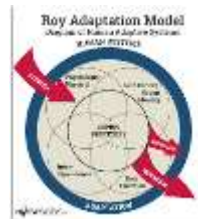


Middle-Range Theory Uniting Practice and Scholarship: Exemplars of Theory-based DNP Projects

Ellen Buckner, Cyndi Cortes, Maria Ledbetter
Samford University

1

Purpose



The purpose of this presentation is to describe how multiple nursing theories provide a theory-to-practice bridge through development of middle range theory for projects in a practice doctorate, or DNP education.



2

Objectives

The participant will:

- Relate the selected nursing theories DNP Essentials (AACN, 2006)
- Use middle range theory in designing curriculum for the practice-focused doctorate
- Describe examples of nursing theory scholarship in DNP projects
- Show through use of Quality Matters Framework (QM) how course design promotes higher order thinking, student engagement, and satisfaction in online nursing theories courses.

We will discuss both course-based activities and DNP projects which incorporate theory-guided approaches.

3

Background

- Nursing theory-guided practice improves quality of care because it allows nurses to articulate what they do and why they do it.
- In a 2019 integrative review of studies from worldwide literature, Canada, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, USA, authors found that nursing ***theory-guided interventions*** improved outcomes in 34/35 studies.
- Theories used were those of Orem, Roy, Peplau, and others, finding these as “useful” for problems of quality of life, self-efficacy, self-care, and stress of patients with acute and chronic conditions and psychological illness. Younas & Quennell (2019)
- Quality Matters Framework has been used as a standard for online course development with increasing interest in testing its effectiveness in encouraging student engagement, higher order thinking, and satisfaction. (Pecka et al., 2014; Gaston & Lynch, 2019).

4

Engaging the online student: Use of the Quality Matters (QM) Rubric in course design

The QM process in course design and evaluation assures that the instructor has a meaningful and targeted plan to execute the course effectively and efficiently.

- Instructional material should support the course and unit objectives and align with learning activities ***applying nursing theory***.
- Assignments should align with the objectives and instructional materials and be reflective of measurable outcomes to evaluate mastery of the ***nursing theory content***.
- The QM process provides the instructor with a focused method to analyze all course material to objectively evaluate if the content is relevant to the specified course objectives ***applying nursing theory***.
- The QM process also provides a focused pedagogy to encourage students' progression from mere comprehension to analysis and application of ***concepts from nursing theory***.

5

Nursing Theory as Underpinning for DNP Practice

DNP Essentials 2006-> present

Essential I: The discipline of nursing is focused on:

- The principles and laws that govern the life-process, well-being, and optimal function of human beings, sick or well;
 - Adaptation as a process
- The patterning of human behavior in interaction with the environment in normal life events and critical life situations;
 - Adaptation as a pattern of human-environmental interaction



6

Nursing Theory Promotes Organizational Leadership for Practice

Essential II: The DNP program prepares graduates to

- Develop and evaluate care delivery approaches that meet current and future needs of patient populations
 - **Application of theoretical frameworks is an integral component of providing systems-based and evidenced based nursing care**
- Ensure accountability for quality of health care and patient safety
 - **Utilization of leadership, management, and systems theories guides decision-making and adoption of policies**

7

Health Promotion as Scholarship for Practice

Essential III: The DNP program prepares graduates to

- Use analytic methods to critically appraise existing literature and other evidence to determine and implement the best evidence for practice.
 - **Evidence-based practice methodology is foundational to the concepts of health promotion, disease prevention, primary healthcare, and population health.**
- The application of relevant findings to develop practice guidelines and improve health outcomes, practice, and the practice environment
 - **Health promotion incorporates interprofessional recommendations for optimal health and wellness and provides a framework for measurable outcomes, systems change, and sustainability**

8

Definition: Middle Range Theory

- **Middle Range Theory (MRT)** avoids the extremes of grand theory and single domain theory, considers a limited number of variables, a substantive focus, limited aspects of relationships, and can be empirically tested. (Merton, *Sociology*, 1964)
- **MRTs** are narrower in scope, and a limited aspect of real world, with concepts and propositions that are empirically measurable (Fawcett, *Nursing*, 1997).
- **MRTs are** generated from research and practice to bridge the theory-practice gap (Roy, *Nursing*, 2014).
- Developing and applying MRT in DNP work links a practice problem to a framework specific to nursing

9

Curricular Examples using QM

Group Assignment Examples:

Team #1: An educational process in critical care nursing or anesthesia. Possible Benner Novice to Expert Model? Examples: simulation education, clinical education, regional education.

