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NURSING FACULTY TURNOVER: RECRUTIMENT AND RETENTION AT JONES
COLLEGE

A Dissertation
presented in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education with an emphasis in Higher Education
in the School of Education
The University of Mississippi

By

ALAN L. HAMMONDS

May 2023

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ABSTRACT

The nursing profession has been facing a deficit of nurses for many years (Denehy, 2000; Haddad et al., 2023, Mayo, 1944; Schorr, 1980; Theisen & Pelfrey, 1990). Nurses are an essential part of the medical care system. They are responsible for most of the functions associated with healthcare. The schools that train nurses are as much affected by the shortage as the industry itself. With fewer nurses in the medical field from which to draw, nursing schools have had a difficult time maintaining nursing faculty levels to meet the needs of the medical community. With nursing faculty shortages already straining a depleted system, voluntary turnover among nursing faculty exacerbates the situation. The reasons given by nursing faculty for voluntarily leaving the classroom varies. The current dissertation project reviews a substantial portion of the literature related to this subject. The practical application of a robust program of recruitment and retention at the local level will be enacted to reduce turnover among nursing faculty.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wonderful wife, Andrea.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

CTE Career and Technical Education the practice of teaching specific career skills to students in middle school, high school, and post-secondary institutions.

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MANUSCRIPT 1

ABSTRACT

A national nursing shortage has been plaguing the medical industry for decades (Haddad et al., 2023, Mayo, 1944). Nurses are an essential part of the medical care system. They are responsible for most of the functions associated with healthcare. The schools that train nurses are as much affected by the shortage as the industry itself. With fewer nurses in the medical field from which to draw, nursing schools have had a difficult time maintaining nursing faculty levels to meet the needs of the medical community. With nursing faculty shortages already straining a depleted system, voluntary turnover among nursing faculty exacerbates the situation. The reasons given by nursing faculty for voluntarily leaving the classroom varies. The current dissertation project reviews a substantial portion of the literature related to this subject. The practical application of a robust program of recruitment and retention at the local level will be enacted to reduce turnover among nursing faculty.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Career and Technical Education: the practice of teaching specific career skills to students in middle school, high school, and post-secondary institutions.

Student Success: This term is used in this study describes matriculation from one class to another by satisfying all requirements until the student completes all coursework to graduate from a program.

Voluntary Turnover: when an employee leaves a job by their own decision. The workplace has not asked them to leave, yet the employee makes the decision to terminate their employment.

According to a U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2019) employment projections, six of the top ten fastest growing occupations in the country over the next ten years are nursing related. The field of nursing is growing, yet the availability of instructors is an issue for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The lack of instructors has created a situation where nursing programs must turn students away. In 2019, the number of qualified students who were denied entry to a CTE nursing program was more than 80,000 nationwide (Rosseter, 2020). Instructor shortages are due to faculty retirements, higher clinical / private sector compensation, and inadequate nursing graduates to replenish the instructor ranks (Rosseter, 2020).

Employee turnover is not unique to the CTE instructor population. Companies face the reality of employee turnover in every industry. When an employee leaves a company, they take with them the tacit knowledge that is learned over time to do the job. Human resource professionals are faced with implementing interventions that increase employee retention. The problem is compounded when replacing an instructor of the medical profession due to the lack of qualified individuals from which to fill the position. In the case of nursing instructors, the self-defeating reduction in student population drastically reduces the available instructors for future generations of nursing students.

Student success is promoted by many factors, one of which is a sense of belonging (Hom, et al., 2017). Faculty members' proximal position and frequent interaction with students place them in a position to create positive interactions that render a sense of belonging in students (D'Amico, et al., 2013). College instructors who take advantage of the opportunity to develop a positive sense of belonging increase the chances of success for that student. With a decline in the amount of nursing student throughput, the profession of nursing depends on high rates of success for students to meet current and future demand.

Statement of Problem

Given the shortage of higher education nursing instructors, a study is needed to investigate the efficacy of a recruiting and retention program. This study will explore the relationship, if any, between nursing faculty turnover and a recruiting and retention program. Nursing faculty will include all nursing faculty (tenured and non-tenured).

Reflection on Positionality

I first encountered employee voluntary turnover as a phenomenon while employed by a manufacturing firm. The firm monitored employee turnover rates in each area of the plant floor. My job was to investigate the reason employees were choosing to leave by interviewing employees in the department for any information that would point to a cause. The interviews required the employee to answer a series of questions about work environment, company provided benefits, company communication, interpersonal relationships with fellow employees, and treatment by supervisors.

The focus on voluntary turnover was for two main reasons. The first reason was to maintain company culture and quality through continuity. The second reason was profit loss. The pay structure at the firm included a potential bonus based on earnings per share. My pay depended on increased profits. The costs associated with voluntary turnover directly affected the bottom line.

The idea behind voluntary turnover investigation was to find a root cause and develop a remedy for that cause. Supervisors and managers viewed the investigations as a way for the corporate office to decide who among them would be terminated. The process quickly degenerated into a pejorative activity that was loathed by everyone. While noble in its beginnings, the program's sinister reputation created a sense of fear among employees.

My interest in this subject grew as the years and my career progressed. I moved to a different manufacturing company as a front-line supervisor of a welding fabrication department. The reality of voluntary turnover became clear when employees who directly reported to me left the company. The employee had been recruited, trained for two-hundred forty hours, passed a national certification examination, and trained on the job to construct proprietary product for a period ranging from three to six weeks. An employee was not expected to produce a sellable product for at least three months from date of hire.

The company was fully aware of the financial costs associated with materials and labor costs associated with a single product; however, the management seemed unaware of the morale cost. The remaining employees were tasked with working extra hours and weekends just to meet production demands. Employee burnout, poor quality due to employee fatigue, lost time accidents, and outside strains such as family relationships all became a factor when voluntary turnover occurred. The cost to employee morale sometimes resulted in more voluntary turnover.

My work began to be more about employee mental and physical welfare than product production. I saw the balance that needed to be struck with employees regarding job satisfaction and work atmosphere. The job entailed working in and with extreme temperatures, heavy lifting, and general labor intense functions. I had to strive to create a working atmosphere of camaraderie that inspired employees to want to stay. My first-hand knowledge of the devastating effects of voluntary turnover both mentally and financially further piqued my interest in this phenomenon.

I moved from the manufacturing industry to my current career as a human resource director in education with the expectation that turnover would not be the focus of my job. Within two weeks of my start date, I had to deal with voluntary turnover among the faculty of the

nursing department. The department experiences more voluntary turnover than any other area on campus. Nursing faculty are vital to keeping the pipeline full of nurses being trained to meet the demand of the healthcare system. Nursing programs are limited in that a specific ratio of faculty to student must be maintained for certification. The high volume of voluntary turnover in this department has reduced the number of nurses being trained.

Literature Review

The body of work examining turnover as a phenomenon is extensive. Higher education faculty turnover is a much more focused demographic with less volume of research. The area of concern in the following review describes existing studies on why turnover takes place, and its effect on the higher education community. The review includes current information relevant to the overall study with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic.

