

PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AMONG BSN STUDENTS TRANSITIONING TO PRACTITIONERS IN NURSING COLLEGE SARGODHA

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Abstract

This study explores the perception of identity among Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students at Nursing College Sargodha as they transition into practitioners. The transition from student to professional nurse is a critical phase that significantly influences the development of professional identity. Utilizing a qualitative approach, that research involved in-depth interviews with second year BSN students. The findings reveal that students experience a multifaceted transformation characterized by the combination of theoretical knowledge with practical skills, the influence of clinical experiences, and the impact of mentorship and noble relationships. Participants expressed a growing sense of confidence and capability, yet also highlighted challenges such as role vagueness and the emotional toll of patient care. The study emphasizes the importance of supportive educational environments and structured transition programs to stand-in a strong professional identity among nursing students. Commendations for nursing curricula and mentorship initiatives are discussed to enhance the transition experience and prepare students for the realities of professional practice

INTRODUCTION

Nursing is a profession that need considerable physical emotional and mental labour. The highest demands for healthcare facilities and inadequate supply of professionals in the work fields are considered an alarming condition in healthcare. The nursing field is sole for several reasons, combining a blend of science, compassion, and flexibility. Nursing focuses not only on physical health but also on patients' emotional, psychological, and social well-being. This inclusive perspective ensures that care addresses the whole person, not just their illness. Nursing is both a science, requiring knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and medical interventions, and an art, requiring empathy, communication, and intuition to connect with patients and families. The

emotional challenges of nursing, such as dealing with life-and-death situations, make it a uniquely demanding profession. Nurses develop a resilience and strength that are both admirable and essential. Nursing is a rewarding career for several reasons, as it offers opportunities for personal fulfilment, professional growth, and meaningful contributions to society. Nursing offers a wide range of specializations, from paediatrics to oncology, critical care, and mental health. Nurses can work in hospitals, clinics, schools, community health organizations, or even as traveling nurses, allowing for flexibility and career variety. it combines compassionate service with professional

achievement, creating a career where one can genuinely make a difference every day.

The transformation from nursing student to practitioner marks a pivotal juncture in a nurse's professional journey, where academic theory converges with practical application in a clinical setting. Newly qualified nurses encounter a substantial escalation in responsibility, necessitating adaptability in managing patient care, decision-making, and crisis management. The transition bridges the gap between theoretical foundations and real-world application, demanding mentorship and structured support to foster confidence and competence. Developing clinical expertise and self-confidence is crucial, directly impacting patient care quality and autonomy in practice. The transition period can be emotionally demanding due to workload, stress, and high-pressure environments, underscoring the importance of coping mechanisms and support networks. Effective integration into diverse healthcare teams necessitates strong interpersonal skills, vital for optimal patient outcomes. So, Transition from nursing student to nursing practitioner is a significant career that comes with numerous challenges. The shift from student nurse to professional nursing practitioner marked by growth learning and adjustment. Nursing Instruction prepares the student with necessary theoretical knowledge and technical skills but real to world submission of this acquaintance present unexpected challenges. The transition for the education of nursing plays an important role in their practice and theoretical work. Because the educational background and practical atmosphere has been relating to different background of knowledge that a nursing students acquire in classroom has considered virtually untransferable to real world due to gap the gap of different knowledge.

The transition is marked as a period of great stress and struggle because graduates face numerous challenges and difficulties that hinder their way. Qualified nurses are presented themselves as fully capable for these professions and ignorance and lack of knowledge make their standard low. The transition contains three phases that make a nurse to become a professional practitioner. First phase in which a nurse completes her nursing study and become a mature clinical practitioner. In the second

phase that is called a transition phase in which a nurse holding the new responsibilities. In the last nurse make herself a good responsible worker and an expert with knowledge and skills, (Wieland et al 2007,317).

During this change a nurse faces numerous challenges. Problems faced during Transition are role adaptations, Time management, workload, emotional and psychological stress, and interpersonal collaboration.

To investigate the primary difficulties nurses, face different kind of obstacle from academic to clinical settings, including deficiencies in practical expertise, self-assurance, and time management. To examine the key determinants impacting the transition process, such as guidance, workplace culture, onboarding initiatives, and individual resilience. To highlight the pivotal role of mentorship, preceptorship, and structured orientation programs in facilitating a seamless transition and enhancing novice nurses' confidence and competence. To emphasize the necessity of acquiring clinical skills, decision-making acumen, and patient-care competencies essential for newly qualified nurses. To investigate how a supportive transition environment influences job satisfaction, burnout reduction, and turnover rates among newly graduated nurses.

