

112-O & 126-O

The Impact of an Emergency Services Open House on the New Graduate Nurse Intern's Perceptions of What it Means to Be an Emergency Nurse

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Upon completion of this course, the participant will be able to:

1. Define the impact that a new graduate nurse's perception of the emergency nurse's role and work environment has on his or her transition to practice; and
2. Identify the key misconceptions that the new graduate nurse has related to the emergency nurse's role and his or her work environment to allow us to make statistical predictions related to other demographic variables such as work experience or educational preparation.

I. Introduction

- A. A new graduate nurse's perception of what it means to be an emergency nurse and his or her perception of the emergency care environment can have a significant impact on the success of his or her transition to practice (Wolf, 2008).
- B. Identification of these perceptions and early exposure to the role and work environment of the emergency nurse can improve the transition of the new graduate nurse into the emergency care setting (Valdez, 2008).

II. Research Question

- A. Does a new graduate nurse's previous emergency department (ED) experience, educational background, or perception of relevant preparatory experience predict an increased understanding of the job roles, duties, or work environment of the emergency nurse?

III. Methods

- A. Evaluated the perceptions of new graduate nurse applicants with a desire to pursue a career in Emergency Services at Forsyth Medical Center.
- B. Began as an initiative to improve the hiring process for new graduate nurses to the emergency department at Forsyth Medical Center.
- C. First obtained institutional review board approval.
- D. Conducted eight open house events between December 2007 and February 2009 to evaluate and select new graduate nurses for vacant staff nurse positions.
- E. Each all day open house event included:
 1. Emergency Services overview and departmental tour
 2. Overview of the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA)
 3. Benefits of membership
 4. Useful tools for those interested in emergency care
 5. *So You Want to Be an Emergency Nurse*
 6. Interviews with leaders and staff
 7. Basic skills stations
- F. A researcher-designed, five-point ordinal scale was created to evaluate applicants':



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8. Perceptions of what it meant to be an emergency nurse
 9. Understanding of the role and daily job functions of an emergency nurse
 10. Understanding of the emergency nurse's work environment
- G. Recruitment for the study came from new graduate nurse applicants to Forsyth Medical Center with an interest in Emergency Services.
- H. The study was considered to be observational rather than experimental and therefore did not require randomization into experimental and control groups.
- I. No intervention or other variable manipulation occurred between open house groups.

IV. Statistical Analysis

- A. The goal of the statistical analysis was to explore the relationship between three ordinal outcome variables associated with the applicant's perceptions and certain predictor variables that may impact these perceptions.
- B. Ordinal logistic regression was used to model all relationships (Tables 2–4).
- C. A two-sided p-value < 0.05 was considered to be statistically significant.
- D. Descriptive statistics were initially calculated and are provided in Table 1 and in displayed graphically in Figures 1–3.
- E. Simple cross-tabulations were utilized to describe specifically the impact of previous ED experience on the applicant's perceptions of job roles and work environment of the emergency nurse.

V. Results

- A. From December 2007 to February 2009, a total of 115 applicants were invited to participate in the eight open house events.
 11. A 42% (48/115) response rate was achieved with 48 applicants responding to the online survey invitation.
 - a) Table 1: Study demographics and characteristics (N = 48)
 - b) Figure 1: Educational Program of Participants (N = 48)
 - c) Figure 2: Participants previous ED Experience (N = 48)
 - d) Figure 3: Participants relevant preparatory experience (N = 48)
- B. Simple cross-tabulations further revealed that 92.3% of those who indicated they had previous emergency care experience agreed or strongly agreed that they understood the job roles, duties, and work environment of the emergency nurse compared to less than 71% of those indicating they had no previous emergency care experience.
- C. Ordinal logistic regression was used to model all relationships and the results are displayed in Tables 2–4.
 12. The models using education level as a predictor was not found to be statistically significant for any of the ordinal outcome variables.
 13. However, perceptions of preparatory experience and reports of previous work experience in an emergency care setting did have a significant effect on the new graduate nurse's perceived understanding of the job roles, duties, and work environment of the emergency nurse.

VI. Discussion and Implications

- A. Awareness of the new graduate nurse's perceived understanding of the job roles, duties, and work environment, along with knowledge of previous experience, is useful information to support safe assimilation into the practice environment.



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- B. Management of these perceived understandings may lead to an improved hiring process for leaders and applicants.
- C. These research findings indicate that specific predictor variables such as a new graduate nurse's previous ED experience and the perception of other relevant experience positively impact his or her understanding of the job role, daily functions, and the work environment of the emergency nurse.
- D. This suggests that understanding of relevant preparatory experience and direct work experience in the emergency care setting may facilitate increased applicant and hiring leader satisfaction with the hiring process and the transition to practice.
- E. The findings of this study support further usefulness of logistic regression methods in predicting the impact of multiple variables on the perceptions of new graduate nurses and his or her understanding of the work environment.
- F. Limitations of this study which included:
 1. The small, convenience sample;
 2. Participant bias related to the hiring process; and
 3. Survey design with a low response rate significantly impacted the models' goodness-of-fit and put the validity of the results in question

VII. Further Study is Necessary After Modification of the Evaluation Tool and Increasing the Sample Size in Order to Generalize the Results to a Larger Population.

Resources:

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