaders is a professional responsibility  
(Malby, 1998; Brown & Dewing, 2016; Chavez & Yoder, (2015); Cook & Leathard 2004)

# LITERATURE REVIEW – PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

- Development of knowledge, skills, values, roles, and viewpoints essential for practice of a specific profession
- Perception of oneself as a member of a profession
- Active process that involves professional socialization
- Responsibilities to society, other professionals, patients and self

(Clark, 1997; Crigger & Godfrey, 2011, 2014; Fagermoen, 1997)

# LITERATURE REVIEW

- There was overlap in the identified themes for clinical leadership and professional identity.
  - Personal attributes
  - Mentoring and being a role model
  - Nursing curricula must address the development of both professional identity and clinical leadership ability
- McNamara et al. 2011
  - If there is a struggle to identify the core values and beliefs of the profession
  - Difficult to communicate the profession's contribution to patient care
  - Issue with asserting themselves as clinical leaders

# RESEARCH QUESTION #1

What relationship exists between self-perceived clinical leadership ability and self-perceived professional identity in novice nurses?



## RESEARCH QUESTION #2

What difference exists in self-perceived clinical leadership ability among novice nurses based on academic degree?



## RESEARCH QUESTION #3

What difference exists in the self-perceived professional identify among novice nurses based on academic degree?

# RESEARCH DESIGN



- Mixed Methods
- Descriptive Research

# DATA COLLECTION

- Electronic survey combining two established instruments\*
  - *Clinical Leadership Survey (CLS)* developed by Patrick in 2010
    - Cronbach's Alpha .86
  - *Nurses Professional Values Scale – Revised (NPVS-R)* developed by Weis and Schank in 2009
    - Cronbach's Alpha .92
  - Demographics
  - Open ended questions\*\*

\*SPSS used for analyzing quantitative data

\*\*NVivo used for analyzing qualitative data

# DATA COLLECTION - PARTICIPANTS

- Convenience sample ( $N=8,138$ ) nurses practicing in the Midwest for less than 3 years
  - Members of the National Student Nurses Association
  - Student nurses who signed up for free access to the American Nurses Association website
  - Two community colleges and two universities in the Midwest that offer a baccalaureate, RN to BSN, masters' entry and accelerated program
- Participants ( $n = 239$ )

# DEMOGRAPHICS

- Median Age – 30
- Age Range – 20 to 55
- 87.9% Female
- Length of Practice – 61.5% (18 months or less)
- 62.3% reported previous healthcare related employment
- 75.7% belonged to the student nurses association
- 41.4% currently belonged to a professional association

# ANALYSIS – RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What relationship exists between self-perceived clinical leadership ability and self-perceived professional identity in novice nurses?

- Pearson's correlation
- *CLS* and the *NPVS-R*
  - total scores
  - domain/factor scores
  - entire group
  - by educational preparation
- The open-ended question will be analyzed for common themes
  - Open-coding method
  - Thematic-coding method

# ANALYSIS – RESEARCH QUESTION 2

What difference exists in self-perceived clinical leadership ability among novice nurses based on academic degree?

- one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)
  - *Clinical Leadership Score*
  - Domains - Challenging the process, Inspiring a shared vision, Enabling others to act, Modeling the way, Encouraging the heart
- Post hoc testing done using Tukey's Honestly Significant Differences Test
- Hochberg's corrections were applied to account for familywise errors
- Factorial ANOVAs – years of practice, previous health-related work, service on a volunteer board/committee, charge nurse experience, experience precepting new nurses or new hires, length of orientation
- The open-ended question will be analyzed for common themes
  - Open-coding and Thematic-coding method



# ANALYSIS – RESEARCH QUESTION 3

What difference exists in self-perceived professional identify among novice nurses based on academic degree?