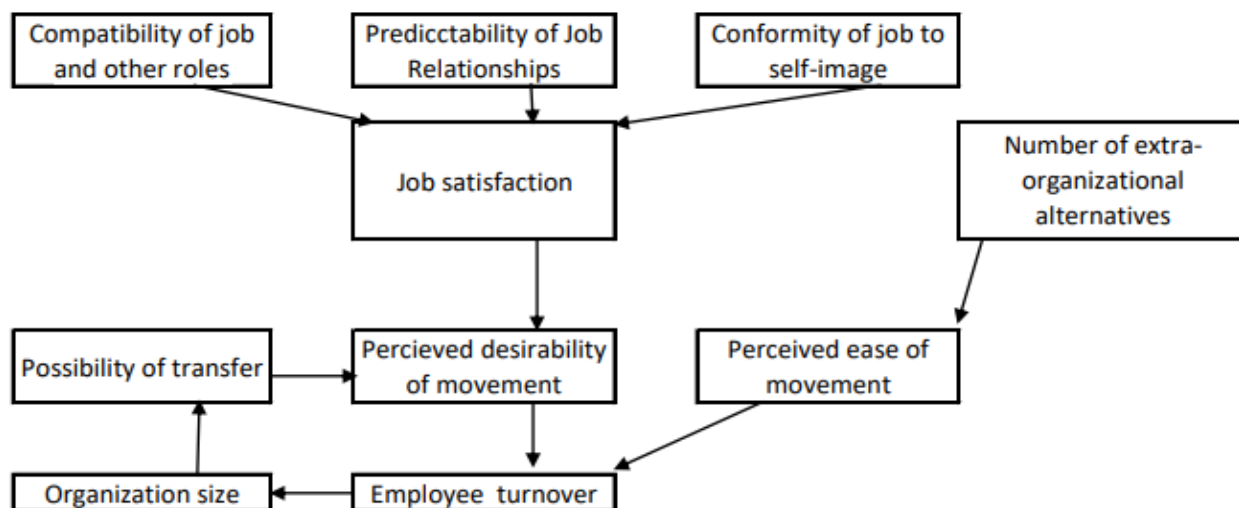
Turnover Theory

Turnover theory has been used to study organizational roles in retention of employees for decades (Hom, et al., 2017). Most of the literature on this topic is focused on industry and cost to companies. Turnover is defined as “employees’ voluntary severance of employment ties” (Hom, et al., 2013). Many iterations of turnover theory have been used to describe this phenomenon. The basic concepts indicate that employees leave their current employer for numerous reasons, some of which can be addressed by the employer to intervene before the employee decides to leave. Various studies have used predictive tests to determine an employee’s likelihood of leaving a job (Mobley, et al., 1979). Some of the predictive measures employed inquire as to the working conditions, overall job satisfaction, employee perception of job at hire vs actual tasks, and pay satisfaction. The studies agree that turnover is a phenomenon that can be addressed should an organization wish to seek answers for their low retention rates.

An early working turnover theory by March and Simon in 1958 named the theory of organizational equilibrium is described by Windon et al. (2019) as operating primarily on the premise that turnover had two variables. The first is the “perceived ease of movement” or an employee’s perception of how difficult or easy it would be for them to take advantage of opportunities outside of the organization. The other variable was “perceived desirability of movement” which is described as an employee’s satisfaction level associated with their current job (Windon et al., 2019).

Figure 1

March and Simon (1958) Theory of Organization Equilibrium diagram



March and Simon (1958) Theory of Organization Equilibrium diagram

Note. From “Theory of Organization Equilibrium” by Ngo-Henha, P. E. (2017). A review of existing turnover intention theories. *International Journal of Economics and Management Engineering*, 2(11), 2760- 2767. doi.org/10.5281/senodo.1316263

Shirol (2014) described an updated theory to this model by Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman as the Herzberg motivational-hygiene theory. The theory designates intrinsic aspects to a job that produce job satisfaction are factors like achievement or recognition for a job well

done. The hygienic or extrinsic aspects that create job dissatisfaction are factors like pay or job security. Shirol (2014) explains that the theory uses both aspects to gain insight into the intention of employees to stay at their current job. The Herzberg motivational-hygiene shifted focus from one dimensional study of job environment motivation to a holistic view of the employee in that environment.

Social exchange theory is described as a mutual dependency on respect for social rules and practices of societal exchange both expressed and implied (Ngo-Henha, 2017). The social bonds of co-workers are based upon these social rules for reciprocity of treatment or the “golden rule” of treating others the way one wishes to be treated. The same social agreement of exchange practices and norms are in effect between worker and management. The theory posits that when the norms are not respected by management or perceived by the employee as not respected, the employee’s intention to leave the organization increases. Management may try to mitigate voluntary turnover by reinforcing the agreed upon norms (Ngo-Henha, 2017).

The human capital theory is based on increased production capabilities through employee development (Becker, 1993). Employee development calls for investment by an organization into the workforce through training and education. The return on that investment is in the form of higher productivity for the organization and higher wages for the employees. The theory also recognizes that the increased education of the worker also increases their worth as an employee in the marketplace, which may induce intention to leave the organization for higher wages (Becker, 1993).

One study by Glennie et al. (2016) describes high turnover rates as being a detriment to quality organization capital. The turnover rate among teachers with less than five years of experience is much higher than those who have been in the classroom more than five years

(Glennie et al., 2019). The quality of education offered is dependent upon the faculty of any educational organization. Faculty members who reach the five-year mark are more likely to continue as a faculty member, creating a stronger educational environment for students (Glennie et al., 2019).

Student Success

Student success, as defined in this study, is critical to the vitality of the nursing profession. Students who become nurses add to the overall well-being of an industry that is growing due to the demand for medical care for an aging population in America. Professors have a unique opportunity to increase the likelihood of student success by developing a positive rapport in the classroom. Colleges and universities have implemented interventions to increase student retention to increase persistence to graduation (Palmer, et al., 2009). A student who has a sense of belonging at the university is more likely to succeed (Palmer, et al., 2009).

As students enter the nursing programs, they increasingly are met with first-time instructors or adjunct instructors. Adjunct instructors are described by Schults (2009) as being committed teachers but not fully involved in the everyday life of the student body. Schults (2009) references a study by A. M. Cohen et al. that indicates full-time faculty members have a three-pronged approach to their profession. The three areas are teaching, service, and scholarship whereas adjunct faculty focus mainly on teaching the single semester they are in without concern for the entirety of the professional careers of their students.

Adjunct faculty are being used instead of full-time faculty as a money saving measure (Bettinger & Long, 2010; Hearn & Burns, 2021). The use of adjunct faculty is attractive to college administrators because their contracts can be as much as 80% less than a full-time faculty member (Bettinger & Long). The study by Bettinger & Long (2010) suggests that matriculation

and persistence rates of college students increase because of the industry knowledge adjunct instructors bring to the classroom. This finding goes against theories posited by other organizations and researchers (Bettinger & Long, 2010).

Nursing Faculty

Faculty members have a major impact on the learning outcomes of students (Trammel & Aldrich, 2016). Instructors who display genuine care, approachability, enthusiasm, and a strong grasp of the subject are preferred by students (Trammel & Aldrich, 2016). Trammel & Aldrich (2016) suggest instructors who display the more desirable personality characteristics but lacks organizational skills will have dissatisfied students. Instructors are expected to hold high expectations of the students and themselves (Trammel & Aldrich, 2016).

The new nursing faculty member is faced with overcoming the challenge of being in the classroom for the first time as an instructor. A mentorship program improves retention by creating a relationship between new and seasoned nursing faculty (Nowell, 2014). The relationship between mentor and mentee creates an environment for collegiality, knowledge sharing, personal and professional growth, and creativity to flourish. A mentorship program must include mentors and mentees who desire to participate. A resistance to the program by either party is detrimental to the success of such a program (Nowell, 2014). The successful mentor helps new instructors by sharing similar classroom experiences and how they handled the situation. A successful mentorship program perpetuates itself by preparing the mentee to eventually become a mentor (Nowell, 2014).

Nursing faculty investment into their profession is perceived as a motivating factor to stay in the classroom according to “side-bet” theory (SBT) (Becker, 1960). Hassanur et al. (2020) explain Becker’s SBT as an employee investing items such as time and pay into a job

would be lost should they quit that job. Nursing Faculty members are investing in their profession by educating future nurses. According to Hassanur et al. (2020), a faculty member who is invested in the organization provides a higher quality education. Studies show that human resource management strategies can increase faculty commitment to the organization (Hassanur et al., 2020).

