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## The Impact Of Administrative Support For Dental Hygiene And Nursing Online Faculty

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THE IMPACT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR DENTAL HYGIENE  
AND NURSING ONLINE FACULTY

by

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A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Affiliated Faculty of

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2021

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AND NURSING ONLINE FACULTY

ABSTRACT

This study examined online faculty in dental hygiene and nursing baccalaureate degree completion programs and their experiences with online education in the area of administrative support. The purpose of this study was to investigate the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. The objective of this study was to provide leaders in institutions of higher learning with insight and aid in reaching the goal of improving dental hygiene and nursing online programs. A total of 17 accredited baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State (15 nursing and two dental hygiene) were included in this study. Faculty members represented in this study were female (n=7), mostly at the assistant professor rank (n=6), teaching in academia for a range of years of one to ten years of online teaching experience, and mostly over 50 years of age. The data revealed that all the faculty respondents received online course development training and reported having adequate support services in the form of technology assistance/help desk. Yet, three respondents felt they needed more training with course management tools. Additionally, faculty with 11+ years in academia and teaching online 4 years or more (n=4) felt there is a lack of support concerning policy and standardization, property rights and course ownership. There were concerns about lack of recognition of greater workload and time commitment for online

teaching at their institution. Examining the impact of administrative support for dental hygiene and nursing online faculty can enable administrators to meet the needs of online faculty and increase teaching effectiveness in the online learning environment. Moreover, understanding the challenges that online faculty face with faculty incentives for online teaching, workload valued for tenure and additional compensation, policy that addresses intellectual property rights and course ownership, and increased faculty training and professional development with technology tools for online course development will enable institutions of higher education to develop strategies for continuous administrative support and ultimately improve online teaching and learning.

Key words: Distance learning; online education; dental hygiene; nursing; administrative support

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The concept of distance education dates back to the 1800's, with the implementation of correspondence education (Hart, 2008). As Moore and Kearsley (2005) affirm, distance education is “planned learning” that occurs in a setting separate from the teacher, requiring distinctive course design, communication through technology, and special organizational and administrative provisions (as cited in Tsokris, 2010, p. 12). Institutions of higher learning across the nation are using online education, a form of distance education, to render accessible education to students of multiple disciplines (Allen & Seaman, 2015). In 2017, there were over six million students enrolled in distance education courses at degree-granting postsecondary institutions nationwide (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2017). Although online education is widely used as an acceptable means of delivering quality education (Allen & Seaman, 2013, 2015, 2016), a number of faculty members teach their first online course without previous online experiences in teaching or learning (McQuiggan, 2012), and predominantly teach courses with little or no online components (Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017).

Faculty members are at the core of the successful delivery of online education. Nonetheless, increasing concerns have emerged for faculty involved in online education including increased workload, and time consumed preparing and implementing course delivery, unfamiliarity with course management systems or various forms of technology, administrative support, proprietorship of course materials, career advancement with increased salary opportunities, and innovation in teaching is not well rewarded in tenure and promotion processes (Hart, 2008; Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017). Meyer (2010) stipulates faculty members teaching online require well-organized, continuous infrastructure support and improvement. Studies show faculty preparation is vital to provide quality instruction, and that faculty need to acquire online

teaching skills, prefer self-paced informal training, access to technical advice, assistance with instructional design, and training in the area of communications related teaching strategies and techniques (Bigatel et al., 2012; McQuiggan, 2012; Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017; Yang & Cornelius, 2005). Technology-related faculty development has a positive impact on the teaching practices of faculty. Yet, leaders who make administrative decisions can undermine valuable faculty feedback (Barefield & Meyer, 2013). According to Beaudoin (2015), every college will need support systems and essential infrastructure modifications to secure a future continuum in distance instruction. Consequently, a change is warranted to develop and implement best practices for online teaching and facilitate administrative support throughout institutions of higher learning.

The use of online education has filtered into many health-related programs and curricula. Higher education administrators assert that business, healthcare, and computer and information science majors are the three areas of anticipated growth in online education (Venable, 2020). Nguyen, Zierler, and Nguyen (2011) investigated nursing faculty's needs for training in the use of new technologies for education and practice, and found that 92% reported technical support was available to them, yet 69% of the respondents felt a need for training with distance learning. Additionally, DeBate (2011) found the following concerns among dental and dental hygiene faculty in the adoption of e-courses: incompatibility with current curriculum and culture, greater time commitment, complexity concerning e-course development and maintenance, and low relative faculty advantage over traditional course delivery. Moreover, Bigatel et al. (2012) found online educators viewed the most critical aspect for online teaching success is rooted in faculty training in the area of communications related teaching strategies and techniques. Additionally, according to the Educase Center for Analysis and Research, faculty are resistant to teaching

online, but believe they would benefit as instructors if they did (Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017). Furthermore, few faculty members agree that online learning helps students learn more effectively. However, most faculty members believe online learning makes higher education more accessible to students, and that integrating technology throughout their courses would help improve their courses (Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017). Accordingly, the juxtaposition for faculty who are opposed to teaching online is their inherent belief of the benefits of online education and technology tools, yet they are reluctant to teach online (Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017).

The focus of this study is to provide insight on the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs offering more than 50% of their curriculum online. Healthcare related fields have unique challenges when faced with incorporating online education, as most programs require clinical and experiential learning components. However, dental hygiene and nursing bachelor degree completion programs typically do not encompass “hands on” clinical requirements, as these programs serve as an opportunity for licensed working dental hygienists and nurses to attain an advanced degree (Gwozdek et al., 2011; Portillo et al., 2013). Thus, dental hygiene and nursing bachelor degree completion programs offer most of their curricula online (American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), 2019; Portillo et al., 2013).

Additional studies that investigate what types of administrative support online dental hygiene, and nursing faculty prefer are needed, as institutions of higher education seek to meet the rapidly growing workforce needs of the dental hygiene and nursing profession. Hence, it is essential to supplement dental hygiene and nursing research literature in the area of online education. Examining online faculty experiences with online education will enhance our ability to meet the needs of future advanced degree-seeking dental hygienists and nurses.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Administrative support for online education is deficient in terms of faculty development and faculty incentives to teach online (Meyer, 2009; Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017). Online education programs are often developed to meet student enrollment and workforce growing demands. However, the infrastructure, policies, and support entities are often not in place to support the demand (Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017; Tallen-Runnels et al., 2006). Examining the current research in online education as it relates to the profession of dental hygiene and nursing was the catalyst for this study.

There is a gap in the literature describing what types of administrative support online dental hygiene and nursing faculty prefer. For example, do the faculty in these disciplines receive the training and administrative support needed to transition from face to face teaching to online teaching? How comfortable are these faculty with the ever-changing world of technology? For this study “administrative support” includes assistance in the form of funding, technology selection, policy creation and implementation, faculty workload, faculty development, and removal of institutional barriers for interdisciplinary cooperation and teamwork (Barefield & Meyer, 2013; Hart, 2008; Legon & Garrett, 2017; Mclean, 2005; Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017; Thompson, 2003; Venable, 2020).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. Supporting faculty in online course design and delivery increases satisfaction with teaching online (Gazza, 2017; Wingo et al., 2016). Examining the types of support preferred by dental hygiene and



nursing faculty may assist faculty and administrators in improving online curricula. Therefore, the need for additional research designed to understand faculty perceptions of administrative support would be greatly beneficial to stakeholders such as online education faculty, students, administrators, technology experts, and community leaders. The data collected from this study may also inform online curriculum development for other allied health care programs.

### **Research Question**

To investigate the impact of administrative support for dental hygiene and nursing online faculty, this study was directed by the following research question:

What administrative supports do faculty members feel best support them for online teaching?

A descriptive survey research design was conducted to answer this research question. This type of design is observational and allows the researcher to study and describe the distribution of one or more variables, without regard to any causal or other hypotheses (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019). This study did not intend to prove nor disprove any hypotheses, nor seek causation or correlation. Participants for this study included faculty who currently teach in dental hygiene and nursing baccalaureate degree completion programs, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online in New York State.

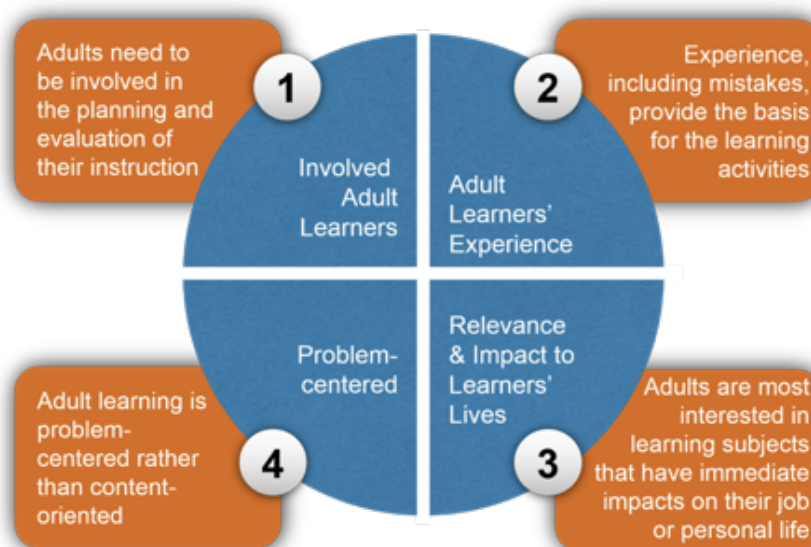
### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework is the perspective from which a study is conducted. Essentially, the conceptual framework is the “whole” of the study’s “parts” (Ravitch & Riggan, 2016). This study was borne from the researcher’s personal interest in online education. Health care education will need to embrace and seriously consider the addition of online education into the curricula to meet the needs of adult learners. The theoretical framework directing this

research was the adult learning theory (Knowles, 1984). The adult learning theory lends itself to understanding how adults learn. In this study, the adult learning theory assists in explaining how faculty like to acquire new technology skills and what skills do they feel they need to teach in an online learning environment. Thus, this framework also serves as a lens linking higher education support administered to faculty adult learners and their perceived preparedness to teach online.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the principles of the adult learning theory.

