Overview

* Ethnography of Nurse Educators within academia had not been done.
* Little is known of the cultural context of nurse educators
* When individuals are constructing a cognitive map of this area of practice- it is on their own, finding their own support, trial and error, and sink or swim.
Research question- what is the cultural context of nurse educators in tenure-granting institutions not associated with a health science center?

To explore and describe the cultural context initially-as the first step in making interventions and effecting change for the better.

This descriptive Ethnographic Analysis does not offer solutions for, but rather descriptions of the culture. It paints a picture.

Why explore the culture of nurses practicing in academia?

Nurses who are moving into academia must identify what is expected of them

They learn the language

They learn the rules, rituals, and beliefs

Only then can they negotiate the culture successfully.

Existing Barriers to adaptation to this culture were identified in this study.

Strategies for adaptation were also identified by participants
Ethnography is the act of studying, describing, and revealing unique aspects of a cultural group.

Spradley 1979

This ethnographic method was applied to multiple participants in this original research.

This cultural group consists of professional nurses who are practicing in Academia, a socially constructed culture.

Methodology

IRB approval was obtained through UNC IRBNET.

After consent, interviews were conducted 1:1.

12 interviews were conducted with participants meeting the inclusion criteria.

Length of time approximately 60 minutes each

Interviews were recorded and transcribed.

The transcriptions were shared with my research advisor, and we debriefed the contents via Skype with weekly meetings.

Participants were identified by letter initially and later by pseudonym.

Journals for each participant were kept and shared with research advisor.
Methodology

* Repeating Patterns emerged after 12 interviews.
* Interview questions evolved over time
* Transcribed interviews were verified.
* All interview data are secure.
* Consent forms were collected and secured
* Demographic Data was collected and aggregated

Description of environment and participants

![Bar chart showing clinical group size, class size, years in faculty role, age of participants, years in direct care, and years as an RN.](chart.png)
Aggregate Data of Sample

* Age: Range 30-74, average 53
* Races: Caucasian (7), Native American (4), and Asian (1)
* Time in Faculty Role, Range: 3-45 years, average 15.
* Schools represented: 3 private faith based institutions and 2 state programs, one with online delivery of curriculum.
* 7 of 12 had formal educational preparation to the faculty role.
* All five programs were located in the Midwestern portion United States.

Analyzing the data

* Transcripts were printed, put into a binder
* Read through transcripts multiple times
* Reflective Notations of:
  * Recurring themes
  * Recurring terms
  * Recurring patterns
  * Spradley called this identifying the taxonomy and components.
* A Framework of four domains guided organization of the taxonomy and identified components.
Framework

Rules

Rituals

Cultural Context of Nursing Faculty

Language

Beliefs

Data Analysis Process

Analysis of Domains

Cultural themes discovered with componential analysis

General Ethnographic Statements

- Multitasking
- Language
- Values
- Components of ethics systems
- See Appendix II

- Attending to own
- Networking in Essential
- Training
- Self
- Faculty
- Mentors are important
- Norms of Scholarship
- Workloads on changing
- Unfairness

- Learning patterns
- Establishing
- Relationships
- Accountability
- Responsibility
Themes emerged within the domains

* Rules, rituals, language and beliefs
* Themes emerged
* Themes not exclusive to one domain
* Sometimes artificial
* Guided by a chart with data exemplars

* Componential analysis was achieved and trustworthiness was safeguarded
* Expert content reviewer, peer reviewers/debriefers, research advisor debriefing, and consultation with an anthropologist

What does it all mean?

* sink or swim
Watch and Learn

“I really feel like I’m the new kid on the block. And I need to just kind of lay low and, you know, get my stuff done and work hard, which is what I do in my office at home, and kind of see how things go. We’ll see.”

Finding Support

“So I had mentors here because I was a student and I was able to reach out to them constantly and say this is what I’m going through. This is what I’m up against”

Networking

“It’s really from watching the other faculty around you. A lot of times, those folks that will take you under [their wing], and if you have questions...”

Follow the leader

“[learning from watching and] modeling from other faculty.”

Bureaucratic Challenges

“Like, are we having a meeting, and a lot of the meetings they have are on Tuesdays and Wednesdays when I am in clinical. And so it’s hard almost to be a part of the campus.”