Nursing Faculty Shortage

The literature in this area tends to focus on retirement as a cause for the faculty shortage. The research conducted raises questions as to the nature of turnover that creates the shortage. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) publishes an annual fact sheet about the ongoing nursing shortage (Rosseter, 2020). A program by the AACN to organize intervention strategies designed to increase the retention of nursing faculty is in the beginning stages. Nursing programs are turning away thousands of students each year due to the faculty shortage (Rosseter, 2020). Fang & Kesten (2017) noted the shortage would continue due to retirement of current faculty. Faculty mean ages have risen in recent years, which projects a higher percentage of faculty turnover due to retirement than in the past (Fang & Kesten, 2017). The pressure to replace the faculty is mounting with more faculty loss due to retirement. Fang & Kesten (2017) suggest succession planning by administrators to include phased retirement which allows retired professors the option to teach part-time, creating opportunities for retired faculty or faculty nearing retirement to participate in faculty initiatives, and preparing mid-career faculty to assume leadership roles.

Vacancies among faculty due to retirement only represents about 20% of the reason nursing faculty leave (Fang & Bednash, 2014). Nursing faculty leaving the teaching profession to pursue other ventures accounted for 48% of the turnover reported among those studied by

Fang & Bednash (2014) adding to the shortage of nurses by faculty leaving academia thereby reducing the number seats for qualified students is a concern for many administrators. Fang & Bednash (2014) reported that of those who left the faculty for other endeavors did not disclose their new career.

A poll in 2008 revealed the public opinion about the nursing profession. Over 50% of the population in the U.S. believe that nurses are underpaid (Donelan et al., 2008). The poll results show that 25% of the population had considered a nursing related career. The profession is viewed as a respected vocation among our nation (Donelan et al., 2008); however, the current nursing professionals are less likely to suggest nursing as a job. The reason nurses gave for advising against going into the professions is because of the work environment (Donelan et al., 2008). Donelan et al. (2008) point out that the most cited reason for entering the profession is personal interaction with a nurse. This shows that nurses are highly influential in recruiting for their profession.

Turnover Interventions

Addressing turnover in an organization can manifest in the form of an intervention program. Intervention programs seek to contend with the root cause of employees voluntarily leaving an organization for employment elsewhere (Nylén et al., 2017). Interventions have been successful when they are unique to an organization, customizing the intervention for reasons employees give for leaving and the specific area in the organization experiencing the turnover (Nylén et al., 2017).

Mobley, et al. (1979) contended that overall job satisfaction can be addressed through interventions. One such intervention that has been used to create a more cohesive group among co-workers is a professional learning community (Pan & Chen, 2023). The learning community

creates a collaborative environment where the employees can share ideas, interact outside of the classroom, and create bonds that strengthen ties to the workplace (Teague & Anfara, 2012). Employees who feel respected, heard, and have close social bonds with one another are less likely to leave an organization according to the social exchange theory (Ngo-Henha, 2017).

Recent Developments

The nursing shortage has ascended as a near crisis since March of 2020. The novel beta-coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19 surfaced on the worldwide stage in late 2019. By March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) had declared COVID-19 a public health emergency. The cases of COVID-19 in the United States rose sharply during the spring of 2020. Hospital admissions were rising sharply when the situation began to be described as a pandemic.

Exacerbation of the situation has now come in the form of terminations due to vaccine mandates (Muonio, 2022). Nurses have been mandated to receive a vaccine developed to fight the COVID-19 pandemic (Gooch, 2023; Khubchandani et al., 2022). A portion of nurses who declined to receive the newly developed vaccine have been terminated (Gooch, 2023; Khubchandani et al., 2022). A study commissioned by the National Institutes of Health (Khubchandani et al., 2022) gathered information from several studies in different countries on vaccine hesitancy among nurses. The study listed factors such as distrust in the government, distrust in the new vaccine's efficacy or safety, and side effects associated with the new drug (Khubchandani et al., 2022).

Summary

The literature reviewed in this section includes scholarly reviewed publications and research on employee turnover theory, student success, nursing faculty, nursing faculty shortage, turnover interventions, and recent developments. The review identified areas that pertain to the

overall theme of a nursing shortage. A review of characteristics that determine turnover were examined along with perceptions of the nursing profession in general.

Plan for Manuscript 2 Overview

Jones College has experienced voluntary turnover among nursing faculty to a level that is concerning for two main reasons. The first area of concern is student success. When faculty leave our campus, the students lose the continuity and rapport they have established with that instructor. The stop-gap approach of using part-time adjunct instructors to temporarily fill the vacancies creates an even bigger disconnect between students and the college. Adjunct instructors can be a great resource for the short-term but are in no way the long-term solution (Tashchian et al., 2021).

The second area of concern is the working environment in the nursing division. Organizational factors that contribute to voluntary turnover such as level of autonomy, collegiality, and innovation support have been identified in multiple studies (Dee, 2004). An inviting and welcoming working environment has shown to invigorate employees to offer their discretionary effort. Nursing faculty have had turnover at a much higher rate on campus (23%) than the next highest department (16%) over a period of two academic years. Considering the current climate surrounding the global pandemic, nursing faculty have become a highlighted priority with respect to retention.

Nursing Faculty Recruiting and Retention Program

A program to recruit and retain nursing faculty is proposed to reduce the stress of voluntary turnover on the college and students. The program must support the Mission and Vision of Jones College by meeting two specific areas defined in the Mission Statement (Jones College, 2023):

(2) higher education programs to meet the needs and interests of students

(5) quality development through continuous planning and assessment

The Vision of Jones College states, “Jones College will be the First and Best choice for students, business, and the community for developing relationships, maximizing potential, and improving the quality of life of all associated with the college.” (Jones College, 2023). This program seeks to support both above areas of our foundational statements by reaching two stated goals.

General Goals of the Recruiting and Retention Program

The recruiting and retention program has three general goals. I developed the goals as the Human Resources Director for Jones College. The current nursing faculty turnover rate was compared to that of the overall faculty turnover rate. A 25% reduction in turnover will normalize the nursing faculty turnover with respect to all other faculty on campus. The reduction rate goal is not predicated on any national or regional turnover index. The goal of increasing faculty by 20% is to have a fully staffed faculty workforce. The program at Jones College is considered fully staffed with thirty full-time nursing faculty. The program has six vacancies in the program due to turnover.

- 1) Reduce voluntary turnover among the nursing faculty by 25% over a period of two academic years.
- 2) Increasing the nursing faculty staff by 20%.

Reduction of Voluntary Turnover

Voluntary turnover among the nursing faculty is at an alarming level. Table 1 reveals the increased turnover levels since 2019. The goal of a 25% reduction is derived from the overall number of nursing faculty to be fully staffed in our program. The program has six open positions

because of turnover. The reduction of nursing turnover is paramount to maintaining a positive learning environment for students. To meet the goal of 25% reduction of voluntary turnover, two specific areas will be addressed. First, a robust recruitment effort will be implemented. The faculty recruitment program has been word-of-mouth for decades. An effort to draw qualified nursing faculty to Jones College will begin with advertisements locally and regionally. The recruiting effort will also include current long-term faculty input with respect to selling points for Jones College. Other elements to increase recruiting success will be campus visits, student organization leadership involvement, and emphasis on state-of-the-art equipment upgrades.

Table 1

Turnover rates at Jones College

Year	Total number of Nursing Faculty at full capacity	Nursing Faculty Turnover	% of Nursing Faculty turnover	% of Jones College overall turnover
2018	30	3	10%	4%
2019	30	4	13%	6.20%
2020	30	5	16.66%	7.30%
2021	30	9	30%	10.9%

Note: Data was derived by me as the Human Resource Director. I am responsible for our job posting program and workforce hiring. The above table is not published. Printed with permission.

