



## **Experiences of Newly Graduated Nurses within the First Year of Work.**

Immaculate Kabengano

Hannah Marie Cabonce

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## **ABSTRACT**

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu  
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The aim of the study was to explore the experiences of newly graduated nurses during their first year of work. It is written to provide nursing students and upcoming nursing graduates a picture on the experiences of new nurses. A descriptive literature review, with thematic analyses was utilized in this study. A systematic literature search from CINAHL was conducted using advanced search.

The nine studies obtained for this review presented similar results indicating that the first year is stressful and overwhelming. Factors such as education, training, environment, and support play an important role in their readiness to practice. Also, finding their identity as a nurse and realizing the difference between their expectation and the reality.

Given the outcome, avenues for future research include investigation of the experiences of new nurses during the pandemic, studies that consider which experiences contribute to the nurses' motivation to remain in the nursing profession and research to determine factors that lead nurses to change profession.

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Key words: newly graduated nurses, first year of work, experience

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**GLOSSARY or ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS (choose one or other)**

TAMK	Tampere University of Applied Sciences
CAH	Critical Access Hospitals
NGN's	New Graduate Nurses
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Nurses play an important role in promoting health, preventing illness, and providing primary and community care. They provide care in emergencies and are key to achieving universal health coverage. An estimate of 9 million nurses and midwifery are needed by 2030 (WHO 2022.) The global turnover rate of newly graduated nurses within the first year of practice is increasing recently due many organizational and environmental factors (Aldosari, Prymachuk, & Cooke 2021).

Doo et al. (2022) state that, surveys conducted on hospital nursing staff in 2019 had alarming turnover rates, in South Korea 45.5% of new nurses in 2018 resigned in one year, this was three times greater than the general average turnover rate for nurses. 33.6% of new nurses left their jobs within one year of employment in North America and the turnover rates was highest in Taiwan, with 32.1% of new nurses leaving within three months of beginning employment.

It is known that the first year of working as a professional is a period where new nurses adapt and integrate their theoretical knowledge with their practice, at the same time, attain competence and feeling a sense of belonging (McKenzie Miller, Cope & Brand 2020.) Also, it is reported that the first year is a sensitive time in which they make decision whether they want to stay in the profession or in an organization (Parker, Giles, Lantry & McMillan 2014). These are some of the reasons why there is importance in supporting the newly graduated nurses in their transition to the workforce to maintain their growth in the nursing profession.

Gaining more knowledge on the experiences of newly graduated nurses is very important for achieving a successful transition to practice. Understanding the lived experiences of new nurses, can as well be very beneficial to nursing students who are preparing to graduate (Brown, Hochstetler, Rode, Abraham & Gillum 2018.) The knowledge will also assist the managers in maintaining the retention of new nurses in their chosen profession in order to overcome challenge of global shortage of nurses (Doo et al. 2020).

A literature review and thematic analyses will be conducted to give more information on the lived experiences of newly graduated nurses during their first year of work. This knowledge will be beneficial to graduating students, it will help them prepare for their transition and entering the workforce. This thesis will be useful to workplace managers and nursing institutions in understanding what the newly graduates experience at work, this will assist them in coming up with new work policies for the NGN, changes in the curriculums at institutions to fill the gap between nursing theory and practice.

## 2 THEORETICAL STARTING POINT

The key concepts of this study are newly graduate nurses, first year experience, transition period, and nursing training. In this chapter, these concepts will be briefly defined.

Based on a book by Meleis (2010, 11), transition is defined as passage from one life phase to another. He also added that it is not a structured circumstance, but instead a personal one. In addition, it was mentioned in the book that disconnection from previous social connections and supports, the absence of familiar reference points such as objects or people, the emergence of new needs, the inability to meet old needs in familiar ways, and inconsistency between previous sets of expectations and those that prevail in the new situation are some of the factors that affect one's transition. (Meleis 2010, 17.)

The essential elements of excellent nursing practice are theoretical and clinical education. However, nursing training may vary depending on each country. But it is evident in these times, that the quality of the educational preparation in nursing has increased. A degree programme in nursing is meant to equip nurses with knowledge based on theories and abilities to enable them to face health-care related challenges in the coming times. (Kumaran & Carney 2014.)

### **3 PURPOSE, TASKS & OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this thesis was to conduct a descriptive literature review regarding the experiences of new nursing graduates as they transition from school to practice. These new professionals from different fields of nursing are asked about their experiences, both positive and negative, during their first year of work. From these experiences, this study will be able to present a better understanding of the factors that helped them transition well into practice along with the elements that negatively affect the transition period.

The objective of this thesis is to provide nursing students and upcoming nursing graduates a picture on the experiences of new nurses during their first year at work. Also, this study can be used as a guide for nurse managers in dealing with newly hired nurses and as such offer these nurses enhanced experience during their first year.