*Figure 1: The Adult Learning Theory*



Note. Characteristics of adult learning, coined Andragogy by Knowles (1984). From Mancuso, A. A. (2018). Educating the Connected Adult Learner. <https://tincture.io/educating-the-connected-adult-learner-8f26640cf41d>. Copyright 2018 Tincture Open-source Thoughtware.

### **Assumptions, Limitations, and Scope**

This study was conducted under the assumption that the faculty participants answered all questions honestly, understood the questions asked in the survey, and had the ability to discern what types of supports they need to teach online. The researcher is a full-time faculty member at

one of the colleges included in the study. Thus, another assumption was that responding to a colleague's survey might create a bias for the small selection of participants that work in the same college as the researcher. The final assumption was that participants would participate in the study of their own free will without any promise or expectation of reward or incentive.

The specific population from which the sample was drawn delimited this study. Another delimitation of this study was the time restraint and length of the study. The intent of the researcher was to not interfere with faculty end of semester obligations. Therefore, the study was only available to participants for a total of three weeks. The inclusion criterion for this study also delimited the study to faculty with online teaching experience only, which decreased the sample size considerably. Additionally, some of the elements addressed in this study may become irrelevant over time due to the dynamic nature of online teaching technology (Meyer, 2009). Other limitations included the participants' responses may not have necessarily defined the population to which the individuals belong, and may only provide a snapshot measurement of participants' self-reported perceptions (Roberts, 2010).

The scope of this study was limited to online dental hygiene and nursing faculty in the state of New York who teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. This study was also limited by a low response rate. Low response rates may result in a sample that is not representative of the total population (Atif et al., 2012). Technical difficulties also limit the participant response rate (Creswell, 2015). According to Creswell (2015), factors limiting the success of web-based surveys are technological difficulties, security issues and the potential for the web-based surveys to go directly to junk mail.

## **Rationale and Significance**

The evolution of dental hygiene and nursing professions has deemed it necessary for dental hygienists and nurses to advance their education further. Dental hygiene and nursing associate degree programs are designed to prepare students for clinical licensing and national board examinations (American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA), 2019; International Council of Nurses (ICN), 2020). The associate degree programs are highly structured and are primarily composed of didactic face-to-face learning. Online instruction is typically only used to support traditional face-to-face methods of instruction in associate-degree-granting programs. However, online instruction is the main form of instruction in baccalaureate degree completion programs. Degree completion programs are the platform for dental hygienists and nurses holding entry-level (initial licensure) associate degrees to advance to the baccalaureate level (Gwozdek et al., 2011; Portillo et al., 2013). Degree completion programs utilize online education as a method to accommodate the schedules of working professionals, serve as a ladder for nurses and dental hygienists to move forward in their career, and facilitate a better educated workforce (AACN, 2019; Portillo et al., 2013).

Given the growing use of online instruction (Allen & Seaman, 2013, 2015, 2016; Frazer, et al., 2017; Gazza, 2017), it is essential to understand how online dental hygiene and nursing faculty interpret this change and its influence on the delivery of instruction. The findings in this study will contribute to the dental hygiene body of knowledge in the area of online learning and assist faculty and administrators in improving the delivery of online education. Futuristic implications of this study will support additional research done on online education in dental hygiene, nursing, and related allied health fields and serve as a building block for future studies.

## Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study these definitions are provided to ensure understanding of the following terms:

***Administrative Support:*** Administrative support includes assistance in the form of funding, guidance, oversight, and in removing the obstacles that hinder well-supported online education programs. Traditional administrative support roles such as those of instructional designer, technology support specialist, and administrative advisor are often active online teaching faculty (Barefield & Meyer, 2013). Administrative support includes funding, technology selection, policy creation and implementation, faculty workload, faculty development, and removal of institutional barriers for interdisciplinary cooperation and teamwork (Barefield & Meyer, 2013; Hart, 2008; Legon & Garrett, 2017; Mclean, 2005; Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017; Thompson, 2003; Venable, 2020).

***Degree Completion Programs:*** A degree completion program is an academic program specifically designed for students who have started but not finished, a four-year undergraduate degree. In addition to accepting students who have started and not completed a bachelor's degree, some degree completion programs cater specifically to students who have already earned an associate degree (Stobierski, 2019).

***Dental Hygiene:*** Dental hygiene is the science and practice of the recognition, treatment, and prevention of oral diseases (ADHA, 2019).

***Dental Hygiene Programs:*** Dental Hygiene programs provide extraordinary clinical and academic opportunities for students interested in preventive oral healthcare and the promotion of good health. A key member of the healthcare team, the dental hygienist works together with the

dentist to meet the oral health needs of patients and thereby improve patients' quality of life (New York University, 2020).

***Distance Education:*** The teacher and learner are physically separated for most of the educational process and communication mediated by technology (Keegan, 1996).

***Nursing:*** The autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick or well and in all settings. Nursing includes the promotion of health, prevention of illness, and the care of ill, disabled and dying people. Advocacy, promotion of a safe environment, research, participation in shaping health policy and in patient and health systems management, and education are also key nursing roles (ICN, 2020).

***Nursing Programs:*** Nursing programs prepare students for entry into the profession of Nursing. The curriculum prepares graduates to provide professional nursing skills to individuals, families and groups in a variety of structured and unstructured healthcare settings, as well as the leadership skills needed to supervise nursing care delivered in community settings. The students are provided with the theoretical knowledge and clinical practice needed to administer care for individuals throughout the life cycle (Farmingdale State College, 2020)

***Online Education:*** Online education is a flexible instructional delivery system that encompasses any kind of learning that takes place via the Internet (Jones, 2020).

***Online Learning:*** Online learning is a form of distance education in which instruction and content are delivered primarily over the Internet. The term does not include print-based correspondence education, broadcast television or radio, videocassettes, or stand-alone educational software programs that do not have a significant Internet-based instructional component (Department of Defense Education Activity, 2020).

**Online Instruction:** Online instruction is typically provided in an online course in which the students and instructor or instructors are connected to each other through the Internet. The students and faculty must possess the computer skills necessary to type, browse, and search the World Wide Web for information, and communicate through e-mail and/or other provided interface platforms. In general, online instruction requires no face-to-face meetings and is delivered through the use of a course management system accessible through the institution of higher education in which the course is offered. The students can receive instruction at any time using the Internet, and actively participate in class from any location. Accordingly, faculty can also deliver instruction, feedback, and adapt course progression from any location by using the Internet (Richland Community College, 2013).

### **Conclusion**

Students who have flourished in the Internet era expect the infusion of technology in the curriculum as part of their postsecondary education (Hart, 2008). Subsequently, administrators of higher learning institutions should recognize the benefit of additional resources by meeting these students' needs in offering online courses; however this also increases the demand for technology-savvy faculty. Studies that investigate what types of administrative support online dental hygiene, and nursing faculty prefer are needed, as institutions of higher education seek to meet the workforce needs of the dental hygiene and nursing profession. Investigating the types of administrative support preferred by online dental hygiene, and nursing faculty may assist faculty and administrators in improving online curricula in these disciplines.

This chapter presented an introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, the research question, conceptual framework, assumptions, limitations, and scope of the study, the rationale and significance, and definition of terms. Chapter two will

present a review of the related literature and a summary of the research related to the problem. Chapter three will discuss the research methodology, study design, population and sampling procedures, instrument used, data collection and analysis plan, limitations and delimitations of research design, internal and external validity, and ethical issues in the study. Chapter four will present the results and analysis of findings based on the data collected. Chapter five will summarize the analysis of data and conclusions based on the research conducted, and make recommendations for future research.



## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

Online education is widely used today as an acceptable means of delivering quality education. Increasingly, institutions of higher learning across the nation are using online courses to render accessible education to students of multiple disciplines (Allen & Seaman, 2015). Nevertheless, few studies have examined the perceptions of faculty in dental hygiene and nursing baccalaureate degree completion programs with online education and administrative support. Specifically, this study intended to provide insight on the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. It is essential to supplement the research literature in the area of online education, as institutions of higher education seek to meet the rapidly growing workforce needs of dental hygiene and nursing professionals. Examining the current research in online education as it relates to the profession of dental hygiene and nursing was the catalyst for this study.

### **Study Topic and Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. Specifically, from a delivery of instruction viewpoint the study sought to explore the experiences of online dental hygiene, and nursing faculty with administrative support.

Administrative support is essential for the successful delivery of online education. Online instructional design is widely available and design support is even required at many non-profit institutions (Legon & Garrett, 2017). However, recent research shows only less than a quarter of educational institutions use online program management to support online program development

(Legon & Garrett, 2017). Additionally, Legon and Garrett (2017) affirm, in 40% of community colleges, faculty do not receive compensation for course development, while faculty at private non-profit and larger institutions are compensated. Thus, online education's position in the mainstream of higher education is certain, but the evolution of administrative support is questionable.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in the fall of 2015 there were 14.4% of students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses at degree-granting postsecondary institutions nationwide, and in 2017, there were over six million (NCES, 2017). Consequently, a change in educational leadership is warranted to develop and implement best practices for online teaching and facilitate administrative support throughout institutions of higher learning. Beaudoin (2015) stipulates distance education is a transformative process requiring authentic transformational leadership to sustain continuous innovative growth. The requisition then is for leadership to recognize the importance of support for online teaching faculty. Administrators will want to understand faculty needs for online teaching to improve the campus climate regarding online education.

