



## Clinical education

## Attributes of Iranian new nurse preceptors: A phenomenological study

Leili Borimnejad<sup>a</sup>, Sousan Valizadeh<sup>b</sup>, Azad Rahmani<sup>c</sup>, Bill Whitehead<sup>d</sup>, Shahla Shahbazi<sup>c,\*</sup><sup>a</sup> Nursing Care Research Centre, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Iran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran<sup>b</sup> Department of Pediatric, Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery, Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, Iran<sup>c</sup> Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery, Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, Iran<sup>d</sup> University of Derby, Kedleston Road, Derby DE22 1GB, United Kingdom

## ARTICLE INFO

## Keywords:

Preceptorship  
Preceptor  
New nurses  
Attributes  
Qualitative research  
Phenomenology

## ABSTRACT

Preceptors should possess attributes which help them in successfully performing the demanding and challenging role in the preceptorship. This research utilises a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological approach to explore the attributes of new nurse preceptors. Six preceptors of a teaching hospital in Northwest of Iran who were selected by means of purposive sampling. Data were collected during eight months from July 2014 to March 2015 through in-depth semi-structured personal interviews. Interviews were recorded and transcribed and then were analyzed with the interpretive approach using the Diekmann's seven-stage method in the MAXQDA10 software environment. Findings included two main themes “feeling proud and honored” and “professionalism” with subthemes including empathy, being nonjudgmental, patience, and spirit of self-sacrifice. The spirit of self-sacrifice was a unique attribute revealed in this research.

Preceptors possessed several important attributes which are usually stressed in the literature as selection criteria for preceptors. These attributes could be further drawn upon when selecting new preceptors. Preceptors are role models. Existence of the spirit of self-sacrifice among preceptors could contribute to transferring of such spirit to new nurses and future preceptors as well as to preceptors' patience with challenges of their role. Effective preceptorship needs preceptors who possess specific professional and personal attributes. These attributes could be drawn upon more objectively in the process of selection, preparation and evaluation of preceptors by clinical and educational nursing managers.

## 1. Introduction

There is a worldwide nursing shortage. This is a global challenge (Littlejohn et al., 2012) and it exists in all specialized nursing fields (Zilembo and Monterosso, 2008). Findings of a review study show that when facing nursing shortages, new nurse preceptorship programs should be a primary and fundamental step in retention strategies of health care organizations. Researchers have argued that properly resourced and organized preceptorship is a positive and essential experience for new nurses and their employees (Whitehead et al., 2013).

Structured preceptorship programs will facilitate transition of new nurses and bring about mutual outcomes. First, they promote the confidence and competence level of new nurses in providing patients with care (Ke et al., 2017); second, they increase nurse retention (Park and Jones, 2010).

## 2. Background

In recent years, the nursing shortage has become a major concern of Iranian managers and a substantial challenge for the health system (Ebadi and Khalili, 2014). At present, in Iran, the higher education baccalaureate program leads to the basic nursing qualification and is the only way to achieve registration as a professional nurse (Khomeiran and Deans, 2007). However, similar to findings from other countries, new graduate nurses in Iran are not usually well-prepared to meet the demands of today's complex care environments and this caused them substantial stress, one of the factors that influencing nursing attrition and shortage (Farahani et al., 2017; Hezaveh et al., 2014). The nurse preceptorship program is, therefore, intended to help alleviate these stresses and ease the transition process for new nurses, enhance the quality of nursing care and preserve patient safety.

Preceptorship is a formal one-to-one relationship between an experienced nurse and a novice nurse (preceptee) which is designed to help the novice nurse in adapting to and successfully performing the

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: [l.borimnejad@gmail.com](mailto:l.borimnejad@gmail.com) (L. Borimnejad), [valizades@tbzmed.ac.ir](mailto:valizades@tbzmed.ac.ir) (S. Valizadeh), [azad.rahmani@yahoo.com](mailto:azad.rahmani@yahoo.com) (A. Rahmani), [w.whitehead@derby.ac.uk](mailto:w.whitehead@derby.ac.uk) (B. Whitehead), [ladyoflamp48@yahoo.com](mailto:ladyoflamp48@yahoo.com), [shahbazish@tbzmed.ac.ir](mailto:shahbazish@tbzmed.ac.ir) (S. Shahbazi).

new role (Kalischuk et al., 2013). In the United Kingdom (UK), preceptorship is defined as the process of supporting newly qualified nurses (NQNs) over the transition period from student to registered nurse (RN) (Whitehead et al., 2016). Within this article, the term preceptorship is being defined as the means of transitioning new nurses including NQNs and experienced nurses who are new into the workplace (Yonge et al., 2007). Also, in this article, 'preceptor' refers to a registered nurse who has been given a formal responsibility to support a new nurse through preceptorship. A preceptor is assigned to facilitate the new nurse's learning goals for a predetermined time, which is often short term. The focus of the relationship is the development of the new nurse's clinical knowledge and skills relevant to the work setting they are entering (Watson et al., 2012; Yonge et al., 2007). Preceptors are either chosen or volunteer to work with new nurses (Goss, 2015). A recent systematic review study has provided valuable information on the need for formal preceptorship programs which underscore preceptor selection criteria (Rebholz and Baumgartner, 2015). Preceptor selection is normally the responsibility of nursing managers. Existing literature has introduced various criteria for choosing the best preceptors. Preceptor selection is usually more than random selection of the most skilled or experienced ward nurse (Hartline, 1993). Preceptorship is a complicated and dynamic phenomenon (Omansky, 2010). Besides experience and competence, the preceptorship role requires significant educational skills. Experience is considered a necessary but not sufficient condition for a good preceptor (Hyrkas et al., 2014). One criterion of selecting preceptors is their personal attributes. In fact, preceptors must possess attributes which help them in successfully performing the complicated role of preceptorship. Attributes are qualities inherent to people such as patience or kindness (Rebholz and Baumgartner, 2015). A study by Ferguson (2011) showed that successful preceptors have qualities which result in successful preceptorship. Among these qualities is being a strong positive role model, one who helps the new nurse by showing supportive behaviors to become a team member and who shares his or her experiences and builds trust (Ferguson, 2011).