This literature review will discuss about “What are the experiences of new nursing graduates during their first year of work?”

## 4 METHODOLOGICAL STARTING POINT

### 4.1 Review Design

The method used for this thesis is a descriptive literature review, with thematic analyses. The authors conducted a systematic literature search from CINAHL using advanced search. First, the research question “What are the experiences of new nursing graduates’ nurses” was converted to a search strategy by identifying the PEO (population, exposure, outcome) components.

### 4.2 Identification of research question

The review question was: “What are the experiences of new nursing graduates during their first year of work?”.

The next step was to identify any synonyms for all the parts of the review question.

### 4.3 Identification of relevant studies

The mnemonic “PEO” was used to identify relevant keywords and search terms, which was based on the review question. The strategy used in searching is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Search Strategy

<i>P</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>O</i>
New nursing graduates	First year of work	Experiences

CINAHL and Medline databases were used in this study. Most of the articles found in Medline were duplicates of what was in CINAHL. Hence, all the studies used for this thesis were from CINAHL.

#### 4.4 Literature search method.

A systematic search on experiences of newly graduated nurses within the first year of work was conducted on CINAHL. The identified synonyms in Table 2 were combined using the Boolean operator 'OR'. These words were then used in electronic database CINAHL during the literature search, limits were applied such as English-language articles, date ranging from January 2012- February 2022 and peer reviewed.

TABLE 2. Identifying synonyms and combined keywords

<i>Column</i>	<i>terms</i>	<i>New graduates</i>	<i>nursing AND</i>	<i>First year of work AND</i>	<i>Experiences AND</i>
OR		New nurse		Work Experience	
OR		Novice nurse			
OR		Beginner nurse			
		New registered nurse			
		New graduate nurse			

#### 4.5 Inclusion & Exclusion criteria

This literature review will focus on studies concerning newly graduated nurses regardless of their age, gender and nationality and has been working for 1 year or less in any health care setting. A person is considered a new graduate nurse if they have finished a bachelor's degree, baccalaureate course and diploma in nursing, is registered according to the law of the country they are residing and is currently working as a registered nurse.

Studies that explored the experiences of new nursing graduates was considered. These experiences comprise of both positive and negative views, feelings, and challenges as they work on their first year as a professional. Also, different health care settings are considered and is not limited to specific area.

TABLE 3. Inclusion and Exclusion

	<i>Inclusion Criteria</i>	<i>Exclusion Criteria</i>
Population	Newly graduated nurses Working in all types of wards Prior nursing experience before graduating Novice nurses caring for Covid patients.	Experienced nurses moving to a new area. Similarities and differences between New nurses & Practical nurses
Exposure	First year of work	More than a year at work.
Outcomes	Lived experiences Both positive and negative experience	New nurses' perception on a specific topic. E.g how new nurses experience patients' death.

#### 4.6 Search Terms

The PEO strategy (Population, Environment, Outcome) was used for this study to excerpt publications of interest. The following search words were used in CINAHL database as shown in Table 2, “New nurse” or “Novice Nurse” or “Beginner nurse” or “New registered nurse” or “New graduate nurse” and “Work experience”.

#### 4.7 Study selection

The primary search provided 210 articles, of which 190 were excluded because of their irrelevant titles. 15 articles were chosen to be reviewed by title and abstract, out of those 9 articles were chosen to be used in this study (Figure 1).