The second area to be addressed is pay. The nursing department already has a different pay scale than the rest of faculty on campus. Table 2 illustrates the pay differential offered for the nursing faculty in comparison to other faculty. The higher pay scale comes from an attempt to recruit and retain nursing faculty. A review of the scale reveals Jones faculty pay to be well below the prevailing wage for the education level required to teach. The median salary for a newly graduated Registered Nurse in Hattiesburg, MS is \$59,176 annually (Salary.com, 2023).

Increasing pay should be a positive aspect for both students and faculty. With higher retention rates, students will have more continuity and connection to the program, which in turn should increase graduation rates.

Table 2

Nursing faculty pay scale at Jones College compared to all other faculty pay scale

Nursing faculty pay scale							
Step	Certificate	B.S.	Masters	Masters + 15	Masters +30	Masters + 45	Doctorate
0	51,972	52,632	53,616	55,008	55,800	57,060	59,004
1	52,524	53,184	54,228	55,620	56,460	57,732	59,700
2	53,008	53,736	54,852	56,220	57,120	58,404	60,396
3	53,628	54,312	55,452	56,832	57,780	59,064	61,068
4	54,168	54,864	56,076	57,444	58,440	59,724	61,764
All other faculty pay scale							
0	42,852	43,356	45,420	46,392	48,168	49,296	51,012
1	43,356	43,884	45,936	46,944	48,720	49,872	51,636
2	43,860	44,412	46,452	47,508	49,284	50,448	52,248
3	44,376	44,928	46,980	48,060	49,836	51,020	52,860
4	44,880	45,444	47,508	48,612	50,388	51,588	53,472

Note. Adapted from unpublished internal Jones College Instructional Affairs annual pay scales.

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Increase Nursing Faculty

Nursing faculty are asked to conduct more classes than all their counterparts across the campus. The normal load for nursing faculty is six classes where other faculty are called upon to conduct five. The extra class is due to the shortage of nursing faculty on campus. Overload or extra classes are assigned, and the faculty are paid extra; however, the extra classes create

burnout. Adding nursing faculty will alleviate the need for assigning nursing faculty extra classes.

Assessment

I will conduct an assessment to determine the need for an intervention or program to meet the above goals. The assessment will be based on a model developed by Banta and Palomba (2015).

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MANUSCRIPT 2

According to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2022) employment projections, four of the top twenty fastest growing occupations in the country over the next ten years are nursing related. The field of nursing is growing, yet the availability of instructors is an issue for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The lack of instructors has created a situation where nursing programs must turn students away. Instructor shortages are due to faculty retirements, higher clinical / private sector compensation, and inadequate nursing graduates to replenish the instructor ranks (Rosseter, 2020).

Employee turnover is not unique to the CTE instructor population. Companies face the reality of employee turnover in every industry. When an employee leaves a company, they take with them the tacit knowledge that is learned over time to do the job. Human resource professionals are faced with implementing interventions that increase employee retention. The problem is compounded when replacing an instructor of the medical profession due to the lack of qualified individuals from which to fill the position. In the case of nursing instructors, the self-defeating reduction in student population drastically reduces the available instructors for future generations of nursing students. Interventions involving recruiting techniques and incentives, pay scale increases, and mentoring programs have been implemented by many institutions to try to stabilize the increasing faculty turnover rates (Haverdink, 2018). The depletion of nursing faculty means further unfilled nursing jobs which adds more strain to the healthcare system.

Student success is promoted by many factors, one of which is a sense of belonging (Hom, et al., 2017). Faculty members' proximal position and frequent interaction with students place them in a position to create positive interactions that render a sense of belonging in students (D'Amico, et al., 2013). College instructors who take advantage of the opportunity to develop a positive sense of belonging increase the chances of success for that student. With a decline in the

amount of nursing student throughput, the profession of nursing depends on high rates of success for students to meet current and future demand.

Statement of Problem

As the healthcare industry continues to struggle with staffing, the nursing vocation is falling further behind in supplying new nurses to meet the demand. A revolving door of turnover among the nursing faculty has stunted the Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs across the country. The number of qualified students who were turned away from programs nationwide due to understaffing in the faculty ranks topped 80,000 in 2020 (Rosseter, 2020).

The national crisis has become a local one for Jones College in Ellisville, MS. Jones College offers Associates Degree Nursing, Certified Nursing Assistant, and Licensed Practical Nursing as degree tracks. Jones College has experienced nursing faculty turnover at a much higher rate than any other faculty sector. The nursing faculty turnover rate for the last four years is 17%, as compared to the rest of the faculty population at 6.8%. The staffing issues have been addressed with full-time faculty when available; however, adjunct faculty have been used as the stop-gap short term solution to keep the nursing program from reducing the number of student seats available. Table 1 offers a faculty breakdown by full-time and part-time with turnover rates as compared to the overall faculty turnover rate. The department is fully staffed with thirty full-time faculty members. Part-time adjunct faculty are hired on an “as needed” basis to keep student to instructor ratio in line with requirements. Student to instructor ratio is fifteen students to one instructor for classroom instruction and ten students to one instructor for clinical rotation in a medical facility.

Table 3

Turnover rates at Jones College

Year	Total number of Nursing Faculty at full capacity	Nursing Faculty Turnover	% of Nursing Faculty turnover	% of Jones College overall turnover
2018	30	3	10%	4%
2019	30	4	13%	6.20%
2020	30	5	16.66%	7.30%
2021	30	9	30%	10.9%

Note. I created this table from the turnover data at Jones College. As the HR Director, I am responsible for our job posting program, onboarding, and offboarding employees. The data is not published. Printed with permission.

Assessment Overview

Jones College has experienced voluntary turnover among nursing faculty to a level that is concerning for two main reasons. The first area of concern is student success. When faculty leave our campus, the students lose the continuity and rapport they have established with that instructor. The stop-gap approach of using part-time adjunct instructors to temporarily fill the vacancies creates an even bigger disconnect between students and the college. Adjunct instructors can be a great resource for the short-term but are in no way the long-term solution.

The second area of concern is the working environment in the nursing division. Organizational factors that contribute to voluntary turnover such as level of autonomy, collegiality, and innovation support have been identified in multiple studies (Dee, 2004). An inviting and welcoming working environment has shown to invigorate employees to offer their discretionary effort. Nursing faculty have had turnover at a much higher rate on campus (23%) than the next highest department (16%) over a period of two academic years. Considering the

current climate surrounding the global pandemic, nursing faculty have become a highlighted priority with respect to retention.

Nursing Faculty Recruiting and Retention Program

The following assessment is to investigate the need for an intervention or actionable program to recruit and retain nursing faculty. The program must support the Mission and Vision of Jones College by meeting two specific areas defined in the Mission Statement (Jones College, 2023):

(2) higher education programs to meet the needs and interests of students

(5) quality development through continuous planning and assessment

The Vision of Jones College states, “Jones College will be the First and Best choice for students, business, and the community for developing relationships, maximizing potential, and improving the quality of life of all associated with the college.” (Jones College, 2023). Any suggested program or intervention must support the mission as well as work toward three main goals.

General Goals of a Recruiting and Retention Program

A recruiting and retention program will have two general goals. I developed these goals in my role as the Human Resources Director. My position at Jones College is directly concerned with the workforce development and overall staffing of the college. The nursing departments have a defined student to instructor ratio which is 15: 1 in the classroom and 10:1 for clinical rounds that limits class sizes (Mississippi Nursing Degree Programs, 2023). The percentage listed in the first goal below would bring the turnover percentage in the nursing department in line with the rest of the college. The second goal percentage reflects an increase that would see

the nursing faculty at full staff. Table 2 shows the turnover comparison numbers between the nursing faculty and all other faculty.

1) Reduce voluntary turnover among the nursing faculty by 25% over a period of two academic years.

2) Increasing the full-time nursing faculty staff by 20%.