Although preceptors have a great impact on how new nurses experience the start of their career (Pasila et al., 2017) and their tasks and roles are investigated to some extent in other studies (Yonge et al., 2013), little attention has been given to the attributes of new nurse preceptors (Panzavecchia and Pearce, 2014; Porter-O'Grady, 2009; Rebholz and Baumgartner, 2015). These attributes are so important that most of definitions given for preceptors are based on preceptors' attributes. In fact, since preceptorship success is often determined by measuring the success of new nurses, attributes and behaviors of preceptors have been identified based on the views of new nurses (Shinners and Franqueiro, 2015) or nursing students (Zilembo and Monterosso, 2008) and not on preceptors' own views. Moreover, no research was found in the extensive review of literature that explored attributes of Iranian new nurse preceptors. Overall, there is a lack of understanding surrounding the preceptors' own views about their role attributes in the context of a new nurse's preceptorship programme. Given the importance of preceptors in new nurse retention and the shortage of studies which have explicated attributes of new nurse preceptors focusing on their own voices, the purpose of this study was to explore and explicate the attributes of new nurse preceptors on the basis of their lived experiences in precepting new nurses.

### 3. Methods

#### 3.1. Design

This research employed a qualitative method and a hermeneutic phenomenology approach based on Heidegger's philosophy. The goal of Heidegger's phenomenology is to understand common meanings (McConnell-Henry et al., 2011). Phenomenology is the most suitable way for understanding common lived experiences of different people of

an important phenomenon in order to develop performances or policies or for deeper understanding of characteristics of a phenomenon (Creswell et al., 2007).

#### 3.2. Participants and settings

Participants were six preceptors who were selected by means of purposive sampling from different wards of a large pediatric teaching hospital in Northwest Iran. At the time of this research, the new nurse preceptorship program was a four-year period and to the researchers' best knowledge, this hospital was the only one officially implementing new nurse preceptorship in Iran. Inclusion criteria were: a BSc or MSc degree in nursing and directly working with patients, official notice to work as a preceptor by the hospital nursing office, and intention to participate in the study.

All participants were females with BSc degrees in nursing ranging from 32 to 46 years old with the mean age at 36.83. Their nursing experiences ranged from 8 to 18 years with 12.5 years in average. Each participant had at least 10 new nurses before for preceptorship.

#### 3.3. Data collection

A list of preceptors was provided by the educational supervisor of the hospital. Confirmed by the regional committee for ethics in research, for a deep understanding of lived experiences of new nurse preceptors, in-depth semi-structured personal interviews were carried out by one of the researchers (the fifth author) as a nursing PhD student from July 2014 to March 2015. Prior to each interview, a phone call was made to participants and after explaining research goals and methods, they were invited to participate in the study. They were given the specifying the time and place of interviews according to their work schedule. Time and place were determined in follow-up calls. The researcher attended the place of interview half of an hour earlier in order to prepare the setting.

The location of interviews as agreed by participants, except in one case, was in the hospital. One of the main interviews, requested by one participant, was performed in the interviewer faculty. Most of the interviews were held at a private and quiet room for preceptors. This room seemed to be a suitable place for interview because it provided a quiet and comfortable environment for participants. No one interrupted during the interviews. All who were invited accepted to participate and cooperated to the end of the study.

As opening questions in preliminary interviews, participants were asked to talk about their experiences of being a new nurse preceptor. Follow-up questions would be extracted based on the contents of interviews with preliminary questions to direct the next interviews. Based on the Interpretation/analysis methods in hermeneutic interpretive phenomenology (Crist and Tanner, 2003), the analysis of each interview transcript determined whether the subsequent interview was to be carried out with the same participant or a new participant. Complementary interviews with individual participants were carried out to clarify ambiguities in the first interviews and also to confirm interpretations of interviews' contents. The six main interviews lasted for 22–63 min and ten follow-up interviews lasted for 8–55 min. All interviews were carried out in Persian and to be presented in this paper, some of the most significant sentences were then translated into English by an external bilingual translator. Translation was based on achieving conceptual equivalence (Squires, 2009). All interviews were recorded and audio files were transferred by the researcher to a PC and then transcribed after several plays of files. Transcriptions were typed in Word software environment and then imported to the MAXQDA10 software environment for analysis. To protect privacy, information such as the names of participants and places were deleted from transcriptions. Data were collected until data saturation was achieved.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/6846397>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/6846397>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)