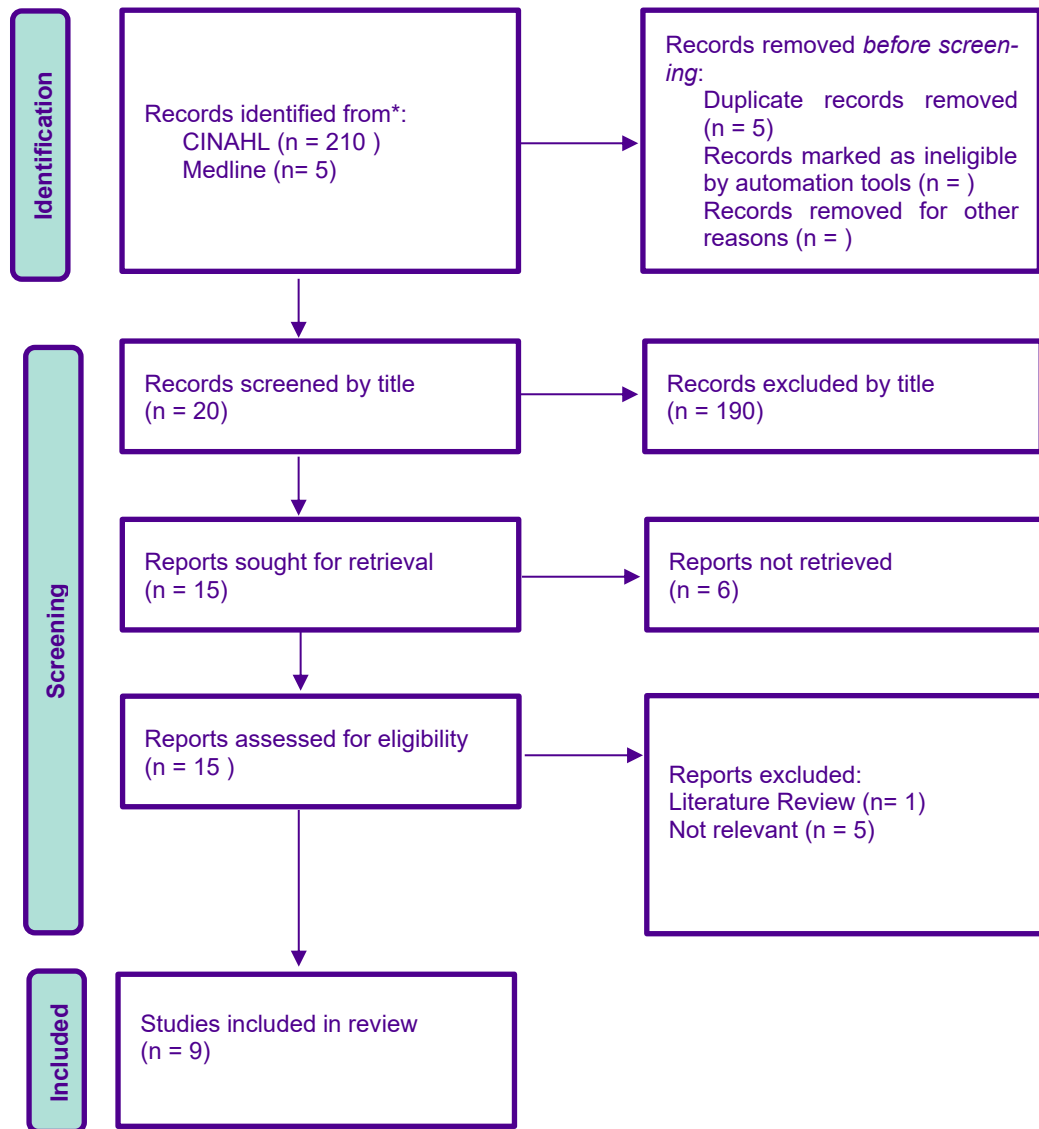


Figure 1. Prisma Flow Diagram

## **5 COLLATING, SUMMARIZING, AND REPORTING FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Overview of the findings**

The 9 articles were published from various countries worldwide. Six articles used in our study were from the United States, the three remaining studies were conducted in the Netherlands, Korea and Australia.

Data that are relevant such as author, year of publication, country, theoretical framework, research method, and findings was charted (Table 4).

Most of the studies utilised a phenomenological research design (n= 7), one study used qualitative longitudinal approach and another one used mixed method cross sectional design.

### **5.2 Thematic analysis of the findings**

According to Braun and Clark, 2006 thematic analysis helps to identify recurring themes in data, which can be used for literature review. Terms similar to newly graduated nurses, including new graduates, new nurse, novice nurse and new nurse graduate were used in different literatures.

Six major themes emerged, each covering several sub-themes: (1) Environment (2) Support (3) Well-being (4) Knowledge (5) Being the Nurse (6) Expectation vs. Reality.

## 6 THEME 1: ENVIRONMENT

### 6.1 Relationship with co-workers, patients, and their family members.

Better teamwork and communication amongst co-workers resulted in a positive working environment. It also created a positive experience for the new graduates and improved patient care, in a way that the new graduates weren't worried asking questions about their patients from their co-workers when they didn't know the answers. This also increased new graduates' professional confidence. However, participants experienced negative relationships with co-workers and physicians, they were very cautious around such colleagues when it was about asking for help or questions, and due to negative work environment, teamwork was missing, and new graduates had to survive on their own in difficult situations. (Brown et al. 2018.)

Nobody on the floor stopped and helped me being the new nurse. I ended up losing sleep over those experiences and thought about quitting. (Brown et al. 2018.)

A study by Ten Hoeve, Kunnen, Brouwer and Roodbol (2018) explained that 8 of the participants had positive relationship with the physicians and their colleagues in time of help and critical situations. This was expressed as a very vital thing in their professional growth and job satisfaction, this resulted in increase in self-confidence in the profession as well. However, 10 novice nurses felt that the physicians weren't treating them as professionals, they felt belittled and ignored. Supervisor only gave negative feedbacks, and this made the participant feel unwelcomed. Patients trusted and valued the new nurse's work; this made them more committed to their profession and quality of care they were providing to their patients. Unfortunately, some of the novice nurses reported verbal & sexual harassment and criticism from their patients.