Table 4

Turnover rate comparison between nursing faculty and all other faculty

Year	Total number of Nursing Faculty at full capacity	Nursing Faculty Turnover	% of Nursing Faculty turnover	% of Jones College overall turnover
2018	30	3	10%	4%
2019	30	4	13%	6.20%
2020	30	5	16.66%	7.30%
2021	30	9	30%	10.9%

Note: Data was derived by me as the Human Resource Director. I am responsible for our job posting program and workforce hiring. The above table is not published. Printed with permission.

Reduction of Voluntary Turnover

Voluntary turnover among the nursing faculty is at an alarming level. The reduction of nursing turnover is paramount to maintaining a positive learning environment for students. To meet the goal of 25% reduction of voluntary turnover, three specific areas will be addressed. First, a robust recruitment effort is proposed. The faculty recruitment program has been word-of-mouth for decades. An effort to draw qualified nursing faculty to Jones College will begin with advertisements locally and regionally. The recruiting effort will also include current long-term faculty input with respect to selling points for Jones College. Other elements to increase

recruiting success will be campus visits, student organization leadership involvement, and emphasis on state-of-the-art equipment upgrades.

The second area to be addressed is pay. The nursing department already has a different pay scale than the rest of faculty on campus. The higher pay scale comes from an attempt to recruit and retain nursing faculty. A review of the scale reveals Jones faculty pay to be well below the prevailing wage for the education level required to teach. Increasing pay should be a positive aspect for both students and faculty. With higher retention rates, students will have more continuity and connection to the program, which in turn should increase graduation rates. Figure 1 is a sample of the pay scale that shows the difference in pay for nursing faculty with respect to all other faculty. This pay scale is developed by the Executive Cabinet of Jones College.

Figure 2

Jones College pay scale sample comparison between nursing faculty and all other faculty

Nursing faculty pay scale							
Step	Certificate	B.S	Masters	Masters + 15	Masters +30	Masters + 45	Doctorate
0	51,972	52,632	53,616	55,008	55,800	57,060	59,004
1	52,524	53,184	54,228	55,620	56,460	57,732	59,700
2	53,008	53,736	54,852	56,220	57,120	58,404	60,396
3	53,628	54,312	55,452	56,832	57,780	59,064	61,068
4	54,168	54,864	56,076	57,444	58,440	59,724	61,764
All other faculty pay scale							
0	42,852	43,356	45,420	46,392	48,168	49,296	51,012
1	43,356	43,884	45,936	46,944	48,720	49,872	51,636
2	43,860	44,412	46,452	47,508	49,284	50,448	52,248
3	44,376	44,928	46,980	48,060	49,836	51,020	52,860
4	44,880	45,444	47,508	48,612	50,388	51,588	53,472

Note. Adapted from unpublished internal Jones College Instructional Affairs annual pay scales.
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The third area of concentration for reducing voluntary turnover is the addition of support staff. Nursing faculty spend up to 30% of their time on administrative activities such as entering grades, advising students, and preparing paperwork for class. The addition of an administrative assistant will reduce this workload, allowing the faculty members to concentrate their efforts on teaching.

Increase Nursing Faculty

Nursing faculty are asked to conduct more classes than all their counterparts across the campus. The normal load for nursing faculty is six classes where other faculty are called upon to conduct five. The extra class is due to the shortage of nursing faculty on campus. Overload or extra classes are assigned, and the faculty are paid extra; however, the extra classes create burnout. Adding nursing faculty will alleviate the need for assigning nursing faculty extra classes.

Assessment

A program to recruit and retain nursing faculty may reduce the stress of voluntary turnover on the college and students. The program must support the Mission and Vision of Jones College by meeting two specific areas defined in the Mission Statement (Jones College, 2023):

(2) higher education programs to meet the needs and interests of students

(5) quality development through continuous planning and assessment

The proposed assessment will focus on Jones College's nursing department. As the Human Resource Director of Jones College, an assessment to determine the need for a program is germane to my direct duties with respect to retention and campus culture. The Vision of Jones

College states, “Jones College will be the First and Best choice for students, business, and the community for developing relationships, maximizing potential, and improving the quality of life of all associated with the college.” (Jones College, 2023).

The following assessment structure is modeled after the text authored by Banta and Palomba (2015). The text is a guide to increase the effectiveness of assessments in higher learning organizations. It gives a framework on which to build an assessment to guide practitioners on how to improve their institution. The model calls for establishing who the stakeholders are for the study and establishing a planning committee or task force. Both groups will be involved in the project from beginning to end. Banta and Palomba (2015) next suggest getting the planning committee to agree on the purpose and goals of the assessment. The model designers suggest having a written assessment document that guides the committee. The final stages of the current study will include a strategy to collect the data, the instrument used for data collection, gathering and recording the data, and priorities and solutions are suggested from data analysis.

Stakeholders

The stakeholders in the following section are all related to the project for different reasons. The stakeholders are President of Jones College, Chief Financial Officer / Chief Academic Officer (CFO/CAO), Career and Technical Education (CTE) Dean, Chair of the Nursing Department, nursing faculty, nursing students, Human Resources Director, Operations Director, and non-nursing faculty.

The President of Jones College and CFO/CAO hold a large stake in this endeavor by being the primary decision maker of the project being given permission to start. The CTE Dean

is a stakeholder because the area of interest in this project is under his direct control and responsibility.

My stake in this program as the Human Resource Director is that recruiting and retaining employees is a direct responsibility of my job. The Operations Manager is responsible for all physical spaces on campus. The proposed intervention will include an exclusive space for meetings and interaction, thus directly involving the operations department.

All nursing faculty are stakeholders by way of job performance, increased job satisfaction if the program goes well, and increased morale throughout the department. They will be asked to participate in the program that they helped design. The direct involvement of the nursing faculty creates their stakeholder designation. Nursing faculty students are stakeholders because this program affects the continuity of their instructors throughout their academic career.

Non-nursing faculty have been named stakeholders because their area may lose funding because the funds are being used on this program. Jones College is not unlike all colleges in that the college must carefully invest in programs that will help the mission of the college. Should this program receive funding, then other programs may go unfunded, thereby negatively affecting non-nursing faculty.

Planning Team

The planning team for the assessment has been carefully chosen to provide a myriad of perspectives. The proposed team will be two nursing faculty members who have over five (5) years of service with Jones College, the CTE Dean, the campus Maintenance Manager, a non-nursing faculty member, a member of the local nursing community (preferably where Jones College students undergo clinical training), and me.

The CTE Dean and I have been identified as team members for their insight and knowledge of the innerworkings of the college's administration. Collaborating with these individuals will hopefully gain trust and goodwill from the administration. Nursing faculty members are targeted to join the team to provide perspective from the population for whom the program is intended. The Maintenance Manager will be able to provide feasibility suggestions with respect to physical infrastructure associated with the proposed program.

Non -nursing faculty members will be asked to participate to offer an outside perspective on the transferability of the program to the campus-wide faculty population. Collaborating with local community nurses should provide up-to-date information with regard to presentation content in addition strengthening the relationship between academia and local medical providers.

Assessment Plan

The Banta and Palomba (2015) model suggests having a written plan for the assessment. The written plan can be as elaborate or simple as the team or institution desires. The plan this assessment will follow will be a simple, straight forward approach: review of the current information regarding nursing faculty turnover in like organizations. The team will review the scope of the issue of nursing faculty turnover, how it affects the healthcare system, and what interventions have been used in the past. The needs assessment will also investigate the extent to which other schools have gone to alleviate turnover.

The team's goal will be to identify gaps that exist between the current situation and a desired stated future situation where the nursing faculty turnover rate is concerned. A review of Table 1 reveals the turnover disparity that is the focus of this study. The assessment will address the feasibility of any suggested steps suggested and what effect other programs have had on closing the identified gaps.