- one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)
  - Nurses Professional Values Scale - Revised
  - Factors – Caring, Activism, Trust, Professionalism, Justice
- Post hoc testing done using Tukey's Honestly Significant Differences Test
- The open-ended question will be analyzed for common themes
  - Open-coding and Thematic-coding method

*Pearson's Correlation between Clinical Leadership Ability and Professional Identity*

	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
All educational preparations	.598	< .001*
Associate	.553	< .001*
Baccalaureate	.616	< .001*
RN to BSN	.664	< .001*
Master's Entry	.669	< .001*

Note. \* $p < .05$

## FINDINGS – QUESTION 1

What relationship exists between self-perceived clinical leadership ability and self-perceived professional identity in novice nurses?

*One-Way ANOVA – Educational Preparation - CLS*

	Associates <i>n</i> = 71		Baccalaureate <i>n</i> = 112		RN to BSN <i>n</i> = 25		Masters' Entry <i>n</i> = 24		<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>		
<i>Clinical Leadership Survey Score</i>	66.63	5.43	65.38	5.93	68.60	4.77	63.67	6.03	3.82	.011*
Challenging the Process	12.39	2.32	12.38	1.54	13.68	1.65	12.13	1.62	4.01	.008*
Inspiring a Shared Vision	13.54	1.43	13.09	1.63	13.72	1.21	12.71	1.57	3.05	.029
Enabling Others to Act	13.97	1.11	13.62	1.30	14.20	.96	13.67	1.47	2.26	.082
Modeling the Way	14.08	1.16	13.85	1.20	14.28	1.14	13.58	1.47	1.90	.130
Encouraging Others to Act	12.65	2.09	12.45	2.21	12.72	1.65	11.58	2.69	1.60	.190

*Note.* Tukey's honestly significant difference (HSD) post hoc test conducted. \**p* < .05

## FINDINGS – QUESTION 2

What difference exists in self-perceived clinical leadership ability among novice nurses based on academic degree?

*ANOVA Comparisons of CLS Scores - Educational Preparations*

Group	<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference Comparisons		
				Associates	BSN	RN to BSN
Associates	71	66.63	5.43			
BSN	112	65.38	5.93	.469		
RN to BSN	25	68.60	4.77	.446	.054	
Masters Entry	24	63.67	6.03	.123	.536	.014*

*Note.* \* $p < .05$

*ANOVA Comparisons of Challenging the Process Scores - Educational Preparations*

Group	<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference Comparisons		
				Associates	BSN	RN to BSN
Associates	71	12.39	2.32			
BSN	112	12.38	1.51	1.00		
RN to BSN	25	13.68	1.65	.015*	.009*	
Masters Entry	24	12.13	1.62	.925	.923	.014*

*Note.* \* $p < .05$

## FINDINGS – QUESTION 2

What difference exists in self-perceived clinical leadership ability among novice nurses based on academic degree?

*Factorial ANOVA – Clinical Leadership Scale*

	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Years of Practice	2.00	.017*
Previous health-related work	.991	.400
Service on a volunteer board/committee	1.55	.210
Charge nurse experience	1.65	.180
Experience precepting new nurses or new hires	1.01	.390
Length of orientation	1.48	.051

*Note. \*p < .05*

*Factorial ANOVA – Challenging the Process*

	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Years of Practice	2.00	.017*
Previous health-related work	.58	.630
Service on a volunteer board/committee	4.03	.008*
Charge nurse experience	1.63	.180
Experience precepting new nurses or new hires	1.29	.280
Length of orientation	1.53	.039*

*Note. \*p < .05*

## FINDINGS – QUESTION 2

What difference exists in self-perceived clinical leadership ability among novice nurses based on academic degree?

*How could your nursing program have been changed to better prepare you to become an RN and assume leadership roles in the practice setting?*

- Formal leadership courses identified
- Need additional time and experience – hands on or skills labs
- *Real life nursing*
  - *additional opportunities for interprofessional communication*
- *Misunderstanding of the concept of clinical leadership*

“Increase the amount of positive and constructive criticism. Teach how to find information rather than fact and process memorization.”

(online survey response, question 24, December 10, 2016)

“Being able to communicate with physicians and observe how they put orders in and what are their expectations of the nursing care.”

(online survey response, question 24, December 10, 2016)



“There is no training on disciplining and/or firing people. If one has never had the experience, the process can be daunting without any guidance. If this was done in school in a role playing activity, it would have been very helpful!”