Nurses are facing different kind of issues due to valued presumption and new changings in healthcare work field. However, according to Pakistan Nursing Council (PNC) round about 125,000 to 170,000 Nurses are figured out.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) shows the analysis of estimated global shortage of over 7.6 million nurses by 2030, with implications for healthcare delivery.

Pakistan is facing shortage of Nursing workforce. World Health Organization One Nurse per 1000 peoples, But Pakistan falls short to this ratio and here roughly 0.8 nurse for 1000 peoples

So, Pakistan needs increasing nursing professionals to cope up with any emergency situation or any outbreak. Because during COVID-19 Nurses and other paramedic staff are front line worriers providing quality health care delivery to massive COVID Patients. They ensure strict Infection prevention protocols, administration medicine timely, providing direct care approach to peoples,

ease them emotionally, support them mentally and physically. This pandemic actually raises the shortage of nurses due to Increased hospital workload and a need for professional health practitioners because they play crucial role in such circumstances for peoples of their country.

Nurses obtain their skills through experimental learning; clinical learning is a main key for nursing practice. But due to congested health and education system there are a lot of hinder in the way to better transition. So, the student of BSN generic From Sargodha city of Punjab highlighted the hurdles in the transitional phase of nursing student to nursing practitioner.

Nursing students face several difficulties and circumstances ring their studies and after becoming NP's, and these challenges affect their education, Professional development and ability to transform in new roles.

Many students highlight that Nursing programs are rigorous and demanding requiring from students' large amount of knowledge to accommodate and this led to increased stress and study burden. Managing complex subjects like pharmacology, statistics, adult health nursing, and pathophysiology and to compensate balance with practical skills can be more challenging and demanding.

In Pakistan many Governments and non-government organizations are offering nursing programs, so most students face financial burden due to high-cost books, trainings fee, and living expenses and transportation rents. This can limit their focus and concentration toward their studies due to economic crises.

Nursing students often face struggle managing education stress, clinical hours and personal responsibilities. This can increase burnout and may have bad impact on their physical and mental wellbeing.

Some nursing students particularly in rural and underdeveloped areas lack access to basic learning resources, not well-structured labs for practical work and not equipped with modern tools and technologies that limit the student's ability to learn and practice their skills effectively.

Cultural barriers and language also influence one's personality. In nursing students from different cultural domains are grouped together so unsuitable

linguistic background and poor communication skills are major drawback in clinical area especially dealing with patients of different mind-set and domains because norms, values and beliefs of patients are their high priority.

Students also highlight the point that inappropriate mentorship, coaching and guidance shapes good transition because learning of new theories are important for a positive transition. Mentorship is considered as long-term relationship, which is less common on today fast-growing era. And lack of proper well-structured coaching also influences student's role transformation.

Nurses' practitioners precisely complete their clinical hours but cannot develop adequate skills and competencies to work independently. Quality clinical education and skills acquisition is mandatory for transition of student to nursing practitioner. Student also highlights challenges faces during this shift from student to nursing practitioners.

Nurses describe that the adaptation role is most critical changing student phase they are under supervision of their mentors and Instructors but in clinical phase all nurses have to take decisions by their own. So, this could be challenging for them.

Another concern is to make rapid decision during some life-threatening emergency situations and knowledge application from theoretical to real world cases and also challenge the ability to handle multiple priorities simultaneously.

Moreover, for nurses the academic schedule to practical field often demands time management and workload. Nurses are facing patient load, more documentations and overwhelming ward management.

Peaceful mind and stress-free mental health contribute to overall person throughout all this management burden they feel emotional and psychological stress in their daily affairs. So, a better interpersonal collaboration and peer support encourage them to come up with this. Because due to emotionally and physically demanding nature of nursing practitioners' role many new nurses feel compassion burnout and fatigue.

Nursing practitioners often consider prescribing and making medical diagnosis another complex task, because inappropriate techniques and training causes false diagnosis and medical errors. Diagnostic

reasoning requires the use of intuition, pattern identification and use of analytical approaches. Feelings of not being able to handle the new responsibilities of a nursing practitioners may jeopardize the nursing practitioners' role transition and cause some nursing practitioners to leave affecting the retention of nursing practitioners' workforce. Nursing practitioners' Feelings of self-doubt and incompetence as well as mixed negative feelings were caused by their expanded responsibilities.

