ABSTRACT

RESEARCH SUBJECT: Evaluation of Outcomes of a Nurse Internship Program

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During the transition from graduate nurse to professional nurse, new nurse graduates experience stress and new challenges. Many new nurse graduates leave their first employment within one year. Research has not yet clarified the effectiveness of internship programs in improving employment outcomes for new nurses. The purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which an internship program improves sense of belonging, organizational commitment, and anticipated turnover among new nurse graduates. This is a partial replication and extension of a study by Newhouse, Hoffman, Suflita, and Hairston (2007). The study uses a quasi-experimental, posttest only, control group design, and is based on the framework of Donabedian (1966). New nurse graduates (n = 80) who completed an internship program were compared with nurse graduates (n = 80) who did not participate in an internship program. The sample was drawn from nurses who worked on medical and surgical units in a Midwestern non-academic acute care facility. The Modified Hagerty-Patusky Sense of Belonging Instrument (Hagerty & Patusky, 1995), the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979) and the Anticipated Turnover Scale (Hinshaw & Atwood, 1982) measured study variables. Findings of the study may extend what is known about outcomes of a nurse internship program and the influence of demographic variables on outcomes.