

Entrepreneurship and Nursing

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship in nursing is an emerging and growing phenomenon that has gained more importance with changes in the health system and the needs of society. With their knowledge and skills, nurses can play an effective role in providing quality and innovative care services. This study examines the concept of entrepreneurship in nursing, the motivations of nurses to enter this field, the challenges and opportunities they face, and its role in improving the health system. Various scientific sources such as articles, books and reports of international organizations have been used in this study. Also, the experiences of entrepreneurial nurses and experts in this field have also been investigated. The findings show that nurses turn to entrepreneurship with various motivations such as financial independence, improving the quality of care, and responding to the needs of society. They face challenges such as legal, financial, and cultural barriers, but there are also many opportunities in various fields such as providing home care services, establishing nursing consultation centers, and producing health-related products. Nursing entrepreneurship can play an important role in improving the health system, increasing the quality-of-care services, and empowering nurses. To develop this field, it is necessary to provide appropriate platforms for training, supporting, and facilitating the entrepreneurial activities of nurses.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Nursing, Health System, Care Services, Innovation

I. Introduction

Entrepreneurship in nursing has its roots in the 19th century and the pioneering efforts of Florence Nightingale in caring for soldiers and establishing nursing schools. Today, rapid changes in

the health care system have provided many opportunities and challenges for creative, innovative and business-minded nurses. The world is looking to change the approach from hospital-oriented to community-oriented, and the World Health Organization (WHO) also emphasizes universal health coverage and the irreplaceable role of nurses as health leaders. The designation of 2020 as the International Year of Nurses is a testimony to the importance of this profession. Entrepreneurship in nursing means creating and developing opportunities focused on care, education or nursing management activities. Studies show that identifying the needs of the organization, environment and society are the primary motivations of outstanding entrepreneurs in this field. Nurse entrepreneurs are innovators who Their primary motivation is change and progress. Entrepreneurship in this field encourages nurses to do independent work and provides opportunities for business development, earning a decent income and professional stability in addition to public challenges. The desire for independence, a holistic view, and earning money are among the reasons for the tendency of health professionals to become entrepreneurs. Developing the role of nursing and showing the capabilities of nurses in different roles is another motivation for nurses to enter the field of entrepreneurship. The development of entrepreneurial culture in the nursing community requires the promotion of this style of thinking and individual and collective behavior, especially among nursing students. Entrepreneurs use their knowledge and skills to create value and wealth. Considering the main health trends such as globalization, aging and the increase of non-communicable diseases, it seems that nursing businesses can achieve significant success in these directions (Dehghan, 2019). Nurse entrepreneurs face challenges such as legal, financial, and cultural barriers. However, there are many

opportunities ahead of them. The development of home care services, the establishment of nursing consultation centers, providing educational and consulting services in the field of health, and the production and supply of products related to care are among these opportunities.

Entrepreneurship in nursing is an emerging and developing phenomenon that can play an important role in improving the health care system and improving the position of nurses. Considering the ever-increasing needs of society for quality and cost-effective care services, it is necessary to nurture and support entrepreneurial nurses.

Entrepreneurship in nursing provides nurses with self-employment opportunities that allow them to pursue their personal visions and passions to improve health outcomes using innovative approaches. The entrepreneurial nurse identifies a need and creates a service to meet that need, and is recognized as a business owner and provides nursing services in the nature of direct care, education, research, implementation, and consultation (Azadi et al., 2018). According to what was raised, the basic question of the current research is what are the effects of entrepreneurship and nursing?

Applying Farzpourmachiani's Attrition Entrepreneurship Theory (Farzpourmachiani M. and Farzpourmachiani A., 2024) to nursing highlights the critical difference between value-adding and merely income-generating activities. Entrepreneurship in nursing, when done correctly, strongly counters attrition entrepreneurship. Nurses who launch businesses that provide innovative patient care, develop new healthcare technologies, or offer specialized services are examples of genuine entrepreneurship. These ventures create societal wealth by improving patient outcomes, increasing efficiency, and addressing unmet healthcare needs. This contrasts sharply with "attrition entrepreneurship," which, in a nursing context, might involve exploiting existing healthcare gaps without introducing meaningful innovation or contributing to the long-term well-being of the healthcare system. By focusing on innovation, quality, and patient-centered care, nurse entrepreneurs can drive positive change, fostering a more dynamic and effective healthcare ecosystem, and directly combating the negative aspects of attrition entrepreneurship.