It is vital to recognize how institutions of higher learning prepare faculty to teach online since there is continuous growth of online programs across higher education (Allen & Seaman, 2013, 2015, 2016; Frazer et al., 2017; Gazza, 2017). A report sponsored by the Sloan Consortium (Sloan-C), prepared by Allen and Seaman (2013) entitled *Changing Course: Ten Years of Tracking Online Education in the United States*, described the rate of growth in online enrollments as "extremely robust." The study found that 32% of higher education students now take at least one online course, and 6.7 million students were taking at least one online course during the fall of 2011, an increase of 570,000 students over the previous year (Allen & Seaman,

2013). Additionally, 77% of academic leaders rate the learning outcomes in online education as the same or superior to those in face-to face classes (Allen & Seaman, 2013). However, the perceptions of the majority of chief academic officers at all types of institutions were that lower retention rates for online courses remain a barrier to the growth of online instruction, and the value and legitimacy of online education accepted by faculty has not increased (Allen & Seaman, 2013). Faculty acceptance of online education is essential to the success of distance learning, as they are the fundamental staple of higher education. Therefore, reasons for the faculty's negative response toward online education must be explored to determine best practices regarding administrative support and ultimately improve faculty acceptance.

Colleges and universities now commonly offer online courses and degrees. According to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in 2015, 13% of associate's programs, 9% of bachelor's programs, 18% of master's programs, and 5% of doctoral programs were fully distance. In 2017, the NCES reported the number of students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses grew by more than 4% and students enrolled in at least one distance education course increased by more than 6% (Ginder, Kelly-Reid, & Mann, 2018). Additionally, a total of 595 two- and four-year schools reported more than 1,000 distance students (Legon & Garrett, 2017). According to the American Dental Hygienists' Association, there are 47 dental hygiene online bachelor's programs and 16 master's programs (ADHA, 2019). The American Association of Colleges of Nursing also reports more than 600 online nursing programs throughout the US (AACN, 2019). The data shows online education is fundamental to higher learning, and has trickled into healthcare education.

There is a gap in the dental hygiene and nursing literature concerning the perceptions of faculty with online education and administrative support in baccalaureate degree completion programs, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. For example, what types of support work best for faculty in dental hygiene and nursing? How do these faculty members perceive the online learning environment from a teaching standpoint? Do dental hygiene and nursing faculty receive the training and administrative support needed to transition from face to face teaching to online teaching? How comfortable are these faculty with technology? It is anticipated that investigating the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach online, will aid in improving course and curriculum development to ensure student satisfaction in dental hygiene and nursing online education programs.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework is the perspective from which a study is conducted. Thus, the conceptual framework “informs” the entire study including research methodology, design, and data interpretation (Ravitch & Riggan, 2016). Its ultimate purpose is to provide a “road map” to guide both the investigator and the reader through the research process.

The focus of this descriptive study was to provide insight on the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. This study originated from the researcher’s personal interest in online education, and the perceived benefits of online education from both the student and the online instructor standpoint. It is believed by the researcher that health care education will need to embrace and seriously consider the addition of online education into the curricula to meet the needs of adult learners.

The theoretical framework directing this research was the adult learning theory. The adult learning theory lends itself to understanding how adults learn. For this study, the adult learning theory assisted in interpreting how faculty like to acquire new technology skills and what skills did they feel they needed to teach in an online learning environment. Thus, this framework also served as a lens linking higher education support administered to faculty adult learners and their perceived preparedness to teach online.

In 1968, Knowles capitalized on the unique strengths of adult learners and coined the term andragogy also known as the adult learning theory (Merriam, 2001). The adult learning theory posits adult learners are essentially self-motivated and measure their learning experiences against their own inherent needs and values (Knowles, 1998). Based on this assumption, adult learners should have a participatory role in the content and process of learning. Thus, administrators will want to seek opportunities for faculty input when implementing supports for online teaching.

Andragogy suggests there are different ways in how adults learn, and learning occurs when the learner creates ideas and frameworks as a result of combining existing and new knowledge (Dirani, 2012). However, the literature is not clear on whether adult learners have the same needs in both traditional and distance learning environments (Black, 2010). Studies suggest that online faculty should receive training where the faculty is the “student”, so that online best practices can be explored and then modeled in their course (Abel, 2005; Elliott et al., 2015). Similarly, the adult learning theory posits adult learners are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate impacts on their job and personal life (Knowles, 1984), denoting an inherent connection between administrative support and faculty professional growth and development.

Research confirms online students benefit from self-directed learning (Blondy, 2007). Moreover, actively engaging adult students through self-directive lectures is a more effective mode of learning (Palis & Quiros, 2014). Seipel and Ferrari (2019) affirm online andragogy warrants the need for continuing professional development opportunities. According to existing research the perceived barriers to online teaching include: increased workload, time consumed preparing and implementing course delivery, unfamiliarity with course management systems or various forms of technology, administrative support, proprietorship of course materials, and career advancement with increased salary opportunities (DeBate, 2011; Hart, 2008; Legon & Garrett, 2017). These barriers allude to a diminished sense of value and faculty acceptance of online education (Allen & Seaman, 2013). Therefore, it is vital to sustain faculty in their online teaching satisfaction, course design and delivery (Gazza, 2017; Wingo et al., 2016).

The topical research and current empirical works depict that the literature is lacking in describing what types of support do online dental hygiene, and nursing faculty feel they need to teach online. These perceptions are imperative to understanding how administrative support influences the delivery of instruction for online faculty in these disciplines. Faculty perceptions regarding administrative support and the types of support needed to teach online can aid in developing higher education initiatives that better prepare faculty to teach in dental hygiene and nursing online programs.

### **Review of the Literature**

Examining the current research in online education as it relates to the profession of dental hygiene and nursing was the impetus for this study. Although numerous studies have been conducted on distance education, very few studies examine administrative support in dental hygiene and nursing online education. The literature presented will discuss distance education,

online education in dental hygiene, and online education in nursing, and administrative support in online education.

### **Distance Education**

Distance education as described by Keegan (1996) is “the separation of teacher and learner from the learning group, with the interpersonal face to face communication of conventional education being replaced by a personal mode of communication mediated by technology” (p. 8). The 1998 part G section 488 Amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1965 defines distance education as follows: “an educational process that is characterized by the separation, in time or place, between instructor and student” (para. H).

The distance education concept is not new, despite its recent popularity. Correspondence education is an earlier version of distance education that can be traced back to the early 1800s (Hart, 2008). Holmberg (1995) defines correspondence education as the teacher communicating in writing via instructional texts with students. The implementation of correspondence education was facilitated by the development of the Uniform Penny Post in 1840 (Hart, 2008). Correspondence education gained momentum with the onset of print based materials, which advanced distance education from single-skill instruction to degree-granting programs (Tsokris, 2010).

A paradigm shift of the perception of distance education occurred as a result of the advances in technology. Communication tools such as mail, fax, radio television, satellite broadcasts, videotapes, teleconferencing, and the Internet are used in distance education (Hart, 2008; Tsokris, 2010). However, student and teacher interactivity were enhanced in distance education electronically with the introduction of the Internet in the 1990s (Hart, 2008).

Phipps and Merisotis (1999) noted original research in distance learning was scarce despite the existing large volume of written material focused on distance learning. The review of the literature by Phipps and Merisotis (1999) identified research disparities, and resulted in future specific recommendations to supplement the existing research. This report was a catalyst to many empirical descriptive, qualitative exploratory, and longitudinal studies that sought to address the gaps in the literature related to distance education such as: academic program student outcomes, differences among students, distance learner dropout rates, student learning styles in relation to particular technologies, individual technologies versus multiple technologies, inclusion of a theoretical or conceptual framework, and the effectiveness of digital libraries (Phipps & Merisotis, 1999). Phipps and Merisotis (1999) also identified many studies conducted did not make known the feelings and attitudes of students and faculty.

Faculty perceptions of distance education and online teaching are vital to understanding the growth and trajectory of education. The concept of learning and how we teach will continue to broaden in the future. As Collins and Halverson (2018) affirm, technology has moved learning outside of school walls and is slowly undoing the identification of education with schooling. The relatively recent introduction of the Internet has dramatically changed the face of distance education. What is now termed online education is a key part of higher education and has created a market responsible for a major growth segment in the education industry (Shelton & Saltsman, 2005). Faculty will need to be “on board” with the distance education movement to secure a future position in this education niche and ensure student success. Additionally, how academic leaders evolve distance education programs will have an impact on distance education as a whole (Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017).



### **Online Education in Dental Hygiene**

Online education in dental hygiene continues to grow exponentially as the use of online learning and implementation of technologically based delivery systems increase in institutions of higher learning across the United States. According to the American Dental Association Survey Center, a survey conducted on allied dental education performed in 2010-2011 reported 51 dental hygiene programs offered online study. Data from the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) in 2009 revealed there were 309 entry-level dental hygiene programs, 60 bachelor degree completion programs of which 17 were offered fully online and 20 master's degree programs (Tsokris, 2010). The ADHA website in May of 2019 showed 328 entry-level dental hygiene programs, 56 bachelor degree completion programs of which 31 are offered 100% online, and 21 master's degree programs of which 10 are offered 100% online (ADHA, 2019). The significant increase in dental hygiene entry-level programs and bachelor degree completion and master's programs offered 100% online is a strong indicator that online education is a future staple of the dental hygiene curriculum. Dental hygienists with an associate degree have completed nearly three-quarters of the credits required for a bachelor's degree (Gwozdek et al., 2011). Degree completion programs offer the opportunity for dental hygienists with associate degrees to complete the additional credit hours to obtain a baccalaureate degree (Gwozdek et al., 2011).

Degree completion programs are the platform for dental hygienists holding entry-level associate degrees to advance to the baccalaureate level (Gwozdek et al., 2011; Portillo et al., 2013). Degree completion programs are utilizing online education as a method to accommodate the schedules of working professionals (Portillo et al., 2013). Due to the rising number of fully online programs of study in dental hygiene, it is important to note the existing research related to

distance education in dental hygiene.