Not Enough Hours in the day

“I’m grateful every day, but I’ll tell you, it’s—it’s not the most stressful job I’ve ever had, but I think I’ve put more hours in this job than any job I’ve ever put in.”

Scholarship

“So they would like us to do research and they would like us to do undergraduate research, or have the students engaged in our research, undergraduate students, as well as graduate students in that. But, um... there’s not a huge amount of pressure to do that.”
Rituals

- Sink or Swim
  - "I mean, it was, you know, sink or swim. There was no real prepping you for the position."
- Asking the Right Questions
  - "My willingness to say, ‘How do you do that?’ ... that made people answer questions, because it wasn’t just given... I noticed other faculty wouldn’t ask questions. And then it was almost acceptable to not do it because they did not know."
- Hierarchy
  - "...I think we need a formal orientation process to our department, here is the papers, here is what you do, we need all of this what you do, how you do."
- Secrets
  - "I think sometimes they’re unintentional. I think sometimes they can come from history. And I think there’s the incivility secrets, where you’re actually trying to keep knowledge from another educator. ... I think there’s secrets, but I think it’s more, uh, organizational culture. There’s unwritten rules everywhere you go. There are things we don’t see."
- Trust
  - "There are people that I had to learn the hard way, that I couldn’t trust that relationship at the same level and finally just have to figure out what the dynamic is and which people you can just say anything to and which you can’t do."

Rituals (2)

- Hidden Agenda
  - "But the true underlying what’s really expected came from the-the talk underneath and behind the scenes, office to office. And you know, ‘hey, you probably didn’t know how to do this,’ you know. ‘Let me show you how to do it,’ you know.”
- Earning Credibility
  - "It’s not that I have to work harder, but I have to constantly be proving myself. I feel like I can’t let down my guard and, y  to some extent, you know... and I think that sometimes my age is definitely it hinders me here.”
- Scholarship and Service
  - "If you’re on tenure track—and you’re truly trying to get tenure, you’re gonna have to have done something, but it’s not, if you’ve done a lot of service, let’s say, but you haven’t done a lot of scholarship, but you’ve done an article or something that counts, they’re probably not going to turn you down because of that.”
- Communication and civility
  - "We are- we are very backbiting, which is sad because nursing is so great.”
  - "‘That we do see um, instances of incivility. We as a group are not aware of some things that can be interpreted as uncivil, like raising your eyebrows and, you know.”
**Language**

- **Curriculum**
  - “I don't think they're valuing what we're doing. And I don't think they understand us. Um, it's really frustrating for me.”

- **No Comprende Enfermera**
  - “So I just think there's some of that, that self-importance piece, that they tend to look at nursing and say, “ehh they're a little bit country for us” ... So I think on the campus, it takes that most faculty have a doctoral degree to start getting that respect that they think so I-I do think there's some, “well, nursing does a good job on this campus, but they're not quite where we are” [with terminal degrees].”

**Beliefs**

- **We are here for the students**
  - “The culture of the university here that I'm at is really to help students to bring them along, take the student who is weak and work with them to where they can [succeed].”

- **Workload.. Reprise**
  - “Whenever I came, they said, "We like for our full-time faculty to teach in the summer cuz it's just, you know, more consistency with the courses and whatnot ... but it's not expected, and so, don't feel bad if you say no,” ... and so, while there's not been any negativity that's come from it, you still have this—feel guilty if you don't.”

- **Everybody Loves Us... Almost**
  - “[There is] resentment from other departments in terms of nursing is never here on Tuesdays or Wednesdays, they're never at the meetings.”
Beliefs (2)

* Scholarship comes after students
  * “I think most of the faculty in this department's commitments are to its students first. So it often, the other part [scholarship] takes a back seat.”

* Service- Nurses Serve others
  * “I don't know that there’s specific requirements. … Every few months there’s something we can do to give back to the community. … They focus on that for tenureship, like whenever we're making our portfolio.”

* Conflict is “not nice”
  * “Usually if somebody disagrees with you, it’s... shoved under the table, so. Again, it depends on who the conflict is with.”

Nurse Educators’ cognitive map
General Ethnographic Statements

* Working through the domains, to the themes and concluding the data with these four General Statements- to paint the picture of this culture.