Team #2: The study of a physiologic system disorder or disease process. Possible Betty Neuman Systems Model? Examples: Stress, Cancer, Heart Disease, COPD, Diabetes.

Team #4: Ethical decision making related to critical care or anesthesia dilemmas. Possible King Theory of Goal Attainment? Examples: Jehovah's Witness Patients (what they accept), Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) orders, traumatic injury in the ED (loss of limb, burn patient).

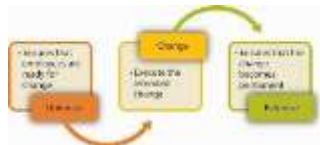
10

Theory Rubric Elements

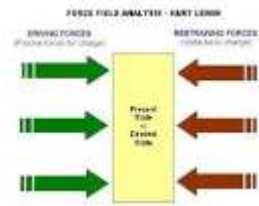
- Description of why chose the specific theoretical framework
- Describes the relationship of the chosen theoretical framework to advance nursing practice or anesthesia
- Define specific and related concepts and describe
- Relationship of concepts and theory to the topic show clear depiction of why theory/framework chosen as it relates to the topic
- Provide a schematic diagram of the conceptual model described in the theoretical framework to provide a visualization of the theorized relationships in for your topic
- Evidence of analysis, interpretation, synthesis of article topic and framework with appropriate critique
- As a group, list the 3 big takeaways to share from your assignment, the framework and collaborating as a group.

11

Systems Change Models



Rossburn & Larrabee EBP Model



12

Exemplar: Reducing Opioid Overdose Risk in Female Inmates Pre- Release: The HOPE Project

- Students' initial interest was in providing Naloxone (Narcan) to inmates at release-simple, narrowly defined goal, validated risk, practice change in prison environment that did very little to prepare inmates for release.
- *Was that enough?*
- Application of the Roy Adaptation Model and the Middle Range Theory of Adapting to Situational Life Events.
- Created **Healthy Outcomes Post Release Education (HOPE)** pre-release education program for female inmates

13

Building The Team

- **Self-concept Adaptive Mode** - need to see themselves as a person of worth - *Lifeline Support Services*
- **Physiologic Adaptive Mode** -need to understand the underlying physiologic processes of addiction, tolerance, and overdose risk – *TN Sav-A-Life Representatives*
- **Role Function Adaptive Mode** -need to recover roles as competent adult, employee, student/graduate, and woman/mother – *CCJ Female Chaplain*
- **Interdependence Adaptive Mode** -need for resources in community such as rehabilitation, medical care, counseling, legal aid, and a positive support network – *TN Department of Health*



14

Systems Outcomes

Self-concept Adaptive Mode – SUD as a moral failure to having resources to support a new beginning

Physiologic Adaptive Mode – SUD as uncontrollable to SUD as a disease

Role Function Adaptive Mode – Support limited (her mother) to identifies multiple resources for support

Interdependence Adaptive Mode – Minimal skills and resources for prevention of STI and pregnancy to Skills and resources available through interdependent partners

Sustainability—A state-wide model—

TN DPH

Correctional Services

State SUD Task Force

Changing the Culture—

Empowered prison staff/volunteers

Life saving, rehabilitative outcomes



Nola Pender's Health Promotion Model

Student Exemplar: Development Brochure to Increase Colorectal Cancer Screening Rates

Individual Characteristics & Experiences

- Consideration of previous screening practices
- Comorbid disease? Age? Quality of life?

Behavior Specific Cognitions & Affect

- Testing beneficial and/or convenient
- Personal beliefs about testing, recommendations from others