Participants in a study done in a large metropolitan area had negative results. The participants felt that their year of transitioning to the profession was difficult, due to negative relationship with their co-worker, bullying and lateral violence. The participants hoped to feel ill, so that they wouldn't have to go to work. They

also experienced negative communication with physicians and family members. Novice nurses felt that the experienced nurses/supervisors belittled them and treated them differently than they treated their fellow nurses with similar experience. (Wiersma, Pintz & Fraser Wyche, 2020; Urban & Barnes 2020.)

In a study published this year (Doo, Seo & Kim 2022), it was pointed out that new graduates who had negative experiences from their colleagues experienced low self-esteem, lost their professional confidence and their vibrant personality. Bullying is one of the reasons new nurses quit their jobs (Wiersma et al. 2020).

Hoppe and Clukey (2020), conducted a study in a rural area, they found that new graduates working in a rural setting had very close and friendly relationship with each other and regarded one another as family, they covered each other's shift and were really excited to go to work. Patients were familiar and they felt grateful caring for them and regarded it as giving back to the community. They had good relationship with their patients and family members, they built trust between their patients. The participants in Doo et al. (2022) study also had a strong relationship with each other, shared their feelings and asked for help from their senior nurses or fellow colleagues when necessary. They went out for a coffee during their free time and talked about professional issues and laughed. This made them feel as if they were family members. No matter how difficult the work was, they received positive feedbacks from their peers and their seniors, this led to their development of self-confidence in the profession.

Covid-19 pandemic stressed new graduates who were transitioning to practice. Their residency programs were cancelled, leading to working overtime and doing mandatory shifts, shifting to different units to cover for shortage of nurses. Regardless, they felt connected as a team, had high sense of togetherness and were very thankful for having caring support from their colleagues. (Casey, Oja & Makic 2021.)

## 6.2 Workload

Due to workload in the unit, novice nurses found it difficult to ask for help from their colleagues when they noticed that they already had enough work themselves. The participants frequently worked overtime just to finish their assigned tasks. (Parker et al. 2014.)

Unreasonable workload due to staff shortage hindered novice nurses from providing quality patient care and put patients' health at risk. One participant admitted administering wrong medications to a patient due to work overload caused by shortage of staff. The participants felt that the organization didn't provide them enough support when they were given severely ill patients to care for. The novice nurses were exhausted and hated going to work in this critical care setting, and some even considered leaving the job.

Shortage of staff was one of the problems novice nurses faced during their transition period to the profession. They were given a lot of work and tasks to do which left them feeling exhausted at the end of their shifts. (Ten Hoeve et al. 2018; McCalla Graham & De Gagne 2015.)

I'm really tired at the end of the day...and when I get home, and to be able to get back to work the next day.... I can handle being physically tired.... That's ok.... But it is the emotional tiredness on top of it due to workload.  
(McCalla Graham & De Gagne 2015.)

The Pandemic also imposed a lot of stress on new nurses transitioning to the profession. Cancellation of residency programs, shortage of staff and mandatory overtime work lead to staying long hours in the isolation room with corona patient without breaks and moving from units to another to cover shifts significantly impacted their well-being. (Casey et al. 2021.)

## 7 THEME 2: SUPPORT

Participants in a study by McCalla Graham and De Gagne (2015), felt that the manager, preceptors, and their colleagues were very supportive and helpful, this made their transition period easier. Ten Hoeve et al. (2018), insisted that supportive team is essential for providing good patient care and increasing job satisfaction. Novice nurses in his study had positive experiences and felt supported by the team. The support helped them go through difficult situations at work such as patients' death. However, some of the participant's explained that they experienced lack of support and encountered lateral violence which was either verbal or nonverbal. Several novice nurses in a study done by Wiersma et al. (2020) also experienced lack of support.

New graduates expected to be supported and encouraged throughout their transition period to the profession, however, many didn't receive support from their fellow nurses, instead they were faced with negativity. Regardless of the negative experiences they were facing, the participants believed that the transition would have been smooth if there was a small number of nurses who supported them, gave them constructive feedback and encouragement. New nurses who were confident and courageous asked for help. (Parker et al. 2014.)

Hoppe and Clukey (2020), in their study done in a rural area reported that novice nurses needed emotional support in critical conditions. Everyone in the hospital worked as team and were very supportive.

I feel supported from all my fellow nurses, experienced and new. The older nurses are there to teach me, show me, and guide me through every task, and the newer ones—we just get through it together. I never have to worry about someone stepping in the room to help me out. And the other office workers who are RNs, Director of Nursing, and really everyone from lab technicians to pharmacists are supportive. I have felt welcome and like everyone works as a team. The experienced nurses were highly approachable. (Hoppe & Clukey 2020.)