Grimes (2002) conducted a landmark study in dental hygiene to determine the extent that distance education was being used in dental hygiene programs. The study showed that 22% of the programs that responded offered distance education, and 13% planned to do so in the future. The respondents reported twelve programs offered a bachelor's degree, and out of the twelve programs, five were degree completion programs, which offered 76-100% of their curriculum online. Grimes (2002) reported that the reasons for incorporating distance education in dental hygiene bachelor degree completion programs were to increase dental hygiene manpower, to improve student recruitment, and to enable dental hygienists to earn a bachelor degree. The most frequently reported reason for offering distance education was to serve special populations, and the most frequent type of distance education being used was asynchronous learning (Grimes, 2002).

Another milestone 10-year longitudinal study done by Olmsted (2010) to investigate student performance in dental hygiene via distance education discovered that distance learning was an effective method for delivering education in dental hygiene. The study aimed to address one of the research gaps noted by Phipps and Merisotis (1999) by documenting student outcomes for an entire academic program rather than individual courses. The examiners investigated the performance of students learning at a distance vs. students learning face-to-face in the same dental hygiene program from 1997 to 2006 (Olmsted, 2010). The research sought to determine the impact of distance learning on learner performance by using established benchmark assessments such as course grades, grade point average (GPA), and National Board of Dental Hygiene Examination (NBDHE) scores (Olmsted, 2010). The results recorded learner performance in the areas of GPA, NBDHE scores, and course grades for an entire dental hygiene

academic program (Olmsted, 2010). The study showed that there were no significant differences in performance between face-to-face students and distance students, indicating the success of distance education as a delivery medium in a dental hygiene educational program (Olmsted, 2010).

Faculty beliefs, attitudes, and acceptance of online education delivery are at the core of improving and increasing the implementation of online education in the dental hygiene curriculum. In a qualitative exploratory study funded by the National Institute of Health performed by DeBate et al. (2011) to investigate the characteristics of e-courses that may serve to increase adoption among dental and dental hygiene faculty members, it was noted that perceived barriers related to e-curriculum development hinder the acceptance of e-courses in the dental and dental hygiene curriculum. The study revealed data from the focus groups describing two general themes, which were the benefits and the barriers to the adoption of e-courses among dental and dental hygiene faculty members (DeBate et al., 2011). The study depicted the following concerns among dental and dental hygiene faculty in the adoption of e-courses: incompatibility with current curriculum and culture, huge time commitment, complexity with regard to e-course development and maintenance, and low relative faculty advantage over traditional course delivery (DeBate et al., 2011). These faculty concerns are echoed in diverse studies throughout the current literature and influence faculty views in online education.

### **Online Education in Nursing**

The demand for innovation in nursing education has increased the use of technology and growth in online programs. Health professions are the fastest growing segment of the online learning population, and healthcare is one of the top three areas of anticipated growth in online education (Allen & Seaman, 2015; Venable, 2020). Online enrollments have increased at rates

greater than the overall enrollment rates for higher education, and 28% of college students take at least one online course (Allen & Seaman, 2015). The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) noted that nearly 80% of employers of new graduates prefer baccalaureate degree-prepared nurses (AACN, 2019).

Evidence supports a positive correlation between nurses with a higher educational degree and provision of quality patient care (Sherrod, 2014). Further research has shown that lower mortality rates, fewer medication errors and quality outcomes are all linked to nurses prepared at the baccalaureate and higher degree level (AACN, 2019). Degree completion programs provide additional education to registered nurses (RNs) who received their initial nursing preparation in diploma and associate degree (ADN) programs. The AACN website reports more than 600 Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN) programs are offered partially or fully online (AACN, 2019). According to the AACN (2019), these bridge programs prepare nurses for a higher level of nursing practice, enhance both clinical competency and patient care, and facilitate a better educated workforce. Additionally, degree completion programs serve as a ladder for nurses to move forward in their careers.

The mandate to increase educational preparation of the nursing workforce and the demand for flexibility by practicing nurses has led to the rapid growth of online RN to BSN degree completion programs (AACN, 2019; Frazer et al., 2017; Gazza, 2017). Consequently, in online education, there will be a need for faculty to demonstrate online teaching effectiveness (Frazer et al., 2017). Moreover, as online education continues to grow, it is imperative to support faculty in their design and delivery of quality courses and satisfaction with teaching online (Gazza, 2017; Wingo et al., 2016). Prior studies provide some insight into nursing faculty's perceptions and experiences related to online teaching. The research indicates consistency among

faculty in their perceptions of the challenges associated with the amount of time required for preparing online courses, managing online course communication, and learning to use new technology (Frazer et al., 2017; Gazza, 2017; Howe et al., 2018; Mastel-Smith et al. 2015; Richter & Idleman, 2017; Richter & Schuessler, 2019; Wingo et al., 2016). Therefore, in determining the types of support needed to encourage faculty to teach online, a better understanding of faculty perceptions in administrative support is warranted to develop initiatives that prepare faculty to teach high quality courses in online programs.

### **Administrative Support In Online Education**

Administrative support as described by researchers is vital to successful online education programs. Administrative support includes funding, technology selection, updating policies, promotion of a paradigm shift, faculty workload, faculty development, and removal of institutional barriers for interdisciplinary cooperation and teamwork (Barefield & Meyer, 2013; Hart, 2008; Legon & Garrett, 2017; Mclean, 2005; Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017; Thompson, 2003; Venable, 2020). Most studies confirm that technology-related faculty development has a positive impact on the teaching practices of faculty. However, the needs of faculty and the value of faculty feedback are undermined by leaders who make administrative decisions (Barefield & Meyer, 2013). Traditional administrative support roles must change to accommodate the online teaching environment (Barefield & Meyer, 2013). Research conducted by Barefield and Meyer (2009) addresses this issue by providing the Administrative Support Matrix, which aims to identify essential elements for sustaining online programs. The Administrative Support Matrix is represented in Table 1.

**Table 1***Administrative Support Matrix*

Foundation Stage	Development Stage	Maintenance Stage
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Administration's ability to respond and listen to faculty needs.</li> <li>2. A supportive and responsive informational technology (IT) team.</li> <li>3. Effective and well-supported campus network.</li> <li>4. Effective server support.</li> <li>5. Online student registration, and payment system.</li> <li>6. Online bookstore services.</li> <li>7. Online library services.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Online program policies.</li> <li>2. Staff development program.</li> <li>3. Faculty incentives.</li> <li>4. Teamwork approach.</li> <li>5. Faculty development program.</li> <li>6. Faculty mentoring program.</li> <li>7. Course management system.</li> <li>8. Lecture capture or course online delivery system.</li> <li>9. Online test security.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continuously evaluate new online technology.</li> <li>2. Update technology only when new technology adds value.</li> <li>3. Periodically assess and update quality of course content.</li> <li>4. Set limits on intrusion of technology on online faculty personal time.</li> <li>5. Survey faculty semi-annually.</li> <li>6. Survey students at the end of every semester.</li> <li>7. Make changes to programs based on faculty and student input.</li> </ol>

Note. Source: Meyer, J.D., & Barefield, A.C. (2009). *Developing and sustaining online*

*education: An administrator's guide to developing an online program*. Cologne: LAP Academic Publishing.

Other findings revealed administrators are clear that infrastructure support needs to be organized and a full-time commitment. Faculty who teach online need to know that they have a strong infrastructure to support their needs technologically, economically, and emotionally (Meyer, 2010). A sound online program can only be developed through careful and purposeful processes that derive from reliable and effective administrative support.

A report prepared by Abel (2005) for the Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC) to examine the achieving success in Internet-supported learning in higher education noted that executive leadership and support, and faculty and academic leadership commitment

were ranked as the most important ingredients in achieving success. The paper titled *Achieving Success in Internet-Supported Learning in Higher Education: Case Studies Illuminate Success Factors, Challenges, and Future Directions*, summarized the results of surveys and interviews conducted with 21 different types of institutions of higher learning with successful usage of e-learning. A review of the findings revealed that administrators and faculty are clear that Internet-supported learning is a long-term commitment (91%), administrators are actively involved in leading the efforts, and administrative support for success is perceived as adequate for success (82%) (Abel, 2005). Conversely, more recent studies show that faculty perceived to have insufficient training and support for teaching online (Adams, 2016; Kennedy, 2015; Mansbach, & Austin, 2018). Furthermore, as Allen and Seaman (2016) affirm, repeatedly faculty members report that they are unconvinced of online education's worth in higher education. According to Pomerantz and Brooks (2017), most faculty members who choose to teach entirely face-to-face do not believe that online learning helps students learn effectively. Thus, many faculty members are doubtful of the research findings that distinguish the learning outcomes produced by online education from those produced by face-to-face education (Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017). Therefore, faculty training for online teaching should include evidence of the robust research supporting strong learning outcomes in fully online and blended learning modalities (Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017). Subsequently, there is a divide between administrator perspectives and faculty perceptions. These studies reveal faculty feel they do not have adequate support or sufficient training to teach online. Yet, administrators believe support for successful online teaching is sufficient. Here in lies the juxtaposition of faculty and online teaching, it is required but not satisfactorily supported.

Faculty training and support needs to address technical concerns, instructional online practices, and satisfaction with online teaching (Horvitz et al. 2015; Kennedy, 2015; Zone, 2013). Online faculty members face unique challenges and have additional needs. According to Elliott et al. (2015), online teachers should attend professional development that is delivered online. Faculty who participate in online professional development are presented with opportunities where online best practices can be explored and modeled in the online environment to improve levels of engagement and student satisfaction. Similarly, Abel (2005) reported some institutions require that faculty teaching online complete a six to eight week training program as the “student” of the course that they will be teaching. Moreover, methodologies learned in online professional development courses can be used to better meet the needs of online learners (Elliot et al., 2015).

A study conducted by Richter and Idleman (2017) to investigate the perceptions of online teaching efficacy of nursing faculty revealed that time was a critical element for successful online teaching. This pilot study elicited the participation of nursing faculty who teach courses in which 51% or more of the content is offered online, within the state university system located in the southeastern United States (Richter & Idleman, 2017). The findings also discovered professional development support and release time to develop online courses have a greater impact on faculty self-efficacy (Richter & Idleman, 2017). Additionally, it was noted, as nursing educators received more support in designing and implementing online courses, their efficacy increased (Richter & Idleman, 2017).