Theoretical foundations

Organizational Entrepreneurship

Organizational entrepreneurship or corporate entrepreneurship refers to an activity in which employees of an organization act as intra-organizational entrepreneurs and try to use their ideas and innovations to improve and develop the

organization. This type of entrepreneurship can lead to creating new products and services, improving processes, increasing productivity and profitability of the organization. In fact, organizational entrepreneurship allows employees to show their creativity and innovation in the work environment and help the growth and development of the organization.

Organizational entrepreneurship is recognized as an important strategy for organizations in today's competitive world. Organizations that support organizational entrepreneurship usually have more competitive advantages. These benefits include speeding up innovation, improving the quality of products and services, increasing employee satisfaction, and attracting top talent. In addition, organizational entrepreneurship can help organizations keep pace with market and technology changes and continuously improve themselves.

To succeed in organizational entrepreneurship, organizations must create an appropriate organizational culture that supports creativity, innovation, and risk-taking. Also, they should provide the necessary resources and tools to the employees and provide them with the required training. In addition, organizations should consider appropriate reward and incentive systems for entrepreneurial employees to increase their motivation to provide new ideas and try to improve the organization. Finally, the senior management of the organization should fully support organizational entrepreneurship and consider it as a priority for the organization (Arabshahi et al., 2024).

Characteristics and Skills of an Entrepreneurial Nurse

Personal Skills

Cognitive Skills

Among the skills of an entrepreneurial nurse are cognitive skills related to learning capacity, such as collecting, processing, and disseminating information, which can be manifested in the form of intelligent speech, active listening, writing, comprehension, and critical thinking (Copley et al., 2019).

Personality and Professional Characteristics

The concept of entrepreneurship in nursing is related to personal and professional characteristics such as independence, flexibility, innovation, proactivity, self-confidence, creativity, responsibility, and motivation (Atanian et al., 2021).

Practical Abilities

Discipline, sociability, and communication, prioritization, risk-taking and risk management, identifying opportunities and exploiting them, and acting in a comprehensive manner to conquer new care situations are among the abilities required by entrepreneurial nurses. (Colici et al., 2019)

Having Knowledge

Entrepreneurial nurses are known as clinical professionals with advanced nursing degrees or years of clinical experience. However, some nurses start investing right after graduation. Some studies have also mentioned entrepreneurial and management knowledge. For example, Sankelo and Akerblad found that their participants had relevant experience and education, both in business and as bedside nurses, before starting their company. Also, in order to add value to the profession in front of the society, strengthen the country's economic growth, financial and conflict management, having legislative awareness and turning to the future is necessary for an entrepreneurial nurse. Entrepreneurial nurses have individualistic characteristics compared to other people and have a positive attitude towards business management. Nurses find ways to create, observe, feel, communicate and learn to improve quality of care directly with patients or indirectly through management, education, research or policy (Sanden, 2019). Studies have shown that nurse entrepreneurs are clinical professionals with advanced training and clinical experience. They tend to act independently, understand the organization as a whole, and are highly satisfied with the quality of care provided. They are expected to use their initiative in line with the employer's organization (Yobuchi, 2021).

Introducing entrepreneurial roles in the primary care environment leads to more timely access to services. In this way, the efficiency and savings at the first level of the health care system will increase and subsequently the pressure on the health system at the higher levels of care will be reduced. These results will be the result of the wide range of nursing practice in this environment. So that entrepreneurial nurses can perform tasks that were previously performed only in the field of doctors. For example, in addition to routine health screening, preventive care and health education, nurses also provide care to people with chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, depression and anxiety, back pain, arthritis, and thyroid dysfunction. It is also believed that nurses who work in this way may remove the boundaries between professional groups. As a result, they promote equal participation between health providers from different disciplines and provide a platform for doing interdisciplinary

work. Since nurses can lead sustainable changes in the provision of primary health care by using the principles of social entrepreneurship, it is necessary to provide training and political and financial support for social entrepreneurship to help them (Vermeer et al., 2017).

