"Becoming Someone Different":
A Grounded Theory Study of How Nurses Integrate Pregnancy and Full Time Employment

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Introduction

- 1.7 million nurses in the U.S., 40% within child-bearing age (20-45) (U.S. Dept. Labor Statistics, 2010)
- 65% of those nurses are employed FT (U.S. Dept of Labor Stats, 2010)
- Pregnancy, then, is a likely possibility
- There is a body of literature exploring the influence of Pregnancy on employment
- How nurses integrate PG and employment is missing

Purpose

- The purpose of this research is to provide a holistic exploration of how primiparous registered professional nurses integrate pregnancy and full time employment

- _Question:_ How do primiparous Registered Professional Nurses integrate pregnancy and full time employment?

Background

- Gender: influences the kind of work women choose, how they act, and how they act in the workplace (Bem, 1993, 1981; Buss, 1995; Chodorow, 1989; Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Wood, 2002; Gergen, 2009, 1990; Hawkesworth, 1997; Shields, 1975)
- Job roles have been defined as Masculine or Feminine
- Despite labels, highest concentration of women employees: Education & Health Care (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011)
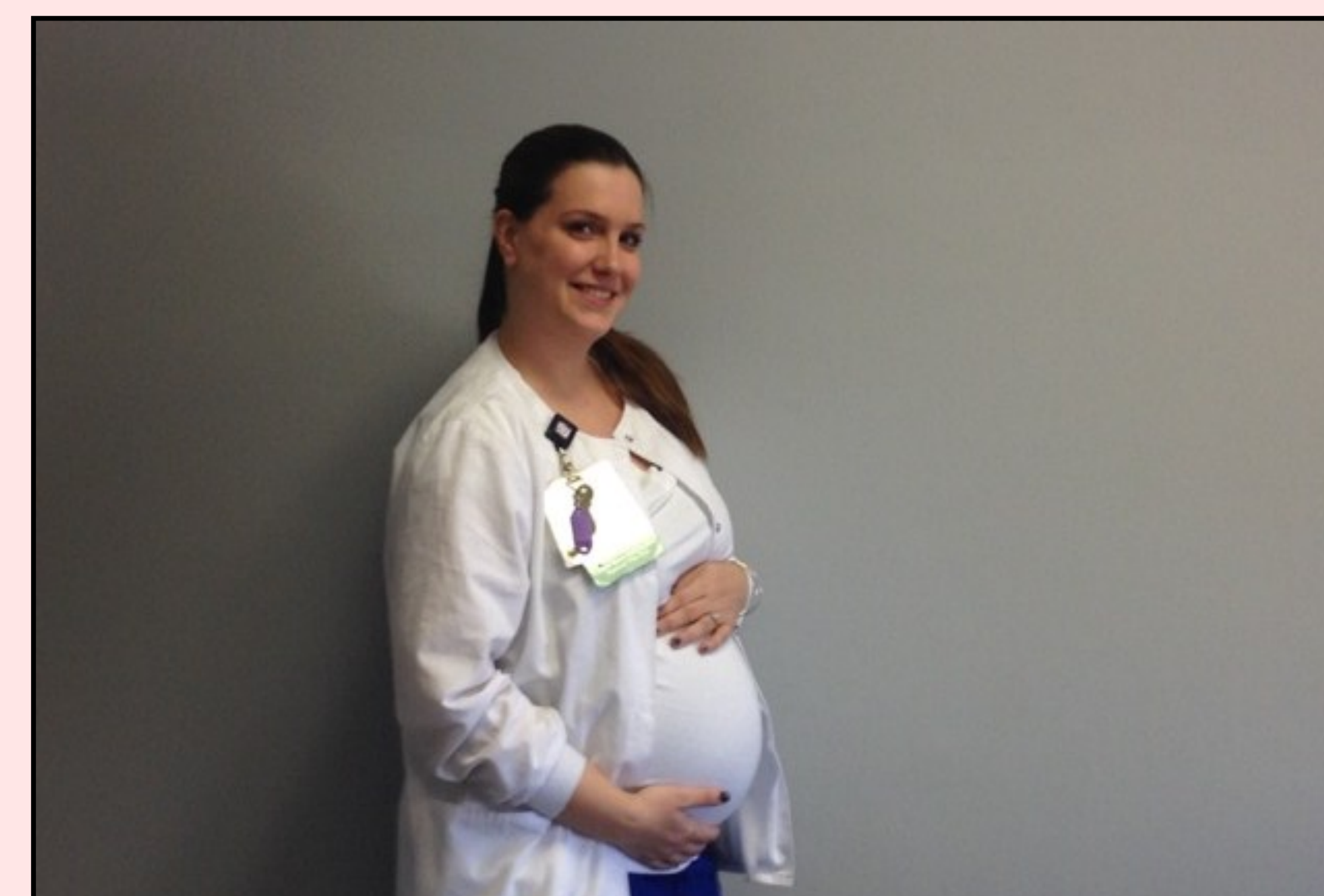- Women are the ONLY sex capable of bearing children

