BSN-to-PhD, Knowing What I Know Now: A Personal Story of Triumph and Pitfalls

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Purpose:

In nursing, a PhD is considered the pinnacle of academic degrees that promises its holders the prospects of success in higher education, research, administration, clinical management, and research. The purpose of this paper is to highlight some personal triumphs and pitfalls while obtaining my BSN to PhD and to answer the question- knowing what I know now, what could I have done differently?

Methods:

This is a personal story of my journey and experience through the BSN-PhD program. I share insight on things that I believe helped me to be successful and prepared me to it the ground running once I was done with my education, but also what helped me to be successful in navigating the dissertation process, which as we all know can be a gruesome process. I also share personal pitfalls and obstacles that i succumbed to in the process. for example I explore reasons why I believe I failed my comprehensive exams the first time around. I also answer the u=fundamental question of "knowing what I know now, what could I have done differently?"

Results:

This will be a discussion of some important issues related to doctoral education. The main elements of my presentation will include the following:

a). examining the types of doctoral programs available in nursing and making a case for the BSN to PhD route.

b). choosing the best university depending on individual needs such as available financial aid and scholarships, completely online programs versus hybrid programs, the program's fit with individual research trajectory.

c). making it through the first year including, fighting stereotypes, balancing life, work, and school, maintaining your sanity while still remaining committed to your work, and making the most of your mentoring relationships

d). tackling major milestones such as diagnostic exams, choosing a dissertation topic, comprehensive exams, proposal and dissertation defense. I also share a personal story of why i think I failed my first comprehensive exams

e). You are done. Now what! This is the question for many people after they graduate and in this section of the discuss issues such as whether or not to pursue a post doc, academia versus industry, tenure track versus clinical track, landing the right job for you, and how to hit the ground running regardless of where you end up.

Conclusion:

Many nurses know that they want to enhance their education by obtaining doctoral degrees, however, finding appropriate programs that meet individual goals is usually a challenge. Additionally, students are

seldom mentally prepared to face challenges in doctoral programs. This can result in a lot of anxiety and negative consequences while in the program. Providing these insights on how to successfully navigate ones doctoral degree and beyond can alleviate some of the unnecessary pressure associated with being doctoral student.

Title:
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Keywords:
BSN to PHD, Successful completion and doctoral programs

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Abstract Summary:
Nurses know that they want to enhance their education by obtaining doctoral degrees, however, finding appropriate programs that meet individual goals is usually a challenge. Additionally, students are not mentally prepared to face challenges in doctoral programs. This session addresses the do's and don'ts of going through doctoral programs successfully.

Content Outline:
Introduction

a. Types of doctoral programs available in nursing

b. Why BSN to PhD

Body

a. **Choosing the best university for you**

- Financial aid and scholarships
- Completely online versus hybrid
- Fit with personal research trajectory

b. **Making it Through Year #1**

- Fighting stereotypes
- It is a balancing act
- Getting over the hump
- Maintaining your sanity while showing commitment
- Making the most of your mentoring relationships

c. Tackling major milestones

- passing your diagnostics exams
- choosing your dissertation topic
- the comprehensive exams: why I failed the first time
- proposal and dissertation defense

d. You are done. Now what?

- a case for or against post docs
- Academia versus industry
- tenure track versus clinical track
- landing the right job
- hitting the ground running

Conclusion

a. take home message

b. being confident in your decision

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Professional Experience: Mercy Mumba, PhD, RN, CMSRN: Dr. Mercy Mumba is an Assistant Professor in the Capstone College of Nursing. She graduated with her Honors Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing and Health Innovation in 2010. She is a certified Medical Surgical Registered Nurse and graduated with her PhD in Nursing in 2016. Dr. Mumba has an extensive clinical background, both in acute care and long-term care. Her experience in academia includes lecture experiences and clinical supervision of students. Her academic areas of expertise include holistic health assessment, fundamentals of nursing, and nursing research. Dr. Mumba has won several notable award including the Rising Star Award from Nurses.Com in their Giving Excellence Meaning awards. She is a recipient of many scholarships and fellowships from the University of Texas at Arlington, Texas Health Resources, and Sigma Theta Tau International.
Author Summary: Dr. Mumba is an innovative researcher who is well versed in both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Her primary research area of focus is substance abuse among nurses and their psychosocial wellbeing. Dr. Mumba has further conducted several studies involving improving patient satisfaction in acute care setting. She is a published author and has presented her research at many local, regional, and international research conferences.