Contexts and Work Environments of the Nurse Entrepreneur

The traditional approach to health care delivery is divided into primary, secondary and tertiary health care. Some nurses are currently working in the roles of entrepreneurs and intra-organizational entrepreneurs, which leads to positive results. These nurses work in the field of continuous care. Since facilities in primary, secondary and tertiary care are provided for the practice of nurse entrepreneur, diversity in business is more visible. It seems obvious that entrepreneurial nursing roles pave the way for this type of partnership with examples of nurses running clinics in primary and secondary care and as specialists for chronic disease exacerbation management in tertiary care (Mousavi, 2018).

Primary care

Primary care is the first level of communication between individuals, families and society with the health system. The challenges facing the primary health care sector mean that policymakers and health care workers must think and act differently to move forward. The primary level of health care includes screening, health education, counseling, etc. (Jehani et al., 2016).

secondary care

Secondary care is provided by specialists and includes specialized care such as surgery, treatment of certain diseases, etc. (Atayan et al., 2017).

Methodology

The current research uses qualitative methodology with the aim of investigating the phenomenon of entrepreneurship among nurses and the factors affecting it. This approach allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences, perspectives and motivations of entrepreneurial nurses. In this section, the theoretical foundations of qualitative methodology, the approaches used, the methods of data collection and data analysis are described.

Qualitative methodology is based on the paradigm of interpretivism, which emphasizes the understanding of phenomena from the perspective of individuals and groups involved. In this approach, the researcher seeks to discover the meaning, patterns and common experiences in social phenomena. In contrast to quantitative methods that seek to measure and

generalize results, qualitative methods focus on the depth and richness of the data.

In this research, the phenomenological approach is used to investigate the lived experiences of entrepreneurial nurses. Phenomenology seeks to discover the studied phenomenon through the description of people's experiences. Also, the grounded theory approach is used to develop a theory about the factors affecting nurses' entrepreneurship. Grounded theory is formed based on data collected through interviews and observations.

Semi-structured interviews with nurse entrepreneurs are used to collect data. In these interviews, open questions are asked about their experiences, motivations, challenges and successes in the field of entrepreneurship. Also, collaborative observations are used to better understand the work environment and interactions of entrepreneurial nurses with others. Data collected through interviews and observations are analyzed using thematic analysis method. In this method, themes and patterns related to the studied phenomenon are identified and categorized in the data. Then, these themes are used to develop a theory about factors influencing nurse entrepreneurship.

Ethical Considerations

During the research, ethical considerations related to the privacy of the participants, informed consent and confidentiality of information are observed. Participants will be informed about the research objectives and how their data will be used, and they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time.

The findings

In this section, the interviews are mentioned.

Participants:

1. *Nurse A*: 10 years of clinical experience, establishing a private nursing clinic
2. *Nurse B*: 5 years of hospital experience, launching a startup in the health sector
3. *Nurse C*: 15 years of emergency department experience, establishing a first aid training center
4. *Nurse D*: 7 years of home care experience, providing home care services to the elderly

5. *Nurse E*: 12 years of hospital experience, launching a website selling medical equipment

6. *Nurse F*: 9 years of clinic experience, establishing an online nursing consultation center

7. *Nurse Z*: 6 years of health care experience, launching health education campaigns

Interview questions:

1. Please talk about your experience as a nurse entrepreneur.
2. What factors made you think of starting your own business?
3. What challenges did you face in your entrepreneurial journey?
4. What have been your most important achievements and successes in this way?
5. What advice do you have for other nurses who are interested in entrepreneurship?

The summary of the interviews

- *Nurse A*: His main motivation was financial independence and providing better services to patients. Her initial challenges were a lack of experience in business management and marketing.
- *Nurse B*: She sought to create innovation in the field of health and was tired of the limitations of the hospital structure. Its challenges have been attracting capital and product development.
- *Nurse C*: She was concerned about public education in the field of first aid and faced a lack of financial resources.
- *Nurse D*: She sought to create a balance between work and personal life and faced legal problems and licenses.
- *Nurse E*: She entered this field due to her interest in business and the market's need for quality medical equipment and faced fierce competition.
- *Nurse F*: She sought to provide consulting services available to the public and faced technical and online marketing problems.
- *Nurse Z*: Seeking to increase community awareness about health issues, she has faced a lack of funding and interagency collaboration.