Background: Nursing

- Nursing is physically-demanding & stressful (Tucker, Harris, Pipe & Stevens, 2010)
- The focus of studies involving pregnant nurses focused primarily on issues surrounding safety: chemicals & diseases to avoid (Hossain & Triche, 2007; Suarez-Varela, Kaerlev, Zhu, Bonde, & Nohr, et al., 2009).
- Other professions (Law enforcement, massage therapy, corporate America) have been innovative in their approaches to help female employees integrate pregnancy & employment

Background: Nursing

- What was missing for nursing: A Holistic Approach that explored how nurses integrate pregnancy and full time employment
- Answer the Question: What's it all about? What's Going on? What happens?
- "So What?": we know what stress can do, but what is the experience of being pregnant and working like for nurses? Nothing is known (Good, Bad, or in between..)
- It's the "**Gap**" in the literature

Background, cont'd

- Pregnancy, then, is likely to influence how women act, and how they're treated, in the workplace (Brown, 2008)
- Workplace policies, practice, & procedures reflect the cultural norms of the organizations and influence how pregnant employees are treated (Padavic & Reskin, 2002)
- Workplace for Pregnant employees: Favorable and Unfavorable Aspects

Methodology

- Qualitative- **Grounded Theory**
- Used to explore areas about which little is known, or where much is known but research would generate new understanding (social process/social context) (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)
- Used to generate a substantive theory that is grounded in data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Jeon, 2004)
- **Model:** Corbin & Strauss (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, 2008)

Sample

- **Theoretical Sampling**: Responsive to the data rather than established before the research begins- concepts discovered drive the next round of data collection
- Go to places, persons, or situations that will provide information about the concepts they want to learn more about (**Be practical and take advantage of the moment) (Corbin & Strauss, 2008)
- **Delimitations**: Participants will have to be Female, RNs, Worked Full Time, and have delivered their 1st Baby (Access: Magnet/Magnet Journey Hosp)

Data Analysis

- Glaser
- Coding: _Open, Axial, and Selective Coding_
- _Codes/Concepts ➡ Categories ➡ Core Category ➡ Theory_
- Develop Categories to ultimately develop a Core Category
- Generate a theory of social process (i.e. theory grounded in data)

"Becoming Someone Different"

- Supported by 4 emergent themes:
- _Looking different, Feeling different_
- _Expectations while Expecting_
- _Connecting differently_
- _Transitioning Labor_

Implications for Nurse Leaders

- Assess & evaluate the Culture of the Nursing Unit
- Communication between the pregnant RN and the Nurse Manager/ Asst. Nurse Manager and/or Director is essential
- Nurse Leaders need a clear understanding of the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) and FMLA
- Use collective voice to re-evaluate exisiting maternity leave policies nationally