The Relationship Between Pre-Licensure Employment and Student Nurse Self-Efficacy

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The Relationship Between Pre-Licensure Employment and Student Nurse Self-Efficacy
Khristina L. Grimm, PhD, RN-BC

Abstract
Lack of self-efficacy in nursing practice contributes to high levels of stress as new nurses enter the workforce, which causes turnover during their first year of practice. Little is known about how the type and amount of pre-licensure employment affects the self-efficacy in nursing practice of the student nurse.

Relevant Literature
Bandura’s social cognitive theory posits that self-efficacy shares a bi-directional relationship with performance accomplishment and vicarious experience (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 1999). Positive modeling results in the acquisition of behavior patterns that result in favorable performance and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 1999).

Problem
The transition to practice in nursing is difficult for newly licensed nurses. Newly licensed nurses voice concern over feeling unprepared for the reality of nursing practice. Healthcare experiences high turnover rates among newly licensed nurses. Projected 16% increased need for nurses over the next decade. Healthcare leaders seek interventions to increase retention and improve self-efficacy in nursing practice. Although many student nurses are employed during their preparation, little is known how the type and amount of pre-licensure employment effects the self-efficacy in nursing practice.

Purpose
Guided by Bandura’s social cognitive theory, the purpose of this cross-sectional survey study was to examine the relationship between type and amount of pre-licensure employment and self-efficacy in nursing practice of student nurses in their final semester of college.

Research Questions
RQ1: What is the relationship between the type of pre-licensure work experience and self-efficacy of student nurses?
RQ2: What is the relationship between the amount of pre-licensure work experience and self-efficacy of student nurses?
RQ3: What is the relationship between the type of pre-licensure work experience, amount of pre-licensure work experience, and self-efficacy of student nurses?
RQ4: What combination of type of pre-licensure work experience and amount of pre-licensure work experience best predicts positive self-efficacy of student nurses?

Findings
RQ1 – RQ3: No significant correlations existed.
RQ4: Model did not predict self-efficacy.

Additional analysis: was completed using data collected in the second section of the Casey-Fink Readiness for Practice Survey measuring self-efficacy in managing the patient care assignment of 2, 3, and 4 patients.

Analysis revealed healthcare experience was the best predictor of positive self-efficacy in managing a patient care assignment of 3 patients ($F = 4.60, p = .01$) and 4 ($F = 3.42, p = .04$).

Limitations
The results may have been limited in generalizability as the participants were recruited using a convenience sample of senior nursing students in southwestern Michigan.

Although bachelor of nursing students were included for recruitment, the number who participated from the bachelor of nursing program was small (8%).

Conclusions
Findings from this study revealed no significant relationships exist between type and amount of pre-licensure work experience and self-efficacy in nursing students in their final semester of college.

Studies have found self-reported self-efficacy in nursing skills, such as delegation of task, communication with patients, and use of evidence based practice, is generally high in all nursing students (Karabacak et al., 2013). The presence of healthcare experience does predict positive self-efficacy in managing a patient care assignment of three and four patients.

Studies report observation of expert role models in the clinical setting increases self-efficacy in managing patients (Chesser-Smyth & Long, 2013; Franklin et al., 2015).

Social Change Implications
The need for RNs is anticipated to increase by 16%. Thus, it is imperative new RNs feel ready for practice. We must ensure nursing students are provided with opportunity to increase their confidence in their nursing skills and ability. Results of this study support changes in the structure of clinical experiences to provide increased opportunity for students to receive modeling from experienced nurses and apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills to a larger patient assignment prior to program completion.

Dr. Eileen Fowles, Committee Chairperson, Dr. Leslie Hussey, Committee Member, and Dr. Mattie Burton, University Reviewer