Loss of confidence may affect nursing practitioners' retention. More than a quarter of novice NPs will leave their job within one year (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, [AACN], 2015). NP support system is divided into 4's including situations, self, support, and strategies. Situation. Because NPs' transition can be altered by the environment, it becomes necessary to examine the situations that surround nursing practitioners' role transition. Nursing practitioners' role transition is triggered by nursing practitioners' enrolling into the graduate nursing program and then seeking a new job. Demands for high Productivity may cause novice nursing practitioners' to quickly self-educate on doing unfamiliar things or Procedures.

Self-include person's unique characteristics may also influence his or her role transition.

Support. To be successful, nursing practitioners' role transition must be well supported prior and after Graduation. Support is often provided by people who encourage, teach, provide contacts, or assist with immediate needs such as transportation, finances, or babysitting.

Strategies. How nursing practitioners learn their new role may also vary depending on what coping Strategies they use to adjust to a new role.

One of the important contributing factors to the issue of quality of nursing practitioners' clinical education Is the lack of consistent competency-based evaluation strategies to assess nursing practitioners' students' readiness for practice. The number of clinical hours is essential to students' learning; however, the quality of students' clinical experiences may also affect their role learning. Moreover, nursing practitioners' students need to have a CLE that is equipped to their needs; they need to have some familiarity with their preceptors and staff to ensure

that the communication is clear and effective; students also need to be familiar with the practice's policies and the types of diagnosis and patient population usual for the site.

The incorporation of simulation in nursing education has been demonstrated to improve clinical competence and confidence, thereby facilitating a more effective transition to the clinical environment.

Lack of adequate clinical sites was found to be a significant role transition barrier. To offset the lack of clinical training, educators had to come up with Some creative solutions to increase the quality of students' clinical experience and clinical environment should also be equipped with instructions and instrument.

Because students vary in their preparation level and the time they may require adjusting to their new role, special attention should be given to the process of matching the preceptor and the student, for example, sites with lower patient volume should be reserved for beginners, while fast-paced clinical environments should be selected for more advanced student.

To facilitate a smoother transition to practice, many healthcare organizations have established nurse residency programs that offer a comprehensive range of support services, including skills training, simulation-based education, and debriefing sessions. These programs are designed to help new nurses build their clinical competencies, develop resilience, and navigate the challenges of the first year of practice.

The emotional demands of nursing can be overwhelming for new nurses during the transition period, as they confront the realities of patient care and grapple with emotionally charged situations, such as patient suffering and loss, which can lead to burnout and underscore the need for effective coping strategies and support systems. Fostering a culture of ongoing professional development among new nurses can help them stay current with the latest advancements in healthcare, enhance their clinical competence, and boost their confidence, ultimately leading to better patient outcomes.

Formal and informal peer support systems can play a crucial role in alleviating feelings of isolation and fostering a sense of community among new nurses, who can benefit from sharing experiences and

receiving support from colleagues who are navigating similar challenges.

Formal support programs, such as preceptorships and mentorships, play a vital role in facilitating a smooth transition for new nurses. Under the guidance of experienced nurses, they receive valuable support, feedback, and role modelling, which helps build their confidence and enhance their clinical skills.

Objectives of Study

- 1.To trace out the perception of professional identity among BSN student of Sargodha.
2. To explore the main factors that are influenced the nursing identity.
- 3.To trace out the relationship between professional identity and transition to nursing practice.

Significance of Study

This study focusses on the existing of nursing profession and formation of nursing students. Nurses play an important role in our society. They provide nursing care to the sick people. A nurse plays as a role of motivator, advocator and care provider to the patients. The study put light on the process of nursing professions their formation and identity among the BSN students of collage of nursing Sargodha. It also traces out how the cultural and institutional context of nursing collage Sargodha influences the formation of nursing identity.

Literature review

The transformational period between the educational, work and environments are supposed to be particularly important to the retention of Nursing field. It maintained the identity and enhance the practical skills of nursing officers and nursing students (Bahouth & Esposito-Herr, 2009).

Lack of unappropriated and ineffective clinical skills could cause Nursing Practitioners to face problems and struggling in for new challenging and herders thus undermine the value of their contributions in the care and look after of patients and their clients (Jones et al., 2015).The transition to practice can be a challenging experience for new nursing practitioners, largely due to the gap that exists between the theoretical foundations of their

education and the practical application of their skills in a clinical fields, (Fitzpatrick & Gripshover, 2016).