Ongoing administrative support is essential to increase online teaching skills. Online faculty must also be recognized for the work and time commitment dedicated to online teaching (DeBate et al., 2011; Richter & Idleman, 2017). Additionally, the literature mentions other



fundamental support practices including: online course observation, partnering with external technology experts, providing instructional designers, setting online course standards, forming a consortium to pool resources, paying faculty to assist other faculty individually with e-learning, academic review of the course prior to offering it online, faculty release time, faculty mentorship, and flexibility in faculty development (Abel, 2005; Dahlstrom et al., 2014; Elliot et al., 2015; Horvitz et al., 2015; Richter, & Idleman, 2017). Specific faculty training needed as found by Keengwe and Georgina (2012) include: training in teaching methods, media and technical support, course design, and support from teaching assistants and librarians. The research confirms that successful support to teach online is directly related to professional development opportunities and administrative support. Professional development should offer opportunities for faculty to encounter increasingly complex situations in training programs through strategies such as case studies, problem solving, and challenges that allow novices to put learning in context (McGee et al., 2017). Faculty motivation and commitment to teach online are found to be higher in institutions where support systems are well provided (Stupnisky et al., 2018).

Progressively, health science programs are incorporating online courses to increase student retention and expand opportunities for personnel in health care fields to earn advanced degrees. The literature shows how the increase in online education has impacted faculty transitioning from face-to-face courses to online courses, and how these faculty are in need of administrative support to successfully overcome barriers to teaching online. The overall weaknesses of the literature are the availability of studies done in dental hygiene and nursing online programs, the type of administrative support faculty receive in these programs to teach online, and how this support impacts their delivery of instruction with online courses.

Dental hygiene and nursing have similar curricula. They also follow similar paths in online degree completion programs, where there are no clinical components. The aim of these programs is to provide dental hygienists and nurses with opportunities to obtain advanced degrees and expand into alternate health care career settings (Gwozdek et al., 2011; Portillo et al., 2013). There is limited research describing what types of support dental hygiene and nursing faculty feel they need to tackle the challenges of online teaching. Therefore, to address this literature gap new research is needed. Moreover, understanding the challenges that faculty face with online teaching and administrative support will enable institutions of higher learning to improve online teaching and learning, recognize areas of course development and curriculum improvement, and develop strategies for continuous online infrastructure support.

The literature presented richly suggests distance education is a viable and sustainable means of education. The dental hygiene and nursing professions have followed suit in incorporating online education into the curricula. Therefore, present and future faculty must be equipped to nourish the growth of online teaching in these respective disciplines.

### **Conclusion**

The substantial amount of available literature regarding online education suggests this mode of instruction delivery is a staple in higher education. Technology advancements provide academic institutions many new opportunities, but responsibility for instructional quality still rests with the faculty (Schulte 2010). Therefore, the need for additional research designed to understand faculty perceptions of administrative support would be greatly beneficial to online education faculty, students, administrators, technology experts, and distance education as a whole. In dental hygiene and nursing education, where faculty are at the core of student learning it is important to determine the value of administrative support as a tool to prepare online faculty.

Conceivably, future studies that examine the use of administrative support in dental hygiene and nursing online education are needed for the enrichment of the existing literature and the enhancement of the dental hygiene and nursing profession.

### CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Colleges and universities now commonly offer online courses and degrees (Allen & Seaman, 2013, 2015, 2016). It is imperative to comprehend how institutions of higher learning prepare faculty to teach online given the growing number of online programs across higher education (Allen & Seaman, 2013, 2015, 2016; Frazer, et al., 2017; Gazza, 2017). This study investigated the perceptions of faculty in dental hygiene and nursing baccalaureate degree completion programs with online education and administrative support. For this study “administrative support” includes assistance in the form of funding, technology selection, policy creation and implementation, faculty workload, faculty development, and removal of institutional barriers for interdisciplinary cooperation and teamwork (Barefield & Meyer, 2013; Hart, 2008; Legon & Garrett, 2017; Mclean, 2005; Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017; Thompson, 2003; Venable, 2020). Degree completion programs do not contain a clinical component, as they serve as a platform for licensed dental hygienists and nurses holding entry-level associate degrees to advance to the baccalaureate level (Gwozdek et al., 2011; Portillo et al., 2013). Degree completion programs utilize online education as a method to accommodate the schedules of working professionals, serve as a ladder for nurses and dental hygienists to move forward in their career, and facilitate a better educated workforce (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2019; Portillo et al., 2013).

This study explored faculty perceptions with online education in the area of administrative support utilizing the Faculty Perceptions of Administrative Support (FPAS) survey instrument (Appendix A). The study examined faculty perceptions and the influence that administrative support has on the delivery of instruction with online education in dental hygiene and nursing baccalaureate degree completion programs offered online in the state of New York.

This chapter will present the research methods, population, materials, and procedures that were utilized to conduct this study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this descriptive survey research was to investigate the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. Faculty members are at the core of the successful delivery of online education. Concerns for faculty involved in online education include increased workload, time consumed preparing and implementing course delivery, unfamiliarity with course management systems or various forms of technology, administrative support, proprietorship of course materials, and career advancement with increased salary opportunities (Hart, 2008).

The dental hygiene and nursing professions have similar curricula. They also follow similar paths in online baccalaureate degree completion programs, where there are no clinical components. The aim of these programs is to provide dental hygienists and nurses with opportunities to obtain advanced degrees and expand into alternate health care career settings. According to the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), the United States has 47 dental hygiene and more than 600 nursing online degree completion baccalaureate programs (ADHA, 2019; AACN, 2019). Consequently, in online education, there will be a need for faculty to demonstrate online teaching effectiveness (Frazer et al., 2017).

It is important to support faculty in their design and delivery of quality courses and satisfaction with teaching online (Gazza, 2017; Wingo et al., 2016). Research indicates consistency among faculty in their perceptions of the challenges associated with the amount of

time required for preparing online courses, managing online course communication, and learning to use new technology (Frazer et al., 2017; Gazza, 2017; Howe et al., 2018; Mastel-Smith et al., 2015; Richter & Idleman, 2017; Richter & Schuessler, 2019; Wingo et al., 2016). Therefore, to better determine the types of support needed to encourage faculty to teach online, an advanced understanding of faculty perceptions in administrative support is warranted to develop initiatives that prepare faculty to teach high-quality courses in online programs. Investigating online education and administrative support can aid in improving online course and curriculum development to ensure student satisfaction in dental hygiene and nursing baccalaureate degree completion online programs.

### **Research Questions and Research Design**

To investigate the impact of administrative support for dental hygiene and nursing online faculty, this study was directed by the following research question:

What administrative supports do faculty members feel best support them for online teaching?

To answer this research question, a descriptive survey research design was undertaken. This type of design is observational and allows the researcher to study and describe the distribution of one or more variables, without regard to any causal or other hypotheses (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019). This study did not intend to prove nor disprove any hypotheses, nor seek causation or correlation. Participants for this study included faculty who currently teach in accredited dental hygiene and nursing online baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online.

This type of research design was chosen because it is a means to reach diverse faculty across the state of New York, and multiple institutions in the disciplines of dental hygiene and

nursing, and gain a better understanding of areas for improvement in online education delivery for health care programs. The data collected from this study may also aid in online curriculum development for other allied health care programs. Examining the current research in online education as it relates to the profession of dental hygiene and nursing was the catalyst for this study.

### **Population and Sampling Methods**

According to the American Dental Education Association (ADEA), in 2018 there were 894 full-time faculty members in dental hygiene programs across the United States. The National League for Nursing (NLN) reported a total of 13,513 full-time nursing faculty members in their 2016-2017 Nursing Faculty Census. New York State has 15 nursing and two dental hygiene baccalaureate degree completion programs, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online (ADHA 2019; Registered Nursing, 2020). The researcher contacted these schools to determine how many faculty members were currently teaching online in bachelor degree completion programs in their respective departments.

### **Sampling Procedures**

The sample included in this study was a purposive criterion sample. This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with the phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2015). The participants were selected by reviewing the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) and American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) website, which provided a comprehensive listing of dental hygiene and nursing baccalaureate degree completion online programs across the United States. Next, an e-mail request was sent to all program directors from the ADHA and AACN website listings of accredited dental hygiene and nursing online baccalaureate degree completion

programs in the state of New York. The e-mail described the nature of the study and request permission to obtain the e-mail addresses of all faculty members who currently teach in their online programs (Appendix B). The e-mail also gave the option for program directors to forward an e-mail invitation (Appendix C) requesting participation in the study with a link to the Faculty Perceptions of Administrative Support survey instrument (Appendix A). Subsequently, one week later, a follow-up e-mail was sent to all directors requesting that they remind faculty to participate in the study.

### **Instrumentation**

The survey instrument was composed by utilizing a specific portion of a survey previously developed and used by the researcher to investigate faculty perceptions of distance education. The Faculty Perceptions of Administrative Support survey (FPAS) (Appendix A) contained the section specific to administrative support from another survey instrument named the Faculty Perceptions and Experiences Survey instrument (FPES), used in a previous study titled: Distance Education in Dental Hygiene: Faculty Perceptions and Experiences with Online Baccalaureate Degree Completion Programs and Master's Programs (Rivera, 2015). The FPES instrument was developed by adapting questions from various survey instruments used in research conducted to investigate faculty perceptions with distance education. An e-mail cover letter was sent to the authors of these survey instruments, requesting permission to adapt portions of their survey as the foundation in developing the FPES instrument. Permission was obtained in writing through an e-mail response (Appendix D). The following survey instruments were adapted:

1. Faculty Perceptions of Instructional Practices Using Asynchronous Learning Networks (Guidera, 2003).



2. Faculty Concerns and Knowledge of Intellectual Property at Rights Survey Instrument (Hart, 2008).
3. a. Faculty Survey Instrument (Tsokris, 2009).  
b. Faculty Perceptions of Online Learning (Tsokris, 2009).

