Abstract
Nursing schools face challenges within maternal/newborn practical courses for undergraduate nursing students, such as a lack of consistent clinical sites or experiences that capture the high acuity needs of perinatal environments. Additionally, perinatal units face challenges in orienting and retaining new graduate nurses, while new graduate nurses entering perinatal units may be likely to experience feelings of insecurity or self-doubt due to perceived inadequate preparation for such specialties. These needs have led to the increased morbidity and mortality rates in the United States are of particular concern, and knowledge gaps and potential lack of skills and confidence in recognizing complications and intervening appropriately potentially exposing patient safety. The literature suggests that perinatal units face challenges in effectively orienting new graduate nurses, leading to burnout and financial burdens (Dickerson et al., 2022) recognizing the potential benefits of improving preparation for students interested in entering a perinatal specialty as new graduates, such as improved patient outcomes and increased job satisfaction. This study seeks to analyze the impact of an elective advanced perinatal course on student perception of knowledge and self-efficacy levels. Qualitative data will be collected through open-ended questions and analyzed for themes.

Review of the Literature
A review of the literature allowed for delineation of several themes relating to new graduate nurses entering a perinatal nursing specialty and the need for innovative teaching strategies to better prepare students for these future roles. Nursing Schools Face Challenges in Providing Adequate Maternal/Newborn Practical Experiences
- The literature demonstrates a gap in the preparation of new perinatal graduate nurses.

Impact on Practice and Research
- Perinatal education programs should consider allowing student nurses to participate in complex perinatal experiences.
- New graduate nurses who have received adequate preparation in a perinatal specialty may increase the knowledge and confidence levels of these future graduate nurses.

Conclusion
Improving preparation for nursing students who aim to enter a perinatal specialty within the midwifery and childbirth focus may be achieved through new graduate nursing courses, improving the quality of care and staff retention rates.

References

Methodology
- Research Question
  - In second-semester senior undergraduate nursing students, how does completing an elective advanced perinatal course affect student perception of perinatal nursing knowledge and self-efficacy levels for those students who aim to enter a perinatal specialty as new graduate nurses?

Design and Sample
- Participants were divided into two groups (a) a control group who did not complete the perinatal course and (b) an experimental group who completed the perinatal course.

Data Collection and Analysis
- Pre- and post-survey of course participants.
- Qualitative data will be analyzed for themes in the post-survey and compared to the pre-survey.

Researcher Role
- The researcher role was determined to be protective of ethical considerations.

Ethical Considerations
- Participation in the study would not affect student grade in the course.

Sample Design and Sample
- A pre and post course survey will be completed by participants.

Mixed Methods Quasi-Experimental Study Design
- A mixed methods quasi-experimental study design was used.

Anticipated Findings
- It is anticipated that students who complete the elective course will have higher levels of self-reported perinatal nursing knowledge and self-efficacy levels regarding on the post-survey as compared to the pre-survey, providing them a perceived advantage when preparing to seek a perinatal nursing position as a new graduate registered nurse in a perinatal specialty.

Implications for Nursing
- While the literature supports benefits to implementing perinatal orientation programs, there is little research on the influence on the effect of implementing advanced perinatal education in an undergraduate nursing curriculum.

Limitations
- As this study will be conducted in a rural, midwestern baccalaureate program, it may not be generalizable beyond the sample population.

Recommendations for Future Research
- Could elective courses be designed for other nursing specialties?
- What content is most beneficial for the nursing student interested in focusing their perinatal/newborn considerations, obstetric emergencies, perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, bereavement care, diversity/ethnicity, inclusion care, and resiliency tips.

Keywords:
Nursing schools, new graduate nurses, obstetrics, new graduate perinatal nurses, perinatal unit managers, obstetric emergencies, perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, bereavement care, diversity/ethnicity, inclusion care, and resiliency tips.

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