The team will then begin to gather information regarding employee turnover intentions in the nursing department. This will be done with a series of interviews with current nursing faculty. The use of interviews has limitations. A limitation to interviewing is the impact of power dynamics between interviewer and interviewee. An interview necessarily puts the interviewee in a less powerful position than the interviewee (Coleman, P., 2019) Another limitation is time consumption. Interviews must be planned, scheduled, conducted, recorded, analyzed, and interpreted. The time involved is extensive (Alsaawi, 2014). Response interpretation by the interviewer, and interviewer bias both are considered limitations of interviews Anderson, C., 2010)

I will make sure the interviewee is informed of the goals of the interview verbally and in writing before the interview. The interviewee will be asked to sign a consent form (Appendix 1) before the interview. Interviewees will be made anonymous by use of pseudonyms and redaction of all identifying information prior to publishing any statements or reports. In addition to faculty interviews, the human resources department will provide the employee turnover data from the last three (3) years. The data will include the following: sex, age, education level, race, years of teaching experience, and years of nursing experience. The human resources department will also provide this data for current faculty members.

I will attempt to interview former faculty members. The interview will be focused on the reason the employee left the college and what actions or programs the former employee suggested increasing the likelihood of current faculty's desire to stay. Interviewees will be given the same anonymity, consent form, and pre-interview information as current faculty.

I will synthesize all the data into a report ready for presentation six weeks after the final interview.

Strategies of Data Collection

The main data collection tool will be discussed through the three areas mentioned in the interviews with the nursing faculty.

Sample Size of Data

The nursing faculty from the entire department will be invited to participate in the interviews. I will contact each faculty member privately with an invitation to participate in the interviews with the understanding that the interviews are completely voluntary with no reprisals for non-participation. I understand that interviews involving the feelings about the place one works is a delicate matter. Interviewees may show reluctance to participate or be less than enthusiastic or forthcoming with answers during the interview for fear of retaliation or loss of opportunities due to the answers they give. I will assure them that their identity will be completely safe and hidden by use of pseudonym and any identifying information will be masked or redacted prior to publishing. A consent form will be presented before the interview and signed by both interviewer and interviewee prior to starting the interview. Interviews will be conducted in a private location on campus or an off-campus location if the interviewee chooses.

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection guide is constructed to elicit thoughts, feelings, and ideas about the program through open ended questions. The interviews will be carried out in a private setting with anonymity to elicit feedback without the fear of reprisal. Interviewees will be contacted individually to inquire about their interest in participating in the interview. A brief description of the nature of the study will be sent in writing to the participant along with a consent form. All interviewees will be required to sign the form prior to interviews. Appendix 1 is the consent form

that will be kept on file in my office on campus. I have a private office that will maintain the security of the physical data.

The study is qualitative in nature. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed and coded using Dedoose software for data analysis. The transcriptions will be coded according to themes and concepts that were revealed in the interview. A grouping of like data will be further analyzed for connections relevant to the research. The relevant themes will be used in formulating the overall picture of what is the current state of the nursing faculty with respect to turnover intentions (Deterding & Waters, 2018).

The interview guide in Table 3 was developed by me using turnover theories as the framework for the themes. Employee development was a theme developed from the human capital theory (Becker, 1993). Becker (1993) explained that the increase in training or development for an employee will result in increased production from that employee. The questions in this section should illicit the extent that the employee feel that Jones College has invested in their development. I used the work of March and Simon (1958) to develop questions that stimulate thoughts and feelings on employee job satisfaction and perceived ease of movement or difficulty level of taking advantage of opportunities outside of Jones College.

The instrument has been reviewed with colleagues for editing suggestions on wording of questions for clarity, additional questions, time to allow for interviews, etc. The reason for the review is to ensure they are remitting to the planning committee the desired data. Two suggestions were made to improve the instrument. The first suggestion was to switch questions three and four under the demographics theme. The original version asked “why” before “how long”. The questions were switched resulting in a flow to the interview questions that seems more natural. The other suggestion was to ask interviewees to define the culture of Jones before

asking them to compare the culture of Jones to other places. Table 3 is a description of the instrument's themes and questions in the final form.

Figure 3

Interview questions for nursing faculty regarding turnover intentions

Themes	Questions
Demographics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How long have you been in the nursing profession? 2. What drew you to nursing? 3. How long have you been a nursing instructor? 4. Why did you become a nursing instructor?
Employee development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How often have you attended meetings at Jones. 2. Describe how those meetings improved your teaching skills? 3. What topics were your favorite and why? 4. What was the topic of your last CEU class? 5. What have you learned from your fellow faculty members that you apply in your class?
Job Satisfaction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you like about being a Jones College faculty member? 2. Have you ever thought about leaving Jones College? If so, why? 3. Will you please define the culture of Jones College? 4. How does the culture of Jones College compare to other places you have worked? 5. How does the pay at Jones College compare to other places you have worked? 6. If you have ever worked anywhere before Jones College, why did you leave? 7. What would improve Jones College enough to make faculty members want to stay?

Data Gathering and Recording

The Information Technology department will be responsible for providing a secure space for secure storage for digital data that has been collected or created by the planning team. The data will be stored on a drive that is accessible to the planning team only. A spreadsheet with contact information for stakeholders and the planning team will be created by the me. I will

maintain the confidentiality of interviewees by using pseudonyms and redaction of information that may reveal identification. The interview consent form (see Appendix 1) informs the interviewee of this confidentiality plan.

I will coordinate and conduct all interviews. Interview data will include audio recordings, notes, transcripts, etc., and will be uploaded by me onto a secure drive provided by the Information Technology department. Ethnographic notes made during the interviews will be valuable during the analysis of the interview data (FitzGerald & Mills, 2022). I will be responsible for the anonymity of the interviewees.

Priorities and Solutions

I anticipate the assessment to lead to the proposed establishment of a Learning Community that is centered on nursing faculty only (Çopur & Demirel, 2022; Pan & Chen, 2023). It should be designed to create an environment where collegiality and camaraderie can grow. The community would act as a catalyst for faculty to express and exchange ideas freely, interact with one another on a personal level, and develop a sense of esprit de corps (Bailey et al., 2021; Teague & Anfara, 2012). The community would also provide learning opportunities for the faculty exclusively to help alleviate the cost of maintaining any certifications necessary for their credentials. This type of deliberate and nurtured community gives a voice to the faculty that can give them a sense of belonging and empowerment (Bailey et al., 2021; Çopur & Demirel, 2022; Teague & Anfara, 2012).

The CTE Dean and I will produce a report detailing the data analysis. The data analysis report will be given to the planning team in a presentation that is the precursor to developing a full program that addresses the gaps identified by the data analysis. The team will analyze all

needs that arise and prioritize each one for addressing in a manner that is profitable to the college, the nursing faculty community, and students.

The team will prioritize the needs based on preset criteria. The criteria will be based on a hierarchy starting with the number of employees that will be affected by addressing the need, next will be the organizational goals being addressed by this intervention, followed by urgency of need, then by what degree the need is from the desired state. The needs will be ranked according to these criteria by the entire planning team.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Appendix A: Interview Consent Form

This form was derived from the sample consent form published online by Roane State Community College

https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.roanestate.edu%2Fwebfolders%2FWALLACEDA%2Foier%2FIRB%2FInformed_Consent%2520Template.doc&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK.

Nursing Faculty Turnover Assessment

Consent to take part in research

- I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves meeting with the researcher for an interview that may include follow-up clarification questions.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous.
- This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in dissertation, conference presentation, published papers, testimonial literature, etc.
- I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in Human Resources office of Jones College until the project is complete or discontinued.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained until the project is complete or discontinued.
- I understand that under freedom of information legislation, I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information. Names, degrees, affiliations and contact details of researchers (and academic supervisors when relevant).