* Learning Patterned ways of thinking
* Relationships
* Negotiating the bureaucracy
* Earning credibility
Learning patterned ways of thinking

* Novice nurse educators find support in a cohort of newcomers
* Nurse educators in a cohort communicate with one another for support for common concerns and challenges.
* Sink or Swim, learn it on your own, trial and error
* They thought everyone was supportive of one another in clinical practice, does that carry over to academia?
* Encountered covert bullying with secrets kept from the educators—having to ask the right question

* Orientation varies
* Mentorship varies

Relationships

* Keeping Secrets
  * Secretive under tones, Protecting information for security in position Pride and Intellectual property
  * Have to feel part of the community to avoid suspicion of others’ behaviors and motives.
  * Communication is titrated based on time in position and need to know.

* Avoiding conflict
  * They compete for the approval of students, and acceptance of academic colleagues across campus.
  * Undeclared boundaries exist—those must be discovered by chance.
  * “We are all here for the students”
  * Conflict is avoided at all cost, sweep it under the rug

* Incivility
  * Hidden Agendas
  * Incivility—communication is titrated on a need to know basis, watch voice tones and nonverbal communication
  * Unwritten rules of dress code and behaviors, often not addressed with confrontation but rather behind the scenes.
  * Nurses ‘Eat their young.’
Negotiating the bureaucracy

- Slow pace of work, resist change, and different autonomy
  - Faculty do not have individual autonomy to change course descriptions or objectives, channels must be learned and followed.
  - There are formal and informal channels and rules for how to initiate change, knowing the right people.
  - Outdated systems? Equipment? Financial constraints lead to outdated systems, or traditional ways of doing things.

- Workload excessive
  - The workload is intense and demanding, no matter the delivery method. Workload leads to some level of isolation.
  - Control over teaching assignments is earned with tenure and longevity.
  - Salary Differential... low wages for amount of work required.

- Expectations for scholarship
  - Scholarship is encouraged without consequence for its omission
  - Scholarship defined by nursing faculty as CEU, presentations, programs, Book study, achievement of Certifications.
  - Nurse educators can see the changes coming, with denial of tenure, and requirements for publication and scholarship beyond service activities.

Earning Credibility

- Teaching practices are different
  - A difference between nursing academics and traditional academics prevents integration on the campus.
  - Time schedules and teaching responsibilities away from the academic campus contribute to a sense of isolation
  - Interdisciplinary collaboration, research, and collegiality are impacted by these differences.
  - Nursing Faculty are misunderstood by other colleges and departments. (devalued)? (must earn credibility)?

- Few rewards or acknowledgement
  - Faculty expected to positive extrinsic feedback from administration for fulfilling workload but did not receive it. (Compliments are few)
  - Lack of understanding from faculty of other colleges, about nursing educator role expectations on and off campus, and different ways to measure the critical thinking and decision making skills in nursing.
  - Miscommunications about the complexity of the role, that teaching was only a fraction (45%) with many other demands for scholarship and service.

- We are the best
  - Nursing Faculty see themselves as the best program in the college; financial support, high enrollment, good student outcomes.
  - I'm here to take care of the college of nursing, and educating these students- not seeing the big picture..
**Implications**

* Faculty shortage and Difficulty transitions
  * Stressors in the transition effect longevity - Anderson, 2009
  * Cultural Dissonance is a challenging facet – Schriner 2004
  * Faculty vacancy rate 6.9% - AACN 2015
  * Insufficient funds and difficulty recruiting
  * Salary differential – faculty vs. clinical practice
  * Schoening (2013) transition to faculty role is challenging

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**Implications**

* Although ethnography is not intended to offer solutions, it does suggest direction for the future of nurse educators’ cultural context.
  * Orientation programs
  * Mentorship programs with preparation support given to those who are Mentors
  * Healthier communication practices
  * Integrate to the broader academic community
  * Workloads must be negotiable
Conclusions and Recommendations

* Network of support is essential
  * Retention and continued development of faculty
* Address Horizontal Incivility
* Role modeling healthy behaviors for socialization of students to the profession
* Need for Clearly defined expectations of scholarship

Limitations of this study

* Qualitative study with limited generalizability
  * Narrow Inclusion criteria
  * Limited geographical diversity- may impact emerging cultural norms
  * While repeating patterns existed, it may not be a complete representation of the cultural context
* Novice researcher
  * Content experts, Anthropology consultant and research advisor.
  * Limited to interview data
Questions?