



Remediation in Nursing Education: A Concept Analysis



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ABSTRACT

A need for academic remediation in prelicensure nursing education has presented over the past several years. Presently, it remains unclear as how best to provide effective remediation for underperforming nursing students. This article presents a concept analysis of remediation within the context of nursing education using the Walker and Avant method. Developing a standardized definition and implementation strategies for remediation in nursing education will allow nurse educators to meet the remediation needs of underperforming students.

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A national downward trend in National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) pass rates, increasing nursing course failures, and unsuccessful student completion of nursing education programs has increased remedial measures in nursing education over the past decade (Daley, Kirkpatrick, Frazier, Chung, & Moser, 2003; Mee & Schreiner, 2016; Pennington & Spurlock, 2010; Sifford & McDaniel, 2007). Although remediation in nursing education has been employed since the 1990s, the state of the science on remediation in nursing education remains ambiguous. The limited amount of literature available suggests that, although remediation in nursing education is working, it remains unclear as to which strategies are most effective (Mee & Schneider, 2016). Few rigorous studies on remediation exist, indicating that nurse educators may utilize educational interventions that have little or no empirical basis (Pennington & Spurlock, 2010). Therefore, underperforming nursing students may receive varied remediation approaches and methods. Utilization of various forms of remediation, declining NCLEX-RN pass rates, and increased nursing program attrition rates necessitates the development of a standardized definition and use of remediation across nursing education programs. As such, a closer examination of the state of the evidence on remediation and the NCLEX-RN is warranted. (See Fig. 1.)

If nurse educators share consistent language and understanding of the concept of remediation, they may be able to more effectively incorporate remedial learning into nursing education programs (Culleiton, 2009). To aid in the development of a more standardized

approach and move toward a theory of remediation in nursing education, a concept analysis was performed. Analyzing the concept of remediation acts as a crucial first step in unifying remediation approaches across nursing education. The aim of this article is to examine the concept of remediation within the context of nursing education using the Walker and Avant (2011) method of concept analysis. The definition, defining attributes, antecedents, consequences, and various cases of remediation with application to nursing education are presented.

Method

The literature used to develop this concept analysis is based on a search of higher education, nursing, and psychology databases, including Academic Search Complete, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature, Education Resource, and Educational Resources Information Center. Because remediation in nursing education gained momentum in the 1990s, the search criteria included peer-reviewed literature published from 1990 to the present containing any of the following keywords: *remediation, remedial learning, remedial education, remedial teaching, supplemental instruction, at-risk students, cognitive remediation, nursing, nursing students, or medical students*. The search produced 112 journal articles related to remediation in nursing and higher education. Abstracts were reviewed, and articles were excluded that were non-English, duplicate articles, utilized graduate nursing students, or had no relevance to remediation. In addition, reference sections of articles were reviewed to find additional sources. Ultimately, 22 articles representing various disciplines were identified for use in this concept analysis. In addition, a recent literature review by Mee and Schreiner (2016) thoroughly appraised the existing body of knowledge on remediation in nursing education.

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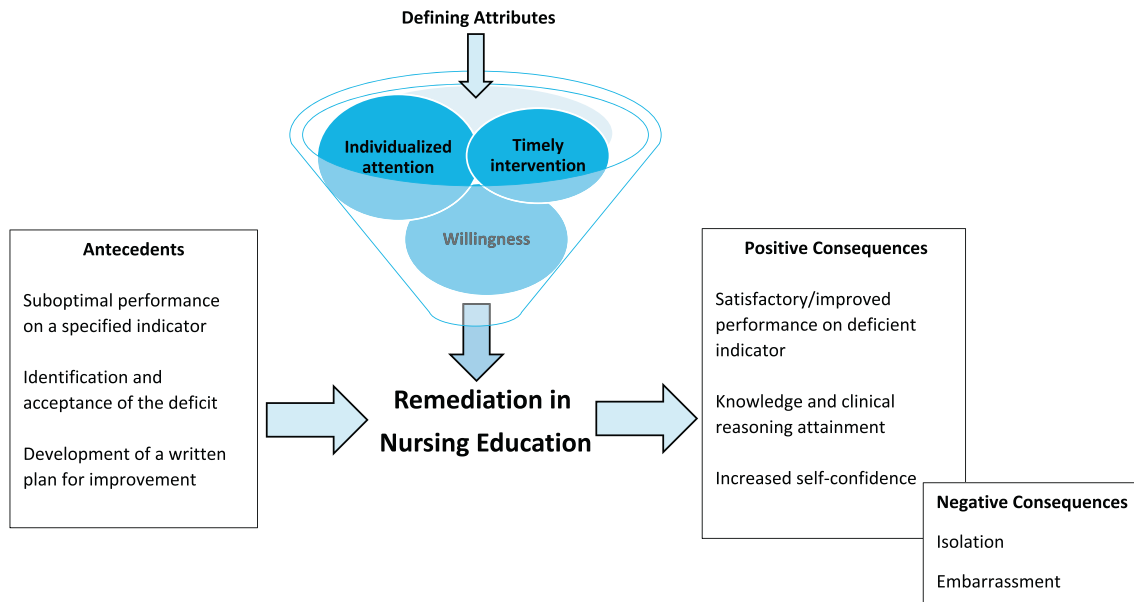