Signature of research participant

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

Signature of researcher

Date

MANUSCRIPT 3

As a profession, nursing is the fastest growing occupation in the U. S. The U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2021) projects a 45.7% growth in nurse practitioners by 2031 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022). The growth of the nursing field is experiencing an issue at the academic level. Nursing programs are seeing a deficit of instructors to train future nurses due to turnover in the nursing faculty. The turnover is attributed to faculty retirements and industry's considerable higher wages paid for nursing services (Rosseter, 2021).

Voluntary turnover among employees is not a new phenomenon. The topic has been studied for decades with multiple theories developed to answer the question of why employees choose to leave their current employer (Hom et al., 2017). Employees who leave an employer voluntarily leave with the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) that they learned while they worked for that employer. The KSA's being applied by that employee as productive outputs will need to be replaced. Professional human resource departments are then tasked with developing, facilitating, and implementing interventions to retain employees to stem the tide of turnover. In the case of nursing faculty, that task is exponentially difficult due to the shortage of qualified nurses in the field. The limited availability of nursing instructors necessarily reduces the available student seats due to the regulated student to instructor ratio of fifteen to one (Mississippi Nursing Degree Programs, 2023). Stabilizing efforts among nursing faculty have included different recruiting techniques, higher pay, and programs of mentorship (Haverdink, 2018). The shortage of nursing faculty accentuates the nursing shortage by graduating less nurses and puts the healthcare system in further duress.

Statement of the Problem

Rosseter (2021) reports that over 90,000 nursing students were turned away from nursing programs in 2021 due to a lack of nursing faculty. Nursing programs are failing to keep up with

demand for nurses because of the nursing faculty deficit. The crisis has affected nursing programs across the country.

Jones College has felt the effects of the nursing shortage in the form of nursing faculty turnover. The programs offered by Jones College are Associates Degree Nursing, Certified Nursing Assistant, and License Practicing Nurse. The nursing faculty turnover at Jones sits at 17%. The nursing faculty turnover rate is more than double the rest of the faculty on campus. A breakdown of turnover rates and comparison are in Table 5.

Table 5

Turnover rates at Jones College

Year	Total number of Nursing Faculty at full capacity	Nursing Faculty Turnover	% of Nursing Faculty turnover	% of Jones College overall turnover
2018	30	3	10%	4%
2019	30	4	13%	6.20%
2020	30	5	16.66%	7.30%
2021	30	9	30%	10.9%

Note: Data was derived by me as the Human Resource Director. I am responsible for our job posting program and workforce hiring. The above table is not published. Printed with permission.

Conceptual Framework

I developed my dissertation in practice based on the human capital theory (Becker, 1993) and theory of organizational equilibrium (March & Simon, 1958). Both theories posit reasons why employees choose to leave their current employer. The nursing turnover issue addressed above was ripe for a study to determine the necessity for an intervention. I developed the study and assessment based on the two theories that the environment created by Jones College could be manipulated in a way to increase the retention of nursing faculty(Becker 1993; March & Simon,

1958). I suggest developing a learning community and a stronger recruiting program to hire and retain nursing faculty.

Leadership Philosophy Statement

The definition of leadership has many variations that have been studied and debated for decades. Peter Northouse (2022) describes an evolution of a working definition of leadership that scholars used that ranged from dictatorial in the early 1900s to collaborative and persuasive in the 21st century. The definition that Northouse uses describes leadership as a “process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2022). The interpersonal skills, traits, and principles described in this statement will be the process by which I will lead any organization to accomplish a common vision.

Leadership Traits

A leader possesses traits that inspire others to follow them. Leadership traits can be honed over time to increase the effectiveness of a leader. Northouse lists several studies through the years that identify different traits that leaders possess. The wide-ranging list is narrowed to five traits that are important to every leader. The condensed list includes “intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability”. A leader should, above all else, be trustworthy. The most important trait on this list is integrity.

Leadership traits described by the US Marine Corps are essential to developing successful leaders. The fourteen traits are “justice, judgement, dependability, integrity, decisiveness, tact, initiative, endurance, bearing, unselfishness, courage, knowledge, and enthusiasm” (Marine Corps Leadership, 2023, Qualities section, para. 3). The leader who possesses and uses these traits will be effective in accomplishing an overall goal with a team of followers.

Integrity

Integrity usually makes any list of traits when describing a leader. Integrity is crucial to having anyone believe in what you say or do. Actions and words must match, or those in leadership will soon find themselves without people to lead. A trustworthy leader is someone who can be relied upon to tell the truth, act according to their own philosophy, and hold others accountable with integrity.

As a leader with a proven track record of success, my philosophy is to maintain my integrity above all else. Genuine leadership fosters integrity in the leader and those who follow them. I have had many situations where a decision to cut corners or otherwise compromise my integrity seemed as though it would prove profitable, but my integrity would have been lost in the eyes of those I was leading. Though the short-term gain may be lucrative, the long-term loss will be devastating.

Transformational Leadership

Leadership is not a one-time act. A leader listens to followers through an emotionally intelligent system of caring, understanding, and empathy. For followers to be inspired, they must first be recognized as human beings. Northouse (2022) describes this type of leadership as transformational. It is an all-encompassing process by which the leader diligently inspires followers through recognition of work accomplished, inspiring vision, and promoting creativity. Transformative leaders connect on a deeper level with people that increases motivation and attempts to assist followers in reaching their full potential.

A few leadership principles are key to being a transformative leader. The three following principles are derived from a list of leadership principles taught in the military. The first principle is to know yourself and seek self-improvement. Leaders know that they have

limitations and need to be life-long learners. The second principle is to set an example. Followers respect and even admire leaders who hold themselves to the same standard to which the team is held. The third principle is to develop a sense of responsibility among the team. A leader who advocates for followers to take ownership of their work creates a sense of responsibility that inspires followers to go the extra mile. The transformative leader stands on these three principles to create a supportive culture in which followers can thrive.

The Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) provides a framework for the transformational leader to engage education in a way that has maximum impact (*The CPED Framework*, 2022). The CPED guiding principles around ethics, equity, and social justice is the frame around which complex problems can be solved. Scholar practitioners who receive and Educational Doctorate from CPED consortium member has constructed a dissertation in practice (DiP) around a problem of practice that germane to his current organization or position (*The CPED Framework*, 2022). This type of dissertation provides a collaborative opportunity for the scholar practitioner to build partnerships in diverse communities, use professional knowledge, and tie theory to practical situations. The following sections cover my personal journey and leadership values with respect to the guiding principles of the CPED.

Social Justice and Ethics

All voices affected by a decision should be heard. Unfortunately, some voices are not as loud as others and are either unheard or ignored. A leader seeks to give voice to all who have a stake in the effect of a policy, rule, or decision. Karen Singer-Freeman, Linda Bastone, and Erick Montenegro (Henning et al., 2022) suggests that equal treatment can create inequities by not assessing accurately what followers know or can do. A just leader seeks to know their team on a deeper level to understand their life situations, experiences, and privileges. It is in this process

where the leader can begin to inspire, transform, and lead followers to accomplish a common goal.

Understanding the power relationship between follower and leader is crucial to detecting a dynamic that may be counterproductive to an underrepresented subgroup or minority. A leader who is keenly aware of this power dynamic ensures that practices and processes enacted by the group are based upon equitable systems to recognize the worth and value of everyone on the team.