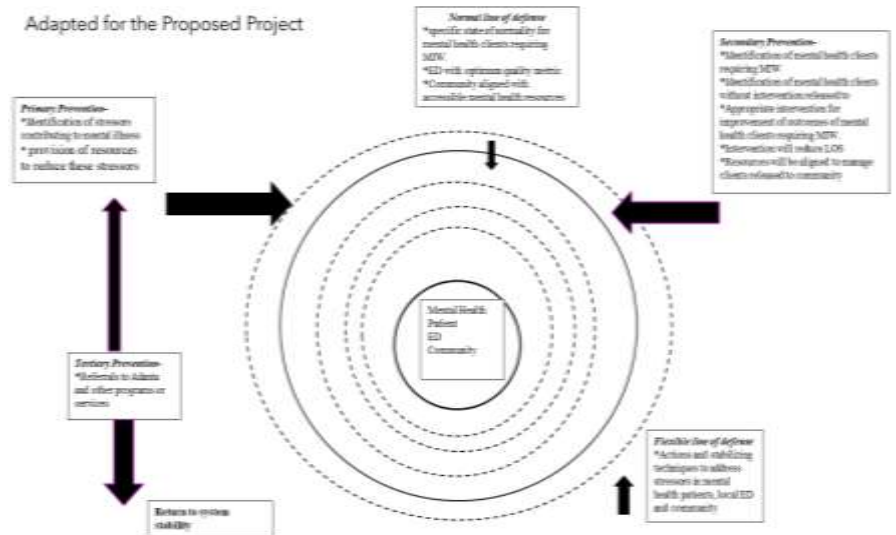
Behavioral Outcome

- Individual undergoes testing & continues testing at recommended intervals
- Testing deferred

Student Exemplar: Processes for Mental Health Patients in ED Requiring Medical Inquest Warrant

Neuman System Model

Adapted for the Proposed Project



17

Current student exemplar

King's Theory of Goal Attainment: Resolution of an Ethical Dilemma - Alternative Therapies to Blood Transfusion in Anesthesia for Jehovah's Witness (JW) Patient

Advocate for the patient's goals by exploration of alternative interventions that account for cultural and religious beliefs.

- Institutional policies and patient preferences reviewed related to blood administration to find a mutually acceptable resolution.
- Social justice principle of "rights" addressed to reflect acceptable therapies based on patients' cultural and religious associations.

Systems-based Leadership demonstrated by taking a proactive approach to a complex issue and educating anesthesia providers about the JW belief system and alternative therapies accepted.

18

Transforming the Practice Culture

- **Nursing theory** is a core concept for nursing practice and interprofessional collaboration.
- A **nursing framework is appropriate** as the underpinning of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree and its DNP project.
- The DNP project is often viewed as a systems change project and the final stage of analysis is **transformation of the culture or practice system**.
- Theory-based change in the setting can be spread to additional settings and **serve as a model** for other systems, creating transformational change in healthcare broadly (e.g. practice generalizability)
- **Middle range nursing theory** bridges the theory-practice gap, providing the unique nursing perspective to the practice change.
- System transformation requires both change process and the **nursing theory conceptual focus**.

19

Advocacy for Theories in DNP Essentials

Domains Under Review by AACN

Domain 1: Knowledge for Nursing Practice

Descriptor: Integration, translation, and application of established and evolving **disciplinary nursing knowledge** and knowledge from other disciplines which distinguish the practice of professional nursing and forms the basis for clinical judgement and nursing practice.

Domain 3: Population Health

Descriptor: **Engagement in partnerships** to support and improve equitable, population health outcomes: local, community, regional and global.

Domain 4: Scholarship for Nursing Practice

Descriptor: The **generation, synthesis, translation, application, and dissemination of knowledge** that aims to improve health and transform health care.

Domain 8: Information and Communication Technologies

Descriptor: The use of **information and communication technologies** to manage and improve the delivery of health care services in accordance with best practice and professional and regulatory standards.

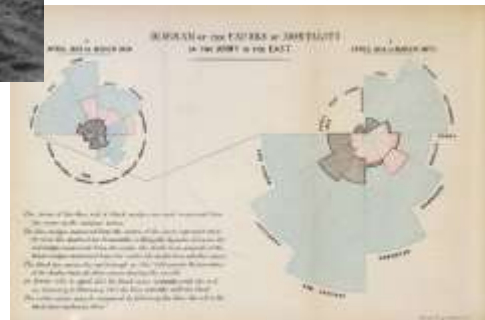
20

Summary

- Practice-focused doctoral programs are designed to prepare experts in **specialized advanced nursing practice**. They focus heavily on practice that is innovative and evidence-based, reflecting the application of credible research findings (AACN, DNP Essentials).
- Online QM Based assignments & rubrics guide students to initial development of **theory-based framework**
- DNP projects emphasize practice or systems change and must be **grounded in nursing theory**.
- Utilization of **theory for practice change** supports both patient-centered outcomes and cultural transformation to produce sustainable evidence-based outcomes.
- **Theoretical work is needed** to identify settings and problems that can be changed and then spread the interventions to broader contexts (e.g. practice generalizability)

21

Comments and Questions?



22