According to Urban and Barnes (2020), Nurses had mixed feelings about peer support at workplace. They felt that some nurses were easily approachable and very supportive in times of need. However, not everyone was supportive and helpful, so the new graduates had to carefully observe from whom they can ask for help. They were given tasks/patients within their abilities, this left them feeling relieved, supported, and cared for. Some of the NGN's were grateful for the help they receive from others on the ward, and they wanted to do the same, helping other nurses on the ward including their seniors. This made them proud of their skilled performance in the assigned tasks and their ability to help their colleagues. They supported each other. (Doo et al. 2022.)

## 8 THEME 3: WELL-BEING

Workplace routines, workloads, caring for difficult patients' groups such as dementia, drug addicts and mental health problem patients made some of the participants transitioning to the profession challenging, stressful and difficult. Medication administration also made the participants feel stressed in their early phases of working. Due to lack of encouragement and feedback from their fellow colleagues, novice nurses were stressed and believed that little encouragement and feedback on their performance would have reduced their stress and anxiety. New registered nurses also experienced high levels of emotional distress and hopelessness and couldn't control their emotions when caring for difficult patient groups such as severely ill, and patients undergoing end of life care. (Parker et al. 2014; Ten Hoeve et al. 2018.)

Higher levels of stress and anxiety was expressed by novice nurses. Due to fear of failure, the novice nurses could not ask for help and kept enduring whatever they were going through. They were being sent to unfamiliar wards, were given a lot of assignments and patients to care for. They thought it was normal because, they are beginners and over time the stress will decrease, but this ended up affecting their personality, they were often sad, quiet and alone at home and didn't want to engage in any social activities outside work with their friends and family. They slept more than usual because of the tiredness and even had dreams about work related issues. (Urban & Barnes 2020.)

I would cry and stuff when I got home. And say to myself "I cannot do this." Yeah, it is stressful. It would even make me feel like, "Is this the right area for me?" And "Are you doing the right thing?" (Urban & Barnes 2020.)

Other physical symptoms related to work stress anxiety were lack of sleep, headaches and anorexia. (Doo et al. 2022). The pandemic also stressed the novice nurses in many aspects, such as working long hours, communication barriers, due to wearing masks, shortage of staff, changing of policies every now and then such as no changing of PPE due to their shortages left novice nurses feeling overwhelmed. (Casey et al. 2021).

A considerable amount of literature has been published on how stress is an issue nurses face and how important self-care is in the nursing profession. As mentioned by Brown et al. (2018), majority of the nurses agreed that taking time for yourself was essential in being satisfied with your job. They added that one of the keys was finding someone to talk to about their experiences during their first year. Conversely, the new graduate nurses who worked during the pandemic, described their inability to maintain their normal self-care routine like going to the gym, eating out, and spending time with family and friends. They added that self-care was more about personal safety and keeping clean to prevent spreading COVID. Furthermore, most of the new graduate nurses spoke about being physically and emotionally exhausted because of not being able to take breaks during the shift which was complicated by staffing shortages and the putting on and off PPE. (Casey et al. 2021.)

The participants shared the importance of day offs for them to relax and feel more focused and refreshed. One participant believed in importance in taking the time off when they feel too stressed and overwhelmed by things. Also, another aspect to self-care was nutrition. Another new graduate nurse stated that the key to a successful shift at work is “staying with a regular plan of eating enough and eating healthy is really important”. (Brown et al 2018.)

## 9 THEME 4: KNOWLEDGE

### 9.1 Education & Training

Nursing school has provided the basic knowledge and training the students needed, but later the new nurses realized after working on the field and being on their own that there are still so much to learn. (McCalla-Graham & De Gagne 2015). However, the results of the study by Parker et al. (2014), suggest that nursing schools provide the needed knowledge and skills necessary for students to function in the acute care setting.

Moreover, confusion may arise due to the difference between theory and practice. In addition, students are taught content in different ways at different institutions. Schools tend to emphasize theory over practice, while hospitals focus more on hands-on learning. In addition, they found that new nurses experienced difficulties because of inadequate work experience in special departments and lacked the knowledge necessary to apply theoretical concepts to real-world situations. (Doo et al. 2022.)

I did not know what to do in an emergency, and I was afraid that emergencies would happen. The doctors and senior nurses helped me a lot, but it was very stressful. (Doo et al. 2022.)

During the pandemic, Casey et al. (2020), found that nurses who graduated from nursing schools in the past few years are finding that they lack the knowledge and preparation they need to manage a pandemic. These new graduates felt that their education programs did not adequately prepare them for a pandemic, and that they were not given any community health courses during their time at school which would have provided them with information about how to prepare for a pandemic. Participants described the disconnect between what was taught in school regarding isolation and infection control practices and what became standard practice after the pandemic.

The study's result proposes that during the final year of nursing school, it should be considered to offer clinical practice in the desired department and include simulations-based education (Doo et al. 2022).