To assess the content validity of the survey instrument, five faculty members in higher education with experience in online teaching piloted the FPES instrument. The survey questions and instructions were e-mailed to the faculty members, requesting the completion of the survey and their recommendations. The survey was revised from the original format based on the recommendations provided by the faculty members. Each individual author of the surveys utilized to develop the FPES instrument established internal consistency, at the time of conducting their research.

The FPES questionnaire used a Likert format with a six-point response scale that required each participant to indicate his or her degree of agreement or disagreement with statements designed to define teaching effectiveness in the online learning environment, experience with online pedagogy, experience with technology in online education, and perceptions of administrative support in online education. The survey also provided a space for faculty to comment individually on their perceptions and experiences with online education. The FPES instrument previously used has a total of 64 questions. The researcher only used the demographic and administrative support components of the FPES instrument for this study. Demographic information questions included in this study were: gender, age, part-time/full-time status, years in academia, years teaching online, number of online courses currently teaching, current job rank and position, tenure status, and online training/technical support available. Additionally, only questions in the FPES instrument related to administrative support were used. Therefore, the

Faculty Perception of Administrative Support (FPAS) instrument utilized in this study only had a total of 25 questions, as it was an excerpt of the FPES instrument.

### **Reliability and Validity**

Reliability is defined as the extent to which an instrument measures or produces the same results on repeated trials. Validity is defined as the extent to which the instrument measures what it intends to measure (Roberts, 2010). Both the validity and reliability of the survey instrument was established during the Distance Education in Dental Hygiene: Faculty Perceptions and Experiences with Online Baccalaureate Degree Completion Programs and Master's Programs study, when the survey instrument was piloted by five faculty members in higher education with online teaching experience.

### **Data Collection**

The Faculty Perceptions of Administrative Support survey instrument was administered online using the REDCap online survey database web application software, which was hosted through the University of New England secured platform. Web-based survey methods have many advantages (Creswell, 2015; Dykema et al., 2013). Web-based surveys are easy to complete, less expensive, and offer improved time of return (Dykema et al., 2013). The web-based platform also allows for seamless, more accurate recording and transfer of data (Dykema et al., 2013).

An email request for faculty participation in the study was sent to all program directors (Appendix B), and one week later, a follow-up e-mail was sent to the directors requesting that they remind faculty to participate in the study. Informed consent was obtained online prior to having access to the survey, consenting to participate in the study voluntarily, and participants were informed they could end participation and/or skip any questions at any time (Appendix C).

The beginning of the survey questionnaire included demographics, inclusion and exclusion criteria questions. If the participant did not meet the survey inclusion criteria, they were not allowed access to the remaining questions of the survey, and were re-directed to an end page, thanking them for their time. The participants meeting the inclusion criteria were allowed to complete the survey.

The faculty responses were given identifier numbers as responses were received, and IP addresses were not collected or revealed to maintain anonymity. The data were stored in a password-protected computer, accessible solely by the researcher. Upon the completion of the research project, five years after the successful defense of the researcher's dissertation, the data will be deleted.

### **Data Analysis**

The Faculty Perceptions of Administrative Support survey instrument was available to participating faculty for a total of three weeks. The intent of the researcher was to not interfere with faculty end of semester obligations. Therefore, the study was only available to participants for a total of three weeks. The responses and raw data were collected through the REDCap web service. Participant comments and responses were given identifier numbers to preserve anonymity. The data was accessible solely by the researcher. The data were analyzed utilizing Excel software (Version 14.2.0). Descriptive statistics were calculated based on completed surveys demographic criteria including experience teaching online, current position, years in academia, full-time faculty, part-time faculty, number of courses currently teaching online, and available administrative support for online faculty. Descriptive statistics are appropriate for the survey design to determine the response rate, evaluation of potential bias in responses, and reporting aggregate responses on each question (Creswell, 2015). Frequency distribution charts

were used to provide an illustrative view of the data and describe the results in the online training, online teaching, and administrative support categories. Measures of central tendency (mean, variance and standard deviation) were not used to determine the representation of the respondent characteristics to the total population, due to the limited responses received.

### **Limitations and Delimitations of the Research Design**

#### **Limitations**

Limitations of a study are related to features of the study that affect its generalizability. All studies have limitations (Roberts, 2010). This study was limited by a low response rate. Low response rates may result in a sample that is not representative of the total population thus creating bias (Atif et al., 2012). A non-response bias may result from a low response rate (Atif et al., 2012; Creswell, 2015). Non-response bias occurs when certain types of survey respondents are under-represented due to non-participation, thus an estimation of a population characteristic based on the survey sample may not be the actual population representation (Cheung et al., 2017).

Technical difficulties may limit the participant response rate (Creswell, 2015). According to Creswell (2015), factors limiting the success of web-based surveys are: technological difficulties, security issues and the potential for the web-based surveys to go directly to junk mail. A low response rate for a survey instrument can also be related to psychological reasons and mechanical issues (Atif et al., 2012). Psychological reasons include forgetting to take the survey, too busy to fill out the survey, or feeling that the survey is too long or too personal (Atif et al., 2012). Mechanical issues are Internet access and skill, technical problems and confidentiality and data security concerns (Atif et al., 2012).

The inaccuracy of faculty email addresses can hinder the ability to obtain survey

responses, which is another limitation related to low survey response rates. Unfortunately, the number of faculty members that actually received the survey is unknown, since program directors chose to forward the survey link to faculty and chose to not forward faculty email addresses to the researcher. Thus, the actual number of faculty recruited to participate in this study is also unknown. Other limitations include the participants' responses may not necessarily define the population to which the individuals belong, and may only provide a snapshot measurement of participants' self-reported perceptions (Roberts, 2010).

### **Delimitations**

The specific population from which the sample was drawn delimits this study. Another delimitation of this study was the time restraint and length of the study since the study was only available to participants for a total of three weeks. The intent of the researcher was to not interfere with faculty end of semester obligations. Therefore, the study was only available to participants for a total of three weeks. The inclusion criterion for this study also delimited the study to faculty with online teaching experience only, which decreased the sample size considerably. The researcher is a full-time faculty member at one of the colleges that was included in the study. It is possible that the small selection of participants that work in the same college as the researcher may introduce bias when responding to a colleague's survey based on their personal and/or professional relationship with the researcher.

### **Internal and External Validity**

Internal validity refers to whether the effects observed in a study are due to the manipulation of the independent variable and not some other factor (McLeod, 2013). Thus, there is a causal relationship between the independent and dependent variable (McLeod, 2013). This

study did not attempt to determine a causal relationship between variables. Hence, the emphasis for this study was on the external validity.

External validity refers to the extent to which the results of a study can be generalized to other settings (McLeod, 2013). The external validity for this study concerns the degree to which the results could be applied to other health related disciplines online baccalaureate degree completion programs and in other institutions of higher learning. This study was specifically designed to examine faculty teaching in online dental hygiene and nursing baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State. These programs are geared for working professionals who have already obtained a license to practice (Portillo et. al, 2013). Since licensure and degree requirements vary among health related disciplines and also vary from state-to-state in the US, this study may not be generalizable beyond the specific population from which the sample was drawn.

### **Ethical Issues in the Proposed Study**

Ethical issues for all aspects of this study were carefully considered. There was no conflict of interest as the researcher is not an administrator at any of the institutions where the survey instrument was distributed, and participation in the study was strictly voluntary. An email cover letter clearly delineating the purpose of the study and articulating that participation was strictly voluntary, participants could leave questions blank, leave the study at any time without giving any reason, and that there were no risks or discomfort associated with the study was sent to each recruited participant (Appendix C). The same statement was included in the informed consent, which must be read and accepted by participants prior to having access to the survey instrument. Additionally, the responses and raw data were collected through the REDCap web service. To preserve anonymity, IP addresses and personal identifiable information were not

collected, and participant comments and responses were given identifier numbers. The data were stored in a password-protected computer accessible solely by the researcher, and will be deleted five years after the successful defense of the researcher's dissertation. The researcher ensured compliance with all University regulations.

### **Conclusion and Summary**

The purpose of this descriptive survey research was to investigate the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. It is vital to support faculty in course design and delivery and satisfaction with teaching online (Gazza, 2017; Wingo et al., 2016), as this may assist faculty and administrators in improving online curricula. This study will contribute to the dental hygiene and nursing body of knowledge in the area of online education. Futuristic implications of this study will support additional research done on online education in nursing, dental hygiene, and related allied health fields and serve as a building block for further studies.

Chapter three describes the research methodology including the sample population, materials, and procedures used to gather and analyze the data. Based on the data obtained, chapter four illustrates the analysis of the findings. Chapter five provides a summation of the research, conclusions to the research questions, and recommendations for additional research based on the research findings.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The following chapter presents the results of this descriptive survey research study. The purpose of the study was to investigate the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. Administrative support for this study includes assistance in the form of funding, technology selection, policy creation and implementation, faculty workload, faculty development, and removal of institutional barriers for interdisciplinary cooperation and teamwork (Barefield & Meyer, 2013; Hart, 2008; Legon & Garrett, 2017; Mclean, 2005; Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017; Thompson, 2003; Venable, 2020).

The first section of this chapter will present a brief review of the methodology. The second section will discuss data analysis and show the demographic data and results related to faculty perceptions of administrative support during their online teaching experience. The third section will provide a summary of the findings.

### Methodology

The study explored the perceptions of dental hygiene and nursing faculty with online education in the area of administrative support utilizing the Faculty Perceptions of Administrative Support (FPAS) survey instrument (Appendix A). To investigate the impact of administrative support for dental hygiene and nursing online faculty, the study was directed by the research question:

What administrative supports do faculty members feel best support them for online teaching?

