

A Concept Analysis of Novice Faculty

Dr. Fadiyah Jadid Alanazi (PhD, RN)^{1,2*}

¹Public Health Department, College of Nursing, Northern Border University, Arar, Saudi Arabia

²Center for Health Research, Northern Border University, Arar, Saudi Arabia

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*Corresponding author: Dr. Fadiyah Jadid Alanazi

Public Health Department, College of Nursing, Northern Border University, Arar, Saudi Arabia

Abstract

A concept analysis is an in-depth examination of a phenomenon of interest as it relates to various disciplines. The literature lacks a clear definition of the concept of novice faculty; therefore, the purpose of this paper is to analyze and develop an operational definition of novice faculty through the methodology of Walker and Avant (2011). A literature search was conducted using four selected databases: PsycINFO, Computers and Applied Sciences, CINAHL, and ERIC, resulting in a total of 19 articles chosen and reviewed. Based on this concept, attributes, antecedents, and consequences were applied, as displayed in the concept map. A model case demonstrates all the defining attributes of the concept. Additionally, borderline and contrary cases are provided to illustrate distinctions among defining attributes. The analysis led to the following definition: A novice faculty member is a neophyte who works in a new culture and lacks experience in both theoretical and practical skills associated with the nurse educator role in the academic environment. The importance of the novice concept to the profession of nursing is highlighted through its implications for nursing science, education, and practice. The outcome of this analysis—the development of a conceptual definition of novice faculty—should be viewed not as a finished product but as a foundational step toward understanding the concept.

Keywords: Novice faculty, Neophyte, New educator, Teacher.

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INTRODUCTION

Educators' roles are more than teaching in classrooms; educators are responsible for an institution's educational outcomes. Teaching in the nursing profession requires pedagogical and critical thinking skills, but not all faculty members have these skills. Apparently, educators in the nursing profession are transferred from clinical practice to academic environments, from graduate students to educators, or from an institution to other institution (Chung & Kowalski, 2012). Most studies in literature examined how to be an expert in the field; however, there were no clear definitions in the literature about the concept of novice faculty. The novice faculty concept has implications for nursing practice, education, and theory development. Novice analysis could render precise operational definitions for use in nursing education and practice.

The application of novice faculty in nursing science could be by adding knowledge about a specific society, and verifying a phenomenon important to nursing, allowing for nursing to drive research into practice and theory-guided practice. Further, defining the

concept is usually valuable to develop or test a nursing theory. Concept analysis could be used to develop a nursing language or develop research instruments. In addition, identifying the novice faculty in education could help the administrator to increase the effort to empower the novices in their pedagogical skills. Concept analysis helps to describe and explain daily experience in nursing practice. Overall, concept analysis is a paradigm of practice and a good exercise in critical thinking that is needed in clinical practice.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze and develop an operational definition of novice faculty. Walker and Avant (2011) strategy were used as a methodology in this paper to guide the concept analysis process. This strategy clarified the concept by identifying the attributes or characteristics of the concept. The result of this analysis, the development of an operational definition of novice faculty, should not be consider a finished product; it is a beginning step of understanding the novice concept. Walker and Avant (2011) developed eight steps to guide the analysis process: select the concept, determine the purposes of the analysis, define all the uses of the concept, determine the defining attributes, identify a model case, identify additional

cases, identify the antecedents and consequences, and define the empirical referents.

Select the Concept

The author used the Walker and Avant (2011) strategy to help clarify understanding of the novice faculty phenomenon. The first step in the analysis process is selecting the concept. Walker and Avant (2011) recommended selecting the concept with care, based on interest to the author and application to nursing. The author is interested in the area of novice faculty development in undergraduate nursing schools, and the novice concept appears to be central to the faculty development phenomenon. Understanding the concept of novice faculty could influence the educators' experience and improve their ability in handling their educational responsibility.

Determine Aims of the Analysis

The second step of processing the concept analysis is identifying the purpose of the analysis. This step directs the author to set up a specific aim for conducting the analysis. The purpose of this concept analysis is to define the critical attributes of the novice and develop an operational definition of novice faculty in the academic environment.