## 9.2 Confidence

New graduate nurses varied in confidence levels and that their confidence levels fluctuated from day to day. The participants felt inadequate, intimidated, unprepared, and anxious which was similar with the findings in another study, where novice nurses often experience feelings of incompetence, insecurity, and self-doubt. The mistakes they make, such as in medicine administration, greatly affect their self-confidence. (Brown et al. 2018; Ten Hoeve et al. 2018.)

In a study by Parker et al. (2014), the participants believed that if they were exposed to more challenging cases during their clinical training, they would have been more ready and confident in demonstrating their skill. In another study, newly graduated nurses felt incompetent but still did what needed to be done. They reported feeling lacking when confronted with situations for which they felt unprepared, and worried about making mistakes due to their limited knowledge and experience. (Ten Hoeve et al. 2018).

Many participants from the study that was done re-counted lack in confidence in their abilities, especially around organization, technical skills, and medication administration. Conversely, there were also those who felt confident when they were able to perform a certain task in a specific situation that they have encountered in the virtual hospital at school. (Wiersma et al. 2020.)

I am so thankful for virtual hospital. When I encountered this one situation that was like virtual, I knew I could do it. (Wiersma et al. 2020.)

In a study published this year, they reported about the newly graduated nurses' experiences in which they were given independent assignment after their first two months of working. New nurses struggled to provide adequate explanations for patients' conditions or the diagnostic tests they were undergoing. Most of all, they

failed to act when required to decide the next steps in emergency cases or on busy days (Doo et al. 2022). On the other hand, participants in Brown et al. (2020) study initially reported their lack of confidence during their early phase at work, they gradually gained confidence due to experience and asking questions when in doubt. Being active in spending extra time studying after work helps to increase confidence and build on their knowledge base. Learning that they do not need to know everything, and it is acceptable to ask questions will help them feel more confident in their professional development. (Brown et al. 2020.)

### **9.3 Practice readiness**

The concept of readiness relates to safe care, performance confidence, and having both cognitive and clinical capability to perform the role of a nurse (Wiersma et al. 2020). New graduate nurses assigned in a critical access hospital emphasized that the more hands-on learning experiences and clinical hours in school the better, especially if the clinical hours could be completed in a rural hospital setting. They felt that helping students know what it is really like to be a nurse in a critical access hospital could be an eye-opening experience and affected their readiness to practice in the field. (Hoppe & Clukey 2020.)

One of the phenomenological studies found that the new nurses they interviewed felt being “thrown into practice” because of the crisis the hospital and the country was facing during the pandemic. The participants were able to recognize the challenges of being new to practice, but this was amplified due to the stress of starting their career during COVID-19. They spoke about the challenges they faced such as the constant changes in infections control policies and practices. (Casey et al. 2020.)

Prior experience in nursing did provide the opportunity to understand some of the dynamics of workplace culture and helped new graduates to identify and where possible avoid difficult staff and negative situations (Parker et al. 2014). In a study published by McCalla-Graham & De Gagne (2015), some new nurses felt they lacked practical skills to complete a task given to them.

It's very stressful, it's a lot different than it was in nursing school and a lot different than it was in preceptorship, when you always had an experienced nurse... you could immediately go to, and you had that time to take that time. Once you are out of orientation, you're the one who has to make the decision and with very limited experience to call on, it's stressful. Nursing school does not prepare you for that change. (McCalla-Graham & De Gagne 2015.)

A research study suggested that it is essential that current curriculums be examined to determine what students are taught and to ensure that they are prepared for the practice environment. Furthermore, a study to identify best practices in educational institutions that will translate more seamlessly to practice can build graduate nurse confidence in knowledge and perceptions of readiness for practice. (Casey et al. 2020.)

## 10 THEME 5: BEING THE NURSE.

The novice nurses in Urban and Barnes (2018) study said that it felt strange to identify themselves as “the nurse” when they are working alone. As they work independently, they must develop their own style of efficient time management and patient interaction. This entails becoming aware of professional instincts or noticing gut feelings, choosing to act on them, and preventing a problem for the patient. New graduate nurses need to learn how to organise themselves at work and use self-managing techniques to meet the needs of patients and move forward. Furthermore, they need to develop their own style of efficiently managing their time in doing documentation, medicine preparation and patient interaction. Some of the nurses verbalised that it was good to get their own flow while working individually. (Urban & Barnes 2018.)

It was very exciting to get my own rhythm going (working independently). It's nice to find your own organization style and say, “I'm going to do this first and I'm going to do this next.” When you are with a preceptor, you're going with their flow. They're so used to doing things their way. And so, it's hard to find your flow whenever you are riding on someone else's flow. Intensive Care NGN (Urban & Barnes 2018.)

Some new graduate nurses believed that they need to learn certain skills such as time management, prioritisation, customer service or assessing resources. They also thought that if they developed good coping skills, then it would be less stressful working in the acute care setting and that developing practical skills is fundamental for them to be able to cope with fast-paced changes in a patient's condition. (McCalla-Graham & De Gagne 2015.)