Fig. 1. Antecedents, defining attributes, and consequences of remediation in nursing education.

According to Mee and Schreiner (2016), nurse educators should systematically integrate remediation into the curriculum, determine remediation policies, and measure the results. In addition, nurse educators should also explore how remediation can be tailored to meet individual student needs. Using the definition of remediation and cases of remediation described in this concept analysis, nurse educators may be more equipped to develop a systematic approach for academic remediation in nursing education.

Defining Remediation

According to Walker and Avant (2011), identifying the uses of the concept begins with examining existing definitions of the concept. Various definitions of the concept of remediation exist. First, remediation as defined by Merriam-Webster (2017) is “the act of remedying.” Second, The Free Dictionary (2017) defines remediation as “the act or process of remedying something that is undesirable or deficient” and “the act or process of proving remedial education.” Last, the MacMillan Dictionary (2017) defines remediation as “the process of improving a situation or of correcting a problem.”

Culleiton (2009) defined remediation in a prior concept analysis as “the process of identifying the need to take action to remedy a situation that, if left unresolved, will result in unfavorable outcomes, whereas implementing intervention strategies will successfully address the situation” (p. 26). In addition, Maize et al. (2010) identify educational remediation as “the act of proving a remedy to a problem or a process to correct an academic fault deficiency.” One may argue that Maize et al.’s definition of remediation is reserved for academic deficiency, whereas nursing students may exhibit clinical or skill deficiencies. More importantly, Culleiton (2009) and Maize et al. (2010) neglect to address nonacademic deficiencies in their definitions. It is equally important for nurse educators to address deficient basic academic skills that augment student learning, such as note-taking, study skills, and time management (Rochford, 2005; Schulmerich & Hurley, 2015; Winston, van der Vleuten, & Scherpbier, 2010).

According to Walker and Avant (2011), a concept analysis may result in an operational definition that will increase the validity of the construct, more accurately reflecting its theoretical base (p. 158). After a thorough review of the literature, a new definition of

remediation was developed for this concept analysis. The operational definition of remediation in this analysis is defined as timely, supplemental, individualized instruction provided after identification of a deficit, academic, or otherwise, which benefits the student in some way.

Uses of the Concept

After definitions of the concept have been identified, uses of the concept across disciplines should be examined (Walker & Avant, 2011). The concept of remediation has been utilized throughout various educational arenas, including primary and secondary education, higher education, nursing, physical therapy, and medical education. An overview of the literature regarding higher education and medical education is discussed, as these areas most closely relate to nursing education.

Higher Education

Remediation in higher education has formally existed since the mid-1800s. In 1849, the University of Wisconsin established the first learning assistance program, creating an academic department for these courses and hired faculty to teach them (Association for the Study of Higher Education, 2010). During this time, remedial education focused on “repairing cognitive deficits” and aimed to assist underprivileged students to compete with their peers (Association for the Study of Higher Education, 2010). Today, remediation practices employed in higher education primarily aim to correct reading, writing, or mathematics deficiencies (Ciampa & Revels, 2012; Handel & Williams, 2011; Martinez & Bain, 2014; Stuart, 2009). Students may be placed into remedial programs based on precollegiate standardized examination scores or required to receive remedial instruction determined by performance variables, such as pretest scores, standardized assessments, or receiving a failing grade in a course (Ciampa & Revels, 2012; Martinez & Bain, 2014; Schulmerich & Hurley, 2015).

Currently, vast differences in remedial policies and strategies, coupled with lack of empirical research on remediation effectiveness, contribute to difficulty in identifying a consistent practice of using

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