Table 1. Open coding for interviews

Open Coding	Nurse A	Nurse B	Nurse C	Nurse D	Nurse E	Nurse F	Nurse G
Entrepreneurship Motivations	Financial independence, providing better services	Innovation, dissatisfaction with the existing structure	Concern for universal education	Work-Life Balance	Interest in business, market need	Providing accessible services	Increasing community awareness
Entrepreneurship Challenges	Lack of management and marketing experience	Attracting capital, product development	Lack of financial resources	Legal Issues and Permits	Fierce competition	Technical problems and online marketing	Budget shortage, inter-organizational collaborations

Achievements	Financial success, patient satisfaction	Launching a successful startup	Impact on society	Creating Work-Life Balance	Success in selling medical equipment	Providing effective consulting services	Increasing community awareness
Recommendations	Reliability, continuous learning	Focus on innovation, attracting capital	Efforts to attract financial resources	Tracking Permits, Time Management	Competitiveness, effective marketing	Improving service quality, online marketing	Collaboration with organizations, attracting funding

In the next step, the open codes are converted into core codes and then into selective codes. This process helps the researcher to provide a theory about the factors affecting nurses' entrepreneurship.

Table 2. Axial coding for interviews

Axial code	Open coding
Entrepreneurial motivations	Financial independence, providing better services, innovation, dissatisfaction with the existing structure, concern for universal education, work-life balance, interest in business, market need, providing accessible services, increasing community awareness
Entrepreneurial challenges	Lack of management and marketing experience, attracting capital, product development, lack of financial resources, legal problems and licenses, intense competition, technical problems and online marketing, lack of funding, inter-organizational collaborations
Achievements	Financial success, patient satisfaction, launching a successful startup, impacting the community, creating a work-life balance, success in selling medical equipment, providing effective consulting services, increasing community awareness
Recommendations	Backwork, continuous learning, focusing on innovation, attracting capital, trying to attract financial resources, pursuing licenses, time management, competitiveness, effective marketing, improving service quality, online marketing, collaborating with organizations, attracting funding

In the next step, the core codes are converted into selective codes. This final process will lead to the formation of the final theory about the factors affecting nurses' entrepreneurship.

II. Conclusion

Based on the axial coding table, it can be concluded that entrepreneurship in nursing is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that is affected by various factors. These factors can be divided into four general categories: motivations, challenges, achievements and recommendations.

Entrepreneurial motivations

The motivations of nurses to enter the field of entrepreneurship are diverse. Some of them are looking for financial independence and providing better services to the patients. Others seek innovation and change in the health system. Others have personal concerns, like work-life balance. Finally, some others enter this field due to their interest in business and market needs.

Entrepreneurial nurses face many challenges in their path. These challenges include lack of experience in business management and marketing, raising capital, product development, lack of financial resources, legal and licensing issues, intense competition, and technical and online marketing difficulties.

Despite the existing challenges, entrepreneurial nurses achieve many achievements. Financial success, patient satisfaction, launching successful

businesses, influencing society, creating a balance between work and life, providing effective consulting services, and increasing community awareness are among these achievements.

Entrepreneurial nurses give advice to other nurses who are interested in this field with their experience. Persistence, continuous learning, focus on innovation, attracting capital, trying to attract financial resources, pursuing permits, time management, competitiveness, effective marketing, improving service quality, online marketing, cooperation with organizations and attracting funds are among these recommendations.

In general, it can be said that entrepreneurship in nursing, despite many challenges, can provide many opportunities for nurses. Nurses who enter this field with strong motivation, perseverance and sufficient knowledge can achieve significant success and have a positive impact on society.

Suggestion for future research

Considering the importance of entrepreneurship in nursing, it is suggested that more research be done in this field. This research can help identify more effective factors on nurses' entrepreneurship, provide

practical solutions to support them and develop successful models of entrepreneurship in nursing.

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