Doo et al. (2022) suggested that it took 10 months for newly graduated nurses to assume the role of a nurse at work. They felt proud of their performance in assigned tasks and were able to help their colleagues. They have been challenging themselves and working hard to achieve professional goals. Meanwhile, there were several participants in the study done by Hoppe & Clukey (2020) that said that they have great pride in their sense of identity and the importance of service.

## 11 THEME 6: EXPECTATION VS. REALITY

Previous research has established that a lot of newly graduated nurses experienced a mismatch between their expectations as they enter the work field versus the reality of it. It was established that new graduates had clear expectations of their roles and responsibilities, but they were less clear about what their colleagues expected of them. The participants' perceptions of various clinical contexts were coloured by the expectations placed on them and their ability to perform to the level of expectation. Information was often hard to come by and expectations often differed. (Parker et al. 2014.)

It was stated that new graduate nurses expressed feelings of anxiety when they were expected to meet high standards and provide care for a large number of patients. Many nurses reported feeling overwhelmed and overworked by the demands of their jobs, and they described their workdays as chaotic. These conflicting expectations, which were related to cognitive overload, led to stress. (Ten Hoeve et al. 2018.) According to a study done last year, the pandemic also imposed a huge responsibility on NGN's, the group of nurses appeared to completely miss the initial period of excitement about becoming a nurse and jumped directly into the shock phase. They needed time to adjust to their new work environments and process the experiences of transitioning into practice, but the urgency of the pandemic crisis prevented them from doing so. (Casey et al. 2021.)

I don't think anything could have taught us as fast. Our learning curve had to be, you know, a screaming turn, not just a gradual one. (Casey et al. 2021.)

New nurses spoke of how different it was when they became a staff in the organization and did not have the comfort of the school as a safety net. They also felt nervous about interacting with doctors for the first time on their own and feeling intimidated by the doctors based on the stories they had heard or their own experiences. Eventually, they learned by watching how other nurses interact. Their fears in communicating with doctors were not realised, and they had not had many negative interactions in their first year. (Brown et al. 2018.)

## 12 DISCUSSION

The result of the sourced nine study indicates that the experiences of the new graduate nurses are similar, regardless of the country and the organisation they are working. Recurring themes were extracted among the experiences conveyed by the newly graduated nurses on their first year of work. The majority of papers concluded that the first year of working is overwhelming and how factors such as education, training, environment and support can affect new nurses' experience in their first year in the profession (McCalla-Graham & De Gagne 2015; Brown et al. 2018; Urban & Barnes 2020; Casey et al. 2021.)

The results might suggest that up to this date, the new graduate nurses still experience stress during their transition period despite of all the previous studies done in the past regarding the topic and the interventions implemented to help nurses changeover easily into practice. Transition shock is still evident to new nurses who have graduated in the recent years. Moreover, new graduate nurses during the pandemic felt more beaten because of the challenges faced during their transition (Casey et al. 2021.)

These results should be contemplated when considering how can new graduate nurses be more prepared during a pandemic or any unexpected circumstances. Also, the data collected contribute a clearer understanding of the experiences of new nurses who work under unfavourable conditions such as staff shortage and constantly changing policies.

It is beyond the scope of this study to enumerate the past methods done to support newly graduates nurses during their first year of work and the effectiveness of those interventions. Further studies should take into account which experiences contribute to the nurse's willingness to stay in the profession. Also, research to establish whether a new nurses' lack of confidence in areas such as nursing skills, decision making, prioritisation & communication continues after their first year leads them to changing profession.

## 12.1 Ethics and reliability

The thesis has been conducted in accordance with TAMK's research ethics guidelines. It was done in an honest, diligent, and accurate way in which the results were collected, presented, and evaluated. The researchers of this thesis have followed good scientific practices when using other individuals' publications. Furthermore, respect of the authors works was shown by citing their publications properly in the texts and lists of references. (TENK. 2012.)

The knowledge and information gained from the articles and books used in this thesis was valued, therefore the researchers of this thesis used that information in their work by paraphrasing the sentences, making sure that the original meaning of the sentences remains, following by citation from where it was derived.

The reliability of the data used to make judgments is the foundation of effective research and good decision making in evidence-based practice (EBP). When data cannot be trusted, it is impossible to make an informed judgment. The data's trustworthiness is only as good as the instruments or tests employed to collect it. (Boswell, C. & Cannon, S. 2020, 380). Therefore, the authors conducted a systematic literature search from different scientific databases and did an advanced search. The articles used were from a reliable database, was peer reviewed and were written between the January 2012- April 2022. It should be taken into account that one of the books used in this study is old and may contain outdated information.

The Prisma flow chart will be used to demonstrate the data search process. The permit to write the thesis was granted by TAMK after the authors plan of the thesis was approved.