To answer the research question, a descriptive survey research design was conducted. This type of design allows the researcher to study and describe the distribution of one or more



variables, without regard to any causal or other hypotheses (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019). The study did not intend to prove nor disprove any hypotheses, nor seek causation or correlation. Participants for this study included faculty who currently teach in accredited dental hygiene and nursing online baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online.

A purposive criterion sample was utilized in this study. The participants were selected by reviewing the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) and American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) website, where 15 nursing and two dental hygiene baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online, were identified by the researcher. An email was sent to the program directors requesting the email addresses of their online faculty (Appendix B) and also giving the option for program directors to forward to their faculty an email invitation (Appendix C) requesting participation in the study with a link to the FPAS survey instrument. Since all of the program directors that were contacted chose to forward the survey link to their online faculty, it is impossible to know the number of faculty who actually received the participation invitation and survey link.

The FPAS survey instrument containing 25 questions was administered online and data was collected anonymously using the REDCap online survey database web application software, hosted through the University of New England secured platform. The survey was available for three weeks from September 21, 2020 to October 12, 2020. A follow-up e-mail was sent to the program directors requesting that they remind faculty to participate in the study one week after the survey opened.

### **Data Analysis**

The FPAS online survey yielded a response of seven participants total (n=7), of which 2 responses were from dental hygiene online faculty and 5 were from nursing online faculty. The data were analyzed utilizing Excel software (Version 14.2.0). Descriptive statistics were calculated based on completed surveys demographic criteria including experience teaching online, current position, years in academia, full-time faculty, part-time faculty, number of courses currently teaching online, and available administrative support for online faculty. Frequency distribution tables were created to provide an illustrative view of the data. Measures of central tendency (mean, variance and standard deviation) were not used to determine the representation of the respondent characteristics to the total population, due to the limited responses received.

### **Demographic Data**

The first question incorporated inclusion criteria for the study and asked participants if they teach in either a dental hygiene or nursing baccalaureate degree completion program, whether they do or do not currently teach online, and if they do or do not have online teaching experience. To meet the inclusion criteria for this study, participants needed to be currently teaching in an online dental hygiene or nursing baccalaureate degree completion program. If the participant did not meet the survey inclusion criteria, they were not allowed access to the remaining questions of the survey, and were re-directed to an end page, which thanked them for their time. If the participants met the inclusion criteria, they were allowed to complete the survey.

Demographic information including gender, age, part-time/full-time status, years in academia, years teaching online, number of online courses currently teaching, current job rank

and position, tenure status, and online training/technical support available, were addressed in questions 1-11 of the FPAS survey. All of the participant respondents were female (n=7). The majority were age 51 and over (n=4), although two out of seven respondents were in the age range of 31- 40. There was only one part-time adjunct faculty participant. Most faculty participants reported working full-time (n=6), were of the assistant professor rank (n=6), and have taught online for 1-3 years (n=4). There were no tenured faculty respondents, while three out of seven respondents were on a tenure track, and four respondents on a non-tenure track. Additionally, of note, participants have taught in academia either 1-3 years (n=3) or 11+ years (n=4). All of the faculty respondents reported having training and technical support available to teach online (n=7). Table 2 presents the frequency and percentages of the demographic descriptive variables of the study.

**Table 2***Frequency and Percentages of Demographic Descriptive Variables (n=7)*

Variable	Frequency (n=7)	Percent
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	7	100.0
Male	0	0
<b>Age</b>		
Under 30	0	0
31-40	2	28.5
41-50	1	14.2
51-60	2	28.5
Over 60	2	28.5
<b>How would human resources classify your position?</b>		
Assistant professor	6	85.7
Associate professor	0	0
Full professor	0	0
Adjust faculty	1	14.2
Teaching assistant	0	0
Instructor	0	0
Dean or department chair	0	0
President, provost, vice president	0	0
Visiting professor	0	0
Staff	0	0
<b>Do you teach full time or part time?</b>		
Full-time	6	85.7
Part-time	1	14.2
<b>How long have you taught in academia?</b>		
Under 1 year	0	0
1-3 years	3	42.8
4-6 years	0	0
7-10 years	0	0
11+ years	4	57.1
<b>How long have you taught online?</b>		
Under 1 year	1	14.2
1-3 years	4	57.1
4-6 years	1	14.2
7-10 years	1	14.2
11+ years	0	0
<b>How many online courses do you teach?</b>		
1-2 courses	3	42.8
3-5 courses	3	42.8
6-7 courses	1	14.2
8+ courses	0	0
<b>Do you teach in a:</b>		
Dental hygiene baccalaureate degree completion program	2	28.5
Nursing baccalaureate degree completion program	5	71.4
<b>Please indicate your tenure status</b>		
Tenured	0	0
Tenure track	3	42.8
Non tenure track	4	57.1
<b>Is there a training program for faculty who want to teach online at your institution?</b>		
Yes	7	100.0
No	0	0
<b>Is there technical support available to faculty after a course has been developed?</b>		
Yes	7	100.0
No	0	0

### **Faculty Perceptions of Administrative Support**

The FPAS instrument was used to collect descriptive data on faculty perceptions of administrative support needed to teach online. Questions 13-24 focused on experiences with administrative support during online teaching. These questions were presented in a Likert six-point response scale format that required each participant to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with statements designed to indicate their perceptions of administrative support in online education. The survey also provided a space for faculty to comment on their experiences with online teaching (question 12) and changes that they would like to see in administrative support for online faculty (question 25).

Faculty participants responded with a level of agreement ranging from “somewhat agree - strongly agree” to questions 13-16, and to question 21. These questions addressed faculty having adequate online course instructional design support, the ability for online courses to enhance effectively serving students in an educational institution, the availability of training for online course development, and having help desk and technology assistance support (see Table 3). Additionally, faculty respondents agreed, “there is an increased workload and time commitment with online teaching” (question 21). Conversely, participants showed disagreement with the following statements: “Insufficient faculty involvement in course decision making is a concern with online teaching” (question 23), and “I feel there is a lack of department recognition for faculty who teach online at my institution” (question 24).

Participants revealed a divide in their responses with online teaching principles concerning course property rights and ownership (question 19), policies and standards for online courses (question 20), and online teaching workload not valued for promotion and tenure (question 22). Although, four out of seven faculty respondents specified disagreement (two

disagreed and two strongly disagreed) with the statement “there is a lack of control over property rights and online course ownership at my institution”, three respondents expressed a degree of agreement. Similarly, two respondents indicated agreement (one somewhat agreed and one strongly agreed) with the statement “lack of policies and standards for online courses are a concern for faculty who teach online”, while four respondents disagreed and one respondent somewhat disagreed. Moreover, faculty responses to the statement “I feel the workload of online teaching is not valued for promotion and tenure at my institution” varied from agree to strongly disagree (see Table 3). Table 3 presents the frequency and percentages of the 12 items related to online teaching and administrative support in the study.

**Table 3**

*Frequency and Percentages Describing Faculty Perceptions of Administrative Support*

Question	Variable	Frequency (n=7)	Percent
<b>13.</b>	<b>Adequate instructional design support for online course development is available to all faculty members at my institution.</b>		
	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Disagree	0	0
	Somewhat disagree	1	14.2
	Somewhat agree	1	14.2
	Agree	3	42.8
	Strongly agree	2	28.5
<b>14.</b>	<b>Online instruction enhances my institution's ability to effectively serve students.</b>		
	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Disagree	0	0
	Somewhat disagree	1	14.2
	Somewhat agree	1	14.2
	Agree	1	14.2
	Strongly agree	4	57.1
<b>15.</b>	<b>I received training in online course development.</b>		
	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Disagree	0	0
	Somewhat disagree	0	0
	Somewhat agree	0	0
	Agree	5	71.4
	Strongly agree	2	28.5
<b>16.</b>	<b>Faculty at our institution have adequate access to support services (help desk, technology assistance).</b>		
	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Disagree	0	0
	Somewhat disagree	0	0
	Somewhat agree	1	14.2
	Agree	2	28.5
	Strongly agree	4	57.1
<b>17.</b>	<b>I feel I need more training with new tools added to learning management systems for online course development.</b>		
	Strongly disagree	1	14.2
	Disagree	2	28.5
	Somewhat disagree	1	14.2
	Somewhat agree	1	14.2
	Agree	0	0
	Strongly agree	2	28.5
<b>18.</b>	<b>I feel there is a lack of faculty incentives for teaching online courses.</b>		
	Strongly disagree	1	14.2
	Disagree	2	28.5
	Somewhat disagree	0	0
	Somewhat agree	2	28.5
	Agree	0	0
	Strongly agree	2	28.5
<b>19.</b>	<b>I feel there is a lack of control over property rights and online course ownership at my institution.</b>		
Strongly disagree	0	0	

Table 3 (Continued)

	Disagree	2	28.5
	Somewhat disagree	2	28.5
	Somewhat agree	1	14.2
	Agree	1	14.2
	Strongly agree	1	14.2
<b>20.</b>	<b>Lack of policies and standards for online courses are a concern for faculty who teach online.</b>		
	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Disagree	4	57.1
	Somewhat disagree	1	14.2
	Somewhat agree	1	14.2
	Agree	0	0
	Strongly agree	1	14.2
<b>21.</b>	<b>I feel there is an increased workload and time commitment with online teaching.</b>		
	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Disagree	0	0
	Somewhat disagree	0	0
	Somewhat agree	3	42.8
	Agree	2	28.5
	Strongly agree	2	28.5
<b>22.</b>	<b>I feel the workload of online teaching is not valued for promotion and tenure at my institution.</b>		
	Strongly disagree	2	28.5
	Disagree	2	28.5
	Somewhat disagree	1	14.2
	Somewhat agree	1	14.2
	Agree	1	14.2
	Strongly agree	0	0
<b>23.</b>	<b>Insufficient faculty involvement in course decision making is a concern with online teaching.</b>		
	Strongly disagree	1	14.2
	Disagree	2	28.5
	Somewhat disagree	3	42.8
	Somewhat agree	0	0
	Agree	0	0
	Strongly agree	1	14.2
<b>24.</b>	<b>I feel there is a lack of department recognition for faculty who teach online at my institution.</b>		
	Strongly disagree	1	14.2
	Disagree	4	57.1
	Somewhat disagree	2	28.5
	Somewhat agree	0	0
	Agree	0	0
	Strongly agree	0	0