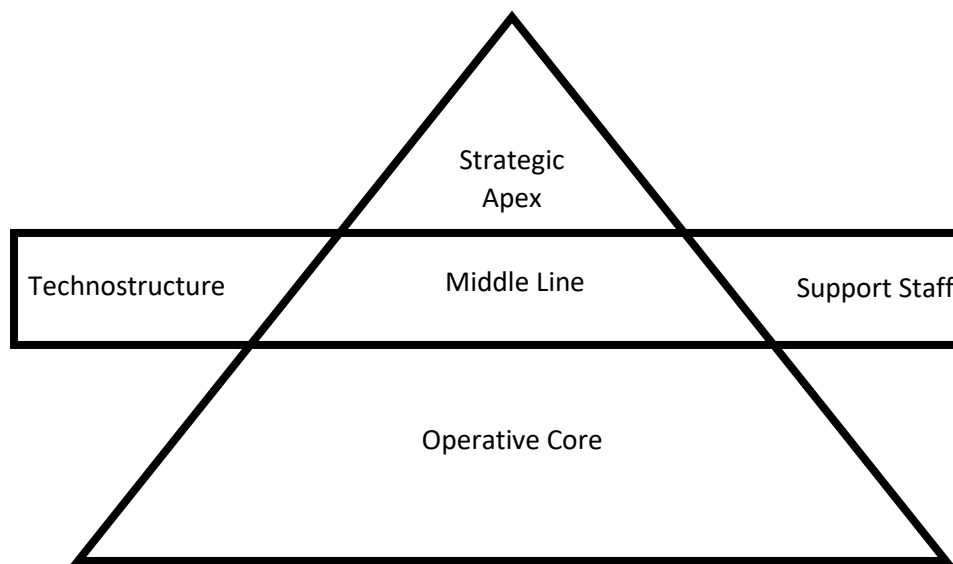
A leader assesses processes, policies, procedures, and practices to effect positive change that aims at eliminating barriers to success for all stakeholders. Multiple methods used for assessment must be employed to eradicate bias to the extent possible. Some of those methods include getting input from all members of the stakeholders when developing a policy, understanding cultural bias when implementing a system, or analyzing demographical data to ensure representation by all stakeholder groups in an equitable manner (Henning et al, 2022). Assessment is critical to overcoming the gap created by inequitable systems that were developed with no attention given to equitable distribution of power or agency.

Recognizing the structural configuration of an organization is a necessary skill to be successful as a leader. Harry Mintzberg defines five types of organizational structures by which area is key to that organization's success. Mentzer's five parts in an organization inform all facets of life in that organization (Bolman & Deal, 2021; Lunenburg, 2012). His model displays a hierarchical structure with five separate entities. The apex entity is the highest management in the organization. The next level consists of three entities that have different influence on the organization: technostructure, middle line, and support staff. The technostructure contains the analytical group such as engineers and accountants. Middle line is middle and lower

management such as front-line supervisors. The third entity is the support staff who provide secondary services to support the organization. An example of support staff would be the janitorial or maintenance employees. The last and largest level entity in Mintzberg’s model is the operative core. The operative core is the group of individuals who perform the tasks of the organization that produce the product. A core group example would be professors at a university.

Figure 4

Mintzberg's organizational dimensions



Note. From “Organizational Structure: Mintzberg’s Framework,” by Lunenburg, F. (2012).

International Journal of Scholarly, Academic, Intellectual Diversity, 14(1), 1-8.

Mintzberg uses this model to define the organization structure. The structure of an organization is determined by which of the five entities are the key to the organization’s success.

Table 1 is a representation of Mintzberg’s organizational structures characteristics. An organizations decentralization of power strategy is important to the structure. A vertically decentralized organization shares authority between management and non-management.

Horizontal decentralization is decision making authority among employees who are not in

management. This description of how an organization decentralizes authority is important in understanding the dynamics interaction in an organization.

Table 6

Mintzberg's organizational structures

Structural Configuration	Prime Coordinating Mechanism	Key Part of the Organization	Type of Decentralization
Simple structure	Direct supervision	Strategic apex	Vertical and horizontal centralization
Machine bureaucracy	Standardization of work processes	Technostructure	Limited horizontal decentralization
Professional bureaucracy	Standardization of skills	Operating core	Vertical and horizontal decentralization
Divisional zed form	Standardization of outputs	Middle line	Limited vertical decentralization
Adhocracy	Mutual adjustment	Support staff	Selective decentralization

Note. Note. From “Organizational Structure: Mintzberg’s Framework,” by Lunenburg, F. (2012). *International Journal of Scholarly, Academic, Intellectual Diversity*, 14(1), 1-8.

Leadership takes patience, passion, and a willingness to be flexible with people. The leader who is careful to guard their integrity will be successful. The privilege of holding a place of leadership in a society should not be taken lightly. A leader is mindful to remember that all stakeholders are affected by any the decision they make, and those stakeholders should have a voice in the decision.

Discussion

Scholar Practitioner

A scholar practitioner is a self-motivated student throughout life. Using the knowledge that is learned through study, research, and practical application places the scholar practitioner in a position to effectively lead an organization. I started this program with an open mind to absorb

as much information as possible to be able to increase the value I add to any organization through thoughtful leadership.

During the time we were engaged with the statistical tools, I realized that the collection of data is an important tool for leaders. Decisions made by emotions or haphazard guesses that have no data to suggest the decision is a good one can be disastrous. The data analysis tool JASP or SPSS gives the scholar practitioner a footing to make decision based upon certainty levels that data reveals.

Theories about human interaction have taken on a new meaning for me. I have more depth to my understanding of how decisions and actions will affect all stakeholders and communities involved. The theories about power and influence taught during the course have given me insight into the dynamics that shape our society.

Personal Skills and Competencies

I have been studying leadership for many years. I joined United States Marine Corps (USMC) in 1991. The USMC incorporated leadership skills and traits from the first day of basic training for enlisted and officer alike. I was exposed to leadership training early in adulthood. My active service ended after six years. I took those leadership skills and competencies that I had attained into my civilian life where I have been able to employ them in various management positions that I have held. Although I understood how to use those leadership traits and skills, the military leadership model neglects to teach scholarly theories behind the actions taken to inspire followers. The structural framework model (Boleman & Deal, 2021) explains why leadership in the USMC, or anywhere else, is effective. I have grown to appreciate the theories and models that are the framework of how leaders lead organizations.

The assessment portion of the course opened my eyes to different aspects of analysis. Having a step-by-step framework to build an assessment gives me confidence in my ability to give an accurate account of reasons for a proposal of intervention. My skills as a qualitative data research scholar have been enhanced through the program by learning to conduct interviews effectively. The qualitative data adds story and depth to any assessment. I am confident that this competency has increased my overall effectiveness in assessing problems in higher education.

Methodical research is the main competency I have acquired through this program. My understanding of what research is or more importantly what it is not has helped me gain confidence in my abilities to analyze a subject. Policy makers are reliant on research to advise their decision. I intend to be in a leadership position that can set policy. With the research skills I have acquired, I am able to use valuable information and knowledge to set policy.

Future Application

As my career progresses, I will take the skills and knowledge obtained through this program and apply them to my job as a leader. Assessing a subject or situation through lens' of various theories and models will add depth and breadth of how that subject or situation can be addressed. The framing of an organization's culture will inform how I can address problems within that organization and be most effective.

Post-Doctoral Enhancement

Higher learning is a passion of mine. I have lived my life to help others succeed in any endeavor they choose to undertake. My passion for service is evident in how I live my life. I became a U.S. Marine out of duty and service to my country. I am always actively seeking positions on committees, panels, or task forces to advance outcomes that are desirable for all stakeholders.

Post-doctoral formal education is a goal that I hope to achieve in the future. While that goal is attainable, I will continue to strive to apply all I learned in this program to increase the availability and opportunity for higher education for all students. I understand that underserved areas in Mississippi have difficulty accessing higher learning opportunities. My education and strong desire to serve will be the tools that I use to advance the cause of accessibility.

The specific problem of practice addressed in this instrument is a problem facing many institutions. I intend to use the skills and knowledge learned while studying this problem and apply them to other areas of my institution. Developing a concise statement about the problem, assessing the need for intervention, and leading a team or committee to address that problem is a recipe that I can use throughout life to progress toward a better future.

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