Identify Uses of the Concept

In this step Walker and Avant (2011) recommended that the author should identify as many uses of the concept as possible in the available literature, dictionaries, and thesauruses. To increase the understanding of the concept, the author used extensive search of various sources to find the uses of the "novice" concept.

General Definition

The author began the search process of concept analysis using the definition of novice in Merriam Webster (n.d.): "a person who is just starting out in a field of activity." Farrell (2012) defined novice as "newly qualified teachers, who have completed their language teacher education program, and have commenced teaching English in an educational institution (usually within three years of completing their teacher education program)" (p.437). In this definition, the author specified the year of being a novice; however, what about being a faculty member for more than three years and teaching a specific course for the first time. Another definition was found in a medical education study, which presented the psychological behavior of neophyte student: "novice is the one who processes each step towards the solution" (Haji *et al.*, 2016, p. 956). Lastly, Benner (1984) was interested in transferring from novice to expert, identified the novice as "a beginner with no experience; their rule-governed behavior is limited and inflexible." Generally, the definitions in literature did not have a clear definition of novice faculty in an academic setting with a new culture or a new environment.

Database Searches

The author conducted an extensive electronic search of literature databases using the Widener University Wolfgram Memorial Library. The selected databases accessed were PsycINFO, Computers and Applied Sciences Complete, CINAHL, and ERIC. The keyword used for the search was "novice" in the title of the publication. The search was limited to the last ten years, English language, and full text only. CINAHL and ERIC had the most databases yielding 275, 356 hits respectively. The author skimmed through the article titles and abstracts, then selected one article per 50 articles. The total number of articles appropriate to concept analysis was 19; these were organized into a template. In addition to the database searches, the author used the Google search with the keyword "novice." The only result in Google search was a dictionary definition. The author reviewed several online definitions of novice. The author fined the most definition from the selected databases. All the selected articles were read twice to obtain in-depth understanding of the use of the novice concept and then transferred the important information to the template.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In general, the novice concept was used same way in different disciplines. There was little difference in the synonyms of the concept of novice. First of all, in psychology, most articles used "novice" as a beginner in the field and used the beginner as a synonym for novice students and evaluators (Brijs, Cuenen, Brijs, Ruiter & Wets, 2014; Plucker, Kaufman, Temple & Qian, 2009) or as untrained (Suchak, Watzek, Quarles & de Waal, 2018). Psychology used "novice" as inexpert, new, and pre-service in regard to teachers (Wolff, Jarodzka, van den Bogert & Boshuizen, 2016) or regard to music reader (Wong & Gauthier, 2010). Novices were explained as a student who processes each step towards solution in working memory (Haji, Cheung, Woods, Regehr, de Ribaupierre & Dubrowski, 2016). In this psychology field, the author noted that most articles examined the critical thinking of their samples and concluded that novices become experts in the field with time.

Like psychology, computer and applied sciences used "novice" to mean students as beginner and surface learners of the computer programming sciences (Palmunen, Pelto, Paalumäki, & Lainema, 2013; Shi, Cui, Zhang & Sun, 2018). The latter study referred to novice learners as undergraduates in computer science who have never previously experienced programming (Shi, *et al.*, 2018). The author concluded that psychology and computer science use "beginner" as a synonym for "novice," when the term is related to students or learners who have no education in the field, and uses "novice" to mean "inexpert and pre-service" in regard to teachers who are educated but lack experience.

Surprisingly, in addition to "neophyte" and "inexpert," (Kim & Roth, 2011) some nursing and

education researchers used “beginner” interchangeably with “novice” in regard to faculty (Alhamad, 2018; Gholam, 2018; Poindexter, 2013) and used novice in regard to nursing student (Cordeau, 2010). The letter researcher examined essential entry-level nurse educator competencies, used “novice educator” as “beginner” because the nurses were expert in clinical settings, but lacked knowledge with regard to educational roles (Poindexter, 2013). However, most researches in the nursing profession used the concept of novice as a registered nurse who lacked hands-on experience and lacked an understanding of the role of nursing educator (Al-Nasser & Muniswamy, 2015; Hobson, Harris, Buckner-Manley & Smith, 2012; Farrell, 2012); lacked clinical experience (Berry, Gillespie, Gates & Schafer, 2012; Hoffman, Aitken & Duffield, 2009); or lacked confidence (Allanson & Fulbrook, 2010).