### **13 TIMETABLE AND FUNDING**

Formulating the thesis topics and writing of the thesis plan began in August of 2021. At the beginning of the thesis process, a working life meeting was conducted between the writers and the chosen working life supervisor/s from Tampere University of Applied sciences. The working life supervisor/s and the writers discussed about main topics and other important things that will help the writers throughout the thesis process. The research permit application was conducted in January of 2022. The implementation of thesis was in February of 2022 after the research permit was secured and the final topic of the thesis was approved and agreed upon both by the working life supervisors/s and the writers. The thesis and submission will be done in November 2022. Writers are responsible for the expense's thesis may cause.

## 14 CONCLUSION

This study reviewed the literature on experiences new graduate encounter during their first year of transitioning into the profession. 6 themes were identified; (1) Environment (2) Support (3) Stress and Anxiety (4) Knowledge (5) Finding their identity and flow (6) Expectation vs. Reality. It was proven in all studies that novice nurses go through positive and negative experiences during the first year into practice. New nurses must have good relationship with their colleagues to help them overcome the difficulties and challenging situations they face in the workplaces. Support and help from the manager, supervisors, physicians, nurses and staff in the field should be provided to the novice nurses to help them gain self-confident, find their flow and develop themselves as professionals.

The managers should plan accordingly NGN's shifts and give them patients within their abilities to prevent burnout, this will also allow them to engage in other activities on their free days. Schools should provide more practice and simulation trainings than theory, this will significantly improve the novice nurse's confidence when it comes to hands-on practices.

Only one study was done on the experiences NGN's faced during Covid-19 pandemic. We suggest that more studies should be done on experiences of NGN during the pandemic to provide a wider picture on their experiences.

The authors have no conflict of interests.

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## APPENDICES

Table 4: Charting the data

Appendix 1(4)

Author & Year	Country	Theoretical Framework	Research Method	Findings
Parker, Giles, Lantry, McMillan, 2014	New South Wales, Australia		Mixed method cross sectional design was used combining quantitative and qualitative approaches.	Several key factors impacting on the experience of transition for new graduates such as the nature of the workplace environment, the level and nature of support available to new graduates, together with their propensity to learn and adapt to workplace cultures and to accommodate their own expectations and the expectations of others, and to a lesser degree, the amount of prior experience.
Brown, Hochstetler, Rode, Abraham & Gillum, 2018	Indiana, USA	Kramer's reality shock	Qualitative phenomenological research study	Impact of nursing school; hospital orientation of new nurses; environment that promotes teamwork; taking time for self; confidence; expectations versus reality in doctor interaction

Table 4: Charting the data

Appendix 2(4)

Ten Hoeve, Kunnen, Brouwer, Roodball, 2018	Netherlands	Reality shock and the theory-practice gap; Duch-scher	Qualitative longi-tudinal ap-proach: written diaries	Relatedness, compe-tence, development, organizational con-text, existential events, goals, auton-omy and fit.
Hoppe & Clukey, 2020	Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, USA		Descriptive phe-nomenological study	6 themes emerged: Always professional, personal connections, pride in work and community, always on your toes, everyone works as a team and essential preparation experiences
Wiersma, Pintz & Wyche, 2020	Mid-Atlantic Region, USA		Qualitative desc-riptive phenome-nology	3 Themes transpired: Practice readiness, Work-related environ-mental influences and Being a Nurse
Urban Barnes, 2020	Southwest, USA	Reality shock Kramer & Duchscher stages of transition	Qualitative phe-nomenological re-search study	Feeling overwhelmed: knowledge insecurity, high anxiety, taking the job home, navi-gating work-based re-lationships: work re-lationships, safe peo-ple, getting bitten, and finding their flow: fly-ing solo, organizing myself, getting it right.

Table 4: Charting the Data

Appendix 3(4)

Casey, Oja & Makic, 2021	Colorado, USA	Kramer's reality shock; Ducscher's Stages of Transition	Qualitative phenomenological re-search study	Being new is overwhelming, even more during COVID; need to be flexible; pandemic knowledge and practice disconnect; communication barriers worsened with mask; COVID nurse; no self-care; gratitude still glad to be a nurse.
Doo, Seo & Kim, 2022	South Korea		Qualitative phenomenological re-search study	"Weakened mind and body", "Reaching one's mental and physical limits", "Fighting back against work stress", and "Assuming the role of a nurse". After the orientation period ended, new nurses were the most stressed during the three to six months. They experienced some resolution by adapting to human relationships with their colleagues after seven months on the job.

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Table 4: Charting the data

Appendix 4(4)

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McCalla Graham & De Gagne, 2015	Southwest Florida	Phenomenological Method	Knowledge: nursing school provided basic knowledge for the new nurses but did not actually prepare them to function effectively at work; skills: lacked practical skills to complete the assignment, needed skills such as time management, prioritization environment: inadequate staffing, overwhelmed with work assignments
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