The transition from nursing student to practicing nurse is often characterized as a discouraging, high-pressure, and emotionally taxing experiences, that create a lot of problems and difficulties (Hampton et al., 2020).

To the lack of collaborations, skills and practice nursing students can face problems and challenges in their fields and development of higher-level thinking, effective communication, and personal responsibility, ultimately impacting their self-awareness and professionalism (Buckley & Trocky, 2019; Lankshear, 2018).

De hei et al. (2020) suggests that successful collaboration in learning settings can result in the acquisition of new knowledge, the development of higher-order thinking skills, and the cultivation of metacognitive abilities, all of which are essential for effective teamwork.

The transition-to-practice experiences of novice nurses have been identified as a key predictor of their job satisfaction and retention, with positive experiences leading to increased satisfaction and reduced turnover (Hampton et al., 2020).

Self-efficacy is a vital component of nursing practice, as it influences nurses' professional identity, performance, and competence, ultimately impacting the quality of care they provide (Kim & Sim, 2020; Yao et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2021).

Due to high revenue rates, due to the shortage of nurses put negative impact on the care of patients, this shortage cause many problems that the patients have been facing (Duffield et al., 2014; Flinkman et al., 2010).According to the point of view of Duchscher, 2008; Kramer, 1975, the transitional experiences includes educated registered nurses, are globally, facing a phenomenon dubbed "reality shock" (Duchscher, 2008; Kramer, 1975) which is primarily attributable to the theory-practice mismatch whereby the qualified and PNC registered nurses are unable to give a proper and safe measurement , (Maben et al., 2006).The U.S. Department of Labor, (2022) declared that more than 275,000 additional nurses will be required in 2020 to 2030; therefore, holding of employee is key to maintaining a reasonable workforce. Dutchner (2009), introduced the concept of "Transition

Shock,” describing the initial disorientation and stress new nurses face when entering professional practice. Kramer et al, (2013) traces out that workplace with strong “reality shock management” strategies play a significant role in the improvement of nurses in retention and satisfaction of patients.

METHADODOLOGY

This research is based on qualitative approach. This study employs a qualitative research approach to provide an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences and perspectives and thinking within the study's natural context. The main aim to capture the distinct voices and nuances of my BSN second year participants' responses, gaining a rich understanding of the issue at hand. Qualitative research proved ideal for this study, enabling:

- Contextual investigation in natural settings (Creswell, 2009)
- Utilization of the researcher as primary instrument
- Employment of diverse data collection methods
- Interpretation of participants' meanings

This approach also allowed for an in-depth examination of the phenomenon, prioritizing depth over breadth (Patton, 2015). Through extended interviews from BSN second year students, that is based on qualitative data.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

QNO1.what was the most hurdle you encountered during your transition phase?

QNO2.In your opinion, what qualities or skills are most important for a nurse practitioner to have when starting career?

QNO3: Was there specific skill that was especially important for you to become nursing practitioners?

QNO4: what kind of support or resources would be most helpful to you in making successful transition?

QNO5: How did you adjust to increased expectations and responsibilities as a practitioner or as a student?

QNO6: What advice would you give to nursing students about transition phase?

Participants:

With ethically, morally and after taking consent from all participants. Interview is recorded in audio form. Interviews are based on the opinions, thoughts and perception of participants.

Participant No1:

Asia Mumtaz and Bisma /Age 20/ single /Nursing student:

“As a student, you learn the science of nursing; as a practitioner, you live the spirit of care.”

She tells that although transition require all your efforts, struggle and sacrifices the end product of your personality fill with patience, remarkable skills and Strategies to Stay alert in your transition phase.

Being a student your entirely focus is on studies besides some clinical rotation but being Nurse practitioner huge responsibilities are there on your shoulders. A strong person with strong willpower conquers every battlefield of their life.

Participant No 2:

Hadia laraib/Age 21/Single/Nursing student.

“The transition from books to bedside is where passion meets purpose, and dreams grow into a calling.”

According to her it's your inner feelings that shape your personality, it determines that if you are passionate to do something or not. Where there is a will, there is a way. By acquiring communication skills, you explore your surroundings and you are able to stand.

So, besides all hurdles, problems, hardship your personality refine step by step and then your dreams come true in the form of successful transition into another career role.

Participant no 3:

Komal Amjad/Age 21/Single/Nursing student.

“From taking notes to taking the lead, this journey redefines purpose and gives wings to empathy.”