Most studies in the nursing and education field examined the challenges that faced the educators’ competencies in teaching and suggested fostering the novice faculty about to their academic responsibilities. In general, there was no huge difference between the four disciplines in using the concept of novice. The variation might appear only with being a novice meaning undergraduates can be identified as beginners, and graduate and faculty could be neophytes or inexperienced people when they are new in a field.

Determine the Defining Attributes

In this step the author should show all the clusters of attributes associated with the concept and the characteristics associated in the literature, to provide the concept with clarity of meaning and differentiation from similar concept (Walker & Avant, 2011). The author read all the selected articles to identify the similarities and differences between the uses of the novice concept. After extensive reviewing of the literature and exploration of the uses of the concept, the author determined the defining attributes to the novice concept. The critical attributes frequently demonstrated in the literature, neophyte and inexperienced were consistent with the author’s worldview.

Neophyte

A neophyte was used in the literature as a synonym of novice (Bonetti Destrebecq & Nucchi, 2008; Specht, 2013; Kim & Roth, 2011). A neophyte-nursing faculty is educators who start their job at the institution and need expert mentors to empower the novice faculty to their pedagogical roles (Specht, 2013). So, it is clear that “neophyte” has the same meaning as “novice” meaning a person who is new to a phenomenon.

Inexpert

A novice person is clearly described in the literature as an inexperienced person. Being inexperienced in a field results in a novice person (Wolff, Jarodzka, van den Bogert & Boshuizen, 2016). Lack of hands-on experience in an educational environment could influence the novice

faculty’s teaching ability. This attribute would not stick with the person for long; as soon as the individual becomes involved in the field and is familiar with all aspects, the individual would be an expert. Researchers show that novice faculty gain experience and become an expert with time in the field (Benner, 1984; Palmunen, Peltto, Paalumäki & Lainema, 2013). Therefore, this defining attribute is distinguished between novice faculty and senior faculty.

Identify a Model Case

Walker and Avant (2011) explained that a model case is when the author uses an example to demonstrate all the defining attributes of the concept. A model case would be an actual example from real life, so one can be extremely sure that the case describes the concept. The following a model case describing the concept of “novice,” is from real life with some fabrication and includes all the critical attributes.

A registered nurse Nora, who has worked in a hospital for four years, is accepted as a full-time faculty member at a nursing school and starts her first-semester teaching. Nora comes to the class with over 150 slides for her 50-minute lecture. When the time is over, she has finished only 70 slides. Nora believes the students are not using their book for studying and only study from the presented slides. Therefore, Nora includes everything important in the book to her PowerPoint slides. Nora explains her problem to her colleagues, “I always run over time.” The colleague tells her not to worry; the same thing happened to me when I am new to teaching. It takes some time to get experience and pull out only the essential ideas for the lecture. Then the slides will be fewer, and the teacher will finish on time.

Identify Additional Cases

Borderline Case

In this case the author includes some defining attributes of the concept but not all of them, using the Nora’s example as a borderline example. Walker and Avant (2011) said that examining other cases, which are inconsistent with the concept, would help the reader to recognize the reasons why model case is not inconsistent.

A registered nurse Nora who has been working in the hospital for four years is accepted as a full-term faculty member at a nursing school and starts her first-semester teaching. Nora comes to the class very excited to communicate with the students and learns the students’ names before finishing the class. This case contained only the defining attribute of being a neophyte but did not include the inexperienced attribute. The reader this case would understand Nora is a faculty who is expert in clinical practice but a novice in an academic environment.

Contrary Case

Nancy is a faculty member in nursing education working at an institution for more than ten years. Nancy

comes to the classroom with only 20 PowerPoint slides to present to the students for her 50-minutes lecture. After that, Nancy used an active learning strategy to increase students' critical thinking. She divided the students into three groups and posted a case study on the smart board. After that, she encouraged group discussion to solve the problem in the case study provided.

