

**Perceptions and Writing Experiences of
Nursing Students:
A Mixed Methods Exploration of Writing
Self-Efficacy**

Presented by
Lori Sprenger, PhD RN CLNC

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INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Challenges with competent academic writing

- Essential academic skill (Giddens & Lobo, 2008)
- Disseminate research and EBP findings (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2008; Newton & Moore, 2010)
- Ensure safe nursing practice (AACN, 2008)

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK (BANDURA, 1986, 1997)

- **Self-efficacy (SE):**
 - ✓ Belief in one's capability AND
 - ✓ Manage future situations AND
 - ✓ Accomplish tasks
- **Self-confidence:** Strength of a SE belief

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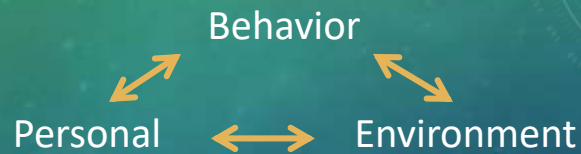
SELF-EFFICACY INFLUENCED BY > RECIPROCAL DETERMINISM

Includes 3 Variables that influence an individual:

1. **Behavioral influences:** Skills and actions
2. **Personal influences:** Beliefs, personality, attitudes
3. **Environmental influences:** Physical surroundings, family

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RECIPROCAL DETERMINISM



Reciprocal determinism. From *Overview of Social Cognitive Theory and of Self-Efficacy* (p. 1), by F. Pajares, 2002. Copyright 2002 by Emory University. Reprinted with permission.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-efficacy: General SE and writing SE

Academic writing in nursing education

- Writing abilities of nursing students
- Writing educational strategies and interventions

Gap: Writing SE specific for nursing education

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PROBLEM

For prelicensure BSN students (sample) >

- Identify facilitators and barriers to competent academic writing
- By examining
 - Writing self-efficacy and
 - Academic writing experiences

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PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1. Empirically determine writing self-efficacy
2. Qualitatively explore academic writing experiences

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METHODOLOGY

Method: Mixed methods

Design: Concurrent triangulation

Population: Pre-licensure BSN students,
Midwestern U.S

Sample: Same, but in Midwestern state

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DATA COLLECTION AND INSTRUMENTATION

Quantitative: Non-probability convenience sample

1. Demographic survey--researcher designed
2. Writing SE survey (Shell, Murphy, & Bruning, 1989)

Qualitative: Purposive interview protocol

- Three focus groups
- Audio and video taped

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QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION: DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY VARIABLES

- Age range
- Gender
- Nursing student status
- Employment status
- Primary care provider status
- Evidence of a support system
- Prior level college course
- First speaking language

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QUANTITATIVE--WRITING SELF-EFFICACY SURVEY (Bruning, Murphy, & Shell, 1989) ($\alpha = .95$)

8 Likert scale questions: Self report writing abilities (0-10) scale

0 = no ability, 10 = high ability

1. Spelling
2. Punctuation
3. Use parts of speech
4. Write a simple sentence
5. Use plurals, verb tenses, prefixes, and suffixes
6. Write compound and complex sentences
7. Construct a paragraph with a theme sentence
8. Construct organized paper with transitions

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS

QUAN: What is the writing self-efficacy of entry-level BSN students?

QUAL: What has hindered or facilitated past writing experiences of entry-level BSN students? (including events, resources, issues, relationships)

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RESEARCH AND NULL HYPOTHESES

Focused on correlations between

- Eight demographic variables
- Writing SE scores

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DATA ANALYSIS: QUANTITATIVE COMPONENT

- *Descriptive statistics*: M , SD, median, and range of demographic data and SE scores
- *Inferential statistics*: ANOVA & Kruskal-Wallis; determined correlations between demographic variables and SE scores

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DATA ANALYSIS: QUALITATIVE COMPONENT

- Self-transcription of interview data
- Open coding: Determine answers to interview questions
- Analytical coding: Detailed coding for interpretation
- Identified categories and themes
- Reciprocal determinism: Determine categories according to the three variables (behavioral, personal, & environmental)

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RESULTS: QUAN DATA

Main QUAN Research Question:

What is the writing self-efficacy of entry-level BSN students?

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QUAN RESULTS

- Total mean writing SE score: 67 out of 80
- Writing SE scores for the eight writing skills
 - Range 7.989 to 8.945 (10 highest)
 - Lowest score: 7.989, punctuation
 - Highest score: 8.945, write simple sentence

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RESULTS: RESEARCH SUB-QUESTION 1

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and their age?

Results:

- Differences noted
- NS

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RESULTS: RESEARCH SUB-QUESTION 2

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and their gender?

Results:

- Statistically significant
- Females more self-efficacious

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RESULTS: RESEARCH SUB-QUESTION 3

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and nursing student status?

Results:

- One report of part-time student status
- Unable to do correlation based on this study's data set

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RESULTS: RESEARCH SUB-QUESTION 4

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and their employment status?

Results:

- ✓ Differences were noted
- ✓ NS

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RESEARCH SUBQUESTION 5

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and their primary care-provider status?

Results:

- Differences were noted
- NS

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RESEARCH SUBQUESTION 6

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and their support-system status?

Results:

- Only one subject reported no access to a support system
- Correlations could not be determined

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RESEARCH SUBQUESTION 7

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and completion of a prior college-level writing course?

Results:

- Differences were noted
- NS

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RESEARCH SUBQUESTION 8

Is there a relationship between entry-level BSN students' writing self-efficacy and first-speaking language?

Results:

- ✓ Differences were noted
- ✓ NS

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QUALITATIVE COMPONENT-- FINDINGS

Main Qualitative Research Question:

1. What has hindered or facilitated past writing experiences of entry-level BSN students?
2. What events, resources, issues, and relationships do entry-level BSN students perceive to be **significant** in their nursing education writing experiences?

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QUALITATIVE COMPONENT--FINDINGS

- Many factors facilitated and hindered competent academic writing of this study's sample.
 - ✓ Behavior (skills, actions)
~1/4 of responses
 - ✓ Personal (feelings, perceptions)
~1/3 of responses
 - ✓ Environment (physical surroundings)
~1/2 of responses

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

1. Increase sample size
2. Include multistate research sites
3. Longitudinal study over several years
4. Assess writing SE at various points
 - Beginning of a class or semester
 - End of a class or semester
 - Until graduation
5. After writing interventions and assignments

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LIMITATIONS

- Convenience sample for QUAN data
- Sample was not normal bell-shape
- Sample was left skewed
- Participants self-reported high scores
- Ten perfect writing SE scores of 80

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**DISCUSSION:
THIS STUDY'S DATA MAY INFLUENCE NURSE
EDUCATORS AT ALL LEVELS TO--**

1. Decrease hindrances
2. Increase facilitators
3. Initiate collaborative writing interventions
4. Understand impact of competent academic writing
5. Sustain rigor of nursing profession

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THANK YOU!

**WHAT IS ONE ACTION THAT YOU CAN DO AT THE
MASTER'S LEVEL TO ENSURE COMPETENT
ACADEMIC WRITING?**

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

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