(online survey response, question 24, December 15, 2016)

*What three activities or courses in your nursing program assisted you in developing clinical leadership skills?*

- *Clinical courses – 48.7%*
  - *Clinical courses with more independence or oversight of a team*
- *Leadership course or project*
  - *Self assessment opportunities*
  - *Management topics*
  - *Professional issue discussions*
  - *Group projects where a leadership role is assigned*

*One-Way ANOVA – Educational Preparation – NPVS-R*

	Associates <i>n</i> = 71		Baccalaureate <i>n</i> = 112		RN to BSN <i>n</i> = 25		Masters' Entry <i>n</i> = 24		<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>		
<i>Nurses Professional Values Score – Revised</i>	104.3	14.01	103.31	14.16	110.2	12.64	102.08	10.83	1.96	.121
Trust	21.79	2.66	21.29	2.76	22.64	1.82	21.00	2.28	2.38	.071
Justice	12.37	2.45	12.17	2.18	13.12	1.51	12.17	2.22	1.31	.272
Activism	17.01	4.07	17.03	4.11	19.00	3.76	16.63	3.82	2.00	.115
Professionalism	14.68	3.03	15.11	2.51	15.24	2.49	15.21	2.36	.53	.664
Caring	38.45	4.66	37.71	5.03	40.20	4.60	37.08	3.40	2.39	.070

*Note.* Tukey's honestly significant difference (HSD) post hoc test conducted. \**p* < .05

## FINDINGS – QUESTION 3

What difference exists in self-perceived professional identify among novice nurses based on academic degree?

*What three activities or courses in your nursing program assisted you in developing your professional identity?*

- **Clinical courses – 56.9%**
  - *witness nurses in action*
  - *witness firsthand what it means to be a nurse*
- **Leadership course or project**
  - *Self assessment opportunities*
  - *Management topics*
  - *Professional issue discussions*
  - *Group projects where a leadership role is assigned*

“Activities that placed us in the community where we had to represent our organization.”

(online survey response, question 26, November 7, 2017)

“Small class size which allowed many one-on-one opportunities to be mentored by my instructors, have meaningful discussions, etc.”

(online survey response, question 26, November 7, 2016)

# CONCLUSIONS

- Stronger a novice nurse's professional identity, the more likely he or she will perceive him/herself to be a clinical leader.
- RN to BSN *graduates are more likely to consider themselves clinical leaders than masters' entry graduates*
- RN to BSN graduates perceive themselves better prepared to Challenge the Process than graduates from associate degree, baccalaureate, or masters' entry programs
- Years of practice influenced the *Clinical Leadership Score*
- Years of practice, service on a volunteer board/committee, & length of orientation influenced the *Challenging the Process* factor score
- Educational preparation played no role in the novice nurse's sense of professional identity

# LIMITATIONS

- Concepts of professional identity and clinical leadership are multidimensional
- Inadequate numbers of diploma and accelerated program graduate participants limited ability to fully explore the impact of all educational preparations



# IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Educational programs must support the development of professional identity in students
  - opportunities that embed professional values and ethics
  - role of clinical faculty essential
  - organize content – focus on clinical leadership knowledge, skills and behaviors
- Foster understanding of clinical leadership versus formal leadership positions
  - clinical exemplars, role models, staff nurse mentor
  - use of debriefing sessions to reflect and add context to clinical experiences
- Use of simulation to fulfil students desire for additional and more varied clinical experiences

# FUTURE RESEARCH

- Research to determine if there is a causal link between professional identity development and clinical leadership ability
- Replication of the study with larger, more geographically diverse sample
- Determine best methods for developing professional identity and values
- Identification of additional clinical and didactic opportunities
  - professional identity development
  - understanding of the RN's role as a clinical leader
  - clinical exemplars, role models, staff nurse mentor
  - use of debriefing sessions to reflect and add context to clinical experiences
- Explore the interaction effect of years of practice, service on volunteer boards/committees and length of orientation
- Explore the concept of Challenging the Process

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