She says that the only thing that motivates you is your goals, which u strive hard to attain them in your life by continuous hardworking consistent workout, the journey of Nursing modified over time and give you enough power, patience and courage to become an efficient Nursing practitioner.

Participant No 4:

Maria khizar And Raheela/Age 22/Single/Nursing student.

It's a path from learning to care to becoming care itself, where each patient becomes a lesson and each life a story.”

She stated that every sunrise is a new day filled with lot of challenges, and responsibilities. During transition phase A nursing student and nursing

practitioners encounter multiple cases and disease so it would be challenging for her if, she does not possess qualities of being a good practitioner, so with patience, critical thinking, and with determination every new role can easily be performed, and each person condition is itself a lesson to be remembered for rest of life for better transition.

Participant No 4.

Laraib Fatima/Age 22/Single/Nursing student.

“Walking the path from student to practitioner is not just a career shift; it’s the soul’s immersion into the art of care.”

She stated that transition is not just a shift, it deeply enrooted in our soul. So, nothing is superior over it like favouritism, Leg pulling, people’s demotivation. All these perspectives should be resolved by Strong background knowledge, strengths, and confidence, because this transition is soul immersion.

Participant no 5.

Aleena Fatima/Age 21/Single /, Nursing student.

She presented her opinion regarding transition phase

“A transition of Nurse of trust, From student to caregiver”

A nurse personality is only build-ups in patients’ life by only through trust. A cooperative, trustworthy relationship is necessary as patients feel comfortable and discuss their concern openly, so during a role shift the thing which she considers priority is to develop effective trust environment.

Finding of Study

This section finds out the key themes identified through data analysis, putting light on how BSN students perceive their professional identity during the transition from students to practicing nurses. The results offer a deeper understanding of their experiences and evolving professional roles. The transition from student to practitioner can be a daunting experience for Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students. As they embark on this significant career milestone, they often encounter a myriad of challenges that can impact their confidence, competence, and overall job satisfaction. Research has explored that during study and practices several key challenges that BSN students’ students applied to shape and reinforce their professional identity. The findings highlight the

techniques and approach adopted by students during their transitioned into professional practice.

Discussion

Nursing plays a crucial role in our society. Their role in our society is appreciable. There are a lot of challenges that a nurse face during her study to practice. With the passage of time the field of nursing is highly promoted. Nursing diploma is converted to degree program that is highly achievable step. During the analysing and interpret the findings in the context of existing literature, offering meaningful insights into the study's implications. This section should be organized into the following subsections for clarity. The research questions, drawing connections to prior studies and existing literature on the development of professional identity among nursing students. The outcomes of this study compare to earlier studies on nursing students' professional identity, highlighting areas of agreement and divergence.

Limitations of the Research

Highlight the study's limitations, including issues like a small sample size, the contextual factors specific to this research, and other variables that may have influenced the outcomes.

CONCLUSION:

In summary, the transition from Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students to practicing professionals is a critical period that shapes their professional identity. This study examined how BSN students at Nursing College Sargodha perceive their professional identity as they prepare to enter the nursing field. Findings show that factors like clinical experiences, mentorship, self-reflection, and socialization strongly influence this identity development. Throughout this transition, students gain a sense of belonging, build confidence, and deepen their commitment to the nursing profession.

The study underscored the importance of clinical placements in building professional identity, as real-world experiences and interactions with healthcare teams help students better understand their roles and responsibilities in nursing. Additionally, mentorship was found to be vital in cultivating professional values and attitudes. Supportive

relationships with mentors and peers encouraged students to adopt a professional mindset and hone essential skills.

Despite these positive influences, the study also identified challenges, including anxiety, self-doubt, and lack of adequate support, which can hinder identity formation. These insights point to a need for focused efforts to ease this transition. Nursing education institutions, like Nursing College Sargodha, should consider implementing strategies to foster professional identity development, such as:

Strengthened clinical placements and mentorship opportunities.

Integration of reflective practices and self-assessment.

Cultivation of a supportive learning environment.

Promotion of professional development and lifelong learning.

By addressing these areas, nursing educators can better support BSN students in developing a strong professional identity, preparing them to deliver high-quality patient care and meet the demands of a complex healthcare system. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of how professional identity is formed among nursing students and provides evidence-based strategies to assist them in becoming competent practitioners.

Future research could explore the impact of professional identity on patient outcomes, the role of technology in nursing education, and how interdisciplinary collaboration influences professional identity development. Ongoing exploration of these topics will help build a capable and compassionate nursing workforce, ready to provide outstanding care in a rapidly changing healthcare environment.

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