As is shown in this contrary case, the reader would understand that Nancy is an expert educator at a nursing school and uses different teaching strategies to encourage student participation and critical thinking. All the identifying attributes of the novice concept are absent in this example. Nancy example is a case of "not the concept" to help in making better judgments about the phenomenon (Walker & Avant, 2011, p 71).

Identify Antecedents and Consequences

Antecedents

The next step of concept analysis is identifying antecedents and consequences of the concept. It is essential to assure that a defining attribute cannot be either an antecedent or a consequence (Walker & Avant, 2011). Antecedents are those incidents that must occur in order for the concept to be present. The author has classified these events as antecedents of "novice" concept: lack of competence, lack of self-confidence, and lack of knowledge. In order to be defined as a novice, an individual would have lack of competence. An individual shows incompetence when they are incapable to perform a new function. Studies show that new nurses and faculty usually performing a low competence due to their lack of experience and lack knowledge of their subject matter (Allanson & Fulbrook, 2010; Alhamad, 2018).

Further, when a person has low knowledge about their roles or how they can deal with a new situation, they also would have a fear of failure and low-self-confidence. Therefore, low self-confidence could be a reason for being a novice in a specific field. Researchers found that low level of experience in a situation causes decreased knowledge, competence, and self-confidence (Allanson & Fulbrook, 2010; Alhamad, 2018; Poindexter, 2013). Novice educators showed a low level of knowledge and competence when reported in teaching, curriculum development, and scholar roles (Poindexter, 2013). Novices usually need time to attain the knowledge and identify the important evidence that is needed to solve the problem (Haji *et al.*, 2016). Apparently, in order to qualify as a novice, individuals should lack knowledge, competence, and self – confidence.

Consequences

On the other hand, consequences are the outcome of the occurrence of the concept (Walker & Avant, 2011). The three identifying consequences for the concept of novice are stressful, overwhelming, or enthusiastic. When a person is starts a new role identified in the literature as stressful and overwhelming, these

consequences could be a negative aspect of being a novice. In academic environment faculty members suffer when learning to be a teacher and how to teach effectively (Farrell, 2012). Thus, all the new roles, responsibilities, and duties could overwhelm the novice. In addition, more stressful experiences could result from low self-confidence, when an individual has a feeling of failure. In contrast, some novices could come to a new job with much enthusiasm and high desire to learn all the new roles with no feeling of stress or being overwhelmed (Brown & Sorrell, 2017). This outcome would show a positive experience of being a novice, where enthusiastic people could foster an improved quality of teaching and increase positive educational outcomes.

Conceptual Map

To increase the understanding of attributes, antecedents, and consequences, the author illustrates these events as related to the concept of novice faculty with a concept map in Appendix A.

Define Empirical Referents

The last step of concept analysis is empirical referents. This step is essential because more often the defining attributes, antecedents, and consequences are abstract. Empirical referents are defined as a category used to examine the existence of the concept (Walker & Avant, 2011). Some studies report empirical measures for evaluating the novice experience to distinguish between the expert and novice in the field. Novices have been examined in the literature in quantitative research by using a scale of professional critique and scale of self-defined novices (Plucker, Kaufman, Temple & Qian, 2009). In this study the authors aimed to explore whether novice and expert evaluate movies the same way; thus, the authors used the instrument to identify whom to consider a novice. Generally, a person could be identified as being a novice according to their performance in the situation (Palmunen, Peltto, Paalumäki & Lainema, 2013). An individual with low performance level could be identified as a novice due their lack of experience.

Operational Definition of Novice Faculty

"A Novice Faculty member is a neophyte who works in a new culture and lacks experience in theoretical and practical skills associated with the nurse educator role in the academic environment."

CONCLUSION

To analyze concept of interest, the author examined the importance of the novice concept in the nursing field and highlighted the implications for nursing science, research, education, practice, and education. The author used the Walker and Avant (2011) strategy as a methodology to analyze the concept. The purpose of this paper was to develop an operational definition of novice to be used in academic environments. There were no clear definitions of novice in nursing literature. Clarification of the concept is needed to shed light on the neophyte faculty.

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Appendix A
Concept Map Novice Faculty