### Online Teaching Experiences and Administrative Support

Faculty responses showed those with more online teaching experience agreed there is a lack of control over property rights and online course ownership, a lack of policies and standards for online courses, and that the workload of online teaching is not valued for promotion and



tenure. Faculty participants with 4-6 years and 7-10 years of online teaching experience (n=2) agreed with questions 19, 20, and 22 regarding a lack of property rights/ownership, lack of online course policies/standards, and online teaching workload not valued for tenure and promotion. In the space provided for comments pertaining to changes faculty would like to see concerning administrative support one faculty member stated “would like it recognized that online courses do carry a heavier workload...” and another respondent confirmed “more standardization for workload for faculty...at college there is more of a lack of recognition.” However, one faculty member with 1-3 years of online teaching experience voiced agreement with question 19, but disagreed with question 20 and 22, while the rest of the participants teaching online from 1-3 years (n=3), and under one year (n=1) expressed a degree of disagreement with questions 19, 20, and 22. Notably, two out of the five faculty participants with 0-3 years of online teaching experience have been teaching in academia for 11+ years. Equally, of note, the respondent teaching 4-6 years online was a nursing faculty member and the participant teaching 7-10 years online was a dental hygiene faculty member. Table 4 presents the responses of faculty teaching 0-3 years online in conjunction with faculty teaching 4+ years online with questions 19, 20, and 22 regarding lack of property rights/ownership, lack of online course policies/standards, and online teaching workload not valued for tenure and promotion.

**Table 4***Faculty Teaching Online 0-3 Years and Faculty Teaching Online 4+ Years*

Question		0-3 Years Teaching Online (n=5)	4-6 Years Teaching Online (n=1) Nursing	7-10 Years Teaching Online (n=1) Dental Hygiene
<b>19.</b>	<b>I feel there is a lack of control over property rights and online course ownership at my institution.</b>			
	Strongly disagree	0	0	0
	Disagree	2	0	0
	Somewhat disagree	2	0	0
	Somewhat agree	0	0	1
	Agree	0	1	0
	Strongly agree	1	0	0
<b>20.</b>	<b>Lack of policies and standards for online courses are a concern for faculty who teach online.</b>			
	Strongly disagree	0	0	0
	Disagree	4	0	0
	Somewhat disagree	1	0	0
	Somewhat agree	0	0	1
	Agree	0	0	0
	Strongly agree	0	1	0
<b>22.</b>	<b>I feel the workload of online teaching is not valued for promotion and tenure at my institution.</b>			
	Strongly disagree	1	0	0
	Disagree	3	0	0
	Somewhat disagree	1	0	0
	Somewhat agree	0	1	0
	Agree	0	0	1
	Strongly agree	0	0	0

The results revealed the majority of the participants in this study were over 50 years of age, specifically in the range 51-60 (n=2) and over 60 (n=2). These same participants (n=4) have been teaching in academia for 11+ years. However, one participant has been teaching online less than one year, another from 1-3 years, and two participants teaching online 4-6 and 7-10 years respectively. Three participants in this age group (51-60 and over 60) agreed with question 17 “I feel I need more training with new tools added to learning management systems for online course development.” One participant age 51-60 and one participant over 60 “strongly agreed” with question 17. On the other hand participants in the age range 31-40 (n=2) disagreed with question 17. Similarly, one faculty member in the 51-60 age range disagreed with question 17,

but when asked to comment on their overall online teaching experience (question 12) the participant affirmed “more work learning how to “engage” the students, but I like the flexibility...” Another respondent in the over 60-age group commented, “If the technology works, it is very efficient and fun. If not, it is very stressful”, and “I miss the one-on-one time with the IT and AV team, now they send links...it makes me very anxious to have to spend long hours on my own trying to remedy a problem.” Table 5 presents faculty responses to question 17 regarding training with new learning management tools in the 51-60 and over 60 age group.

**Table 5**

*Faculty age 51-60 /Over 60 and Learning Management Systems Tools Training*

Question		Age 51-60 (n=2)	Age Over 60 (n=2)
17.	<b>I feel I need more training with new tools added to learning management systems for online course development.</b>		
	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Disagree	1	0
	Somewhat disagree	0	0
	Somewhat agree	0	1
	Agree	0	0
	Strongly agree	1	1

### Research Question Findings

This study investigated the perceptions of dental hygiene and nursing faculty with online education in the area of administrative support utilizing the FPAS survey instrument. The study was guided by the research question what administrative supports do faculty members feel best support them for online teaching? Questions 13-24 of the FPAS survey addressed the research question and provided answers describing which types of support online faculty in dental hygiene and nursing baccalaureate degree completion programs felt they were lacking. Questions 13, 15, and 17 highlighted administrative supports related to online course development. Despite the fact that, all of the participants (n=7) reported having received online course development training and six out of seven respondents stated having

adequate online course design support, three respondents felt they needed more training with course management tools. Questions 18, 23, and 24 addressed faculty incentives, decision-making, and recognition for teaching online. Faculty respondents felt supported with recognition at the department level (n=7), and course decision-making was not a concern (n=6). Yet, four out of seven respondents agreed there is a lack of faculty incentives for online teaching. Questions 19, 20, 21, and 22 focused on policy and standardization, property rights and course ownership, and workload and time commitment valued for online teaching. Faculty with 4 years or more of online teaching experience (n=2) were concerned with the level of support related to policy and standardization, property rights and course ownership, and workload and time commitment valued for online teaching at their institution. On the other hand faculty with 0-3 years of online teaching experience (n=5) did not express concern. Lastly, all of the respondents (n=7) reported having adequate support services in the form of technology assistance/help desk (question 16), and six out of seven respondents felt online instruction facilitates the institution's ability to effectively serve students (question 14).

### **Summary of the Findings**

This study was conducted seeking to investigate the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. Demographic information and data collected from the FPAS survey instrument were presented in this chapter. Descriptive statistics and qualitative comments provided insight concerning the perceptions of dental hygiene and nursing online faculty with administrative support for online teaching.

The results showed the faculty members represented in this study were female (n=7), mostly of the assistant professor rank (n=6), teaching in academia for either 1-3 years (n=3) or 11+ years (n=4), with 0-3 years (n=5), 4-6 years (n=1), and 7-10 years (n=1) of online teaching experience, and mostly over 50 years of age (n=4). In response to the research question regarding the types of administrative supports faculty members feel best support them for online teaching; the data revealed, all of the faculty respondents (n=7) received online course development training and reported having adequate support services in the form of technology assistance/help desk. Yet, three out of seven respondents felt they needed more training with course management tools. Additionally, “seasoned” faculty with 11+ years in academia and teaching online 4 years or more (n=4) felt there is a lack of support concerning policy and standardization, property rights and course ownership, and workload and time commitment valued for online teaching at their institution.

In conclusion, this chapter provided the results and data analysis findings of this study. The research question guiding the study regarding the types of administrative supports faculty members feel best support them for online teaching was answered. The study findings will be discussed in greater detail in chapter five.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION/SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a brief review of the research question and summary of responses, interpretation and alignment of findings with literature implications and recommendations for action, and recommendations for further study. The adult learning theory frames the discussion of findings and implications for online education.

Institutions of higher learning across the nation are using online courses to provide accessible education to students of multiple disciplines (Allen & Seaman, 2015). However, few studies have examined the perceptions of faculty in dental hygiene and nursing baccalaureate degree completion programs with online education and administrative support. Dental hygiene and nursing Bachelor's degree completion programs typically do not have clinical requirements, as these programs serve as an opportunity for licensed working dental hygienists and nurses to attain an advanced degree (Gwozdek et al., 2011; Portillo et al., 2013). Therefore, dental hygiene and nursing Bachelor's degree completion programs offer most of their curricula online (American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), 2019; Portillo et al., 2013).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the types of administrative support systems needed for dental hygiene and nursing faculty to teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. For this study "administrative support" includes assistance in the form of funding, technology selection, policy creation and implementation, faculty workload, faculty development, and removal of institutional barriers for interdisciplinary cooperation and teamwork (Barefield & Meyer, 2013; Hart, 2008; Legon & Garrett, 2017; Mclean, 2005; Pomerantz & Brooks, 2017; Thompson, 2003; Venable, 2020). Examining the types of support preferred by dental hygiene and nursing online faculty may assist faculty and administrators in improving online curricula.

## **Review of Research Question and Summary of Responses**

To investigate the impact of administrative support for dental hygiene and nursing online faculty, the study was directed by the following research question:

What administrative supports do faculty members feel best support them for online teaching?

A descriptive survey research design was conducted to answer the research question. This type of design allows the researcher to study and describe the distribution of one or more variables, without regard to any causal or other hypotheses (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019). This study did not intend to prove nor disprove any hypotheses, nor seek causation or correlation. Participants for this study included faculty who currently teach in accredited dental hygiene and nursing online baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online.

### **Summary of Responses**

A total of 17 accredited baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State (15 nursing and two dental hygiene), which offer at least 50% of their curriculum online were identified by the researcher. An email was sent to the program directors requesting the email addresses of their online faculty (Appendix B) and giving the option for program directors to forward to their faculty an email invitation (Appendix C) requesting participation in the study with a link to the Faculty Perceptions of Administrative Support (FPAS) survey instrument. Since all program directors that were contacted chose to forward the survey link to their online faculty, it is impossible to know the number of faculty who actually received the participation invitation and survey link. The survey was available for three weeks from September 21, 2020 to

October 12, 2020. A follow-up e-mail was sent to the program directors requesting that they remind faculty to participate in the study one week after the survey opened.

The FPAS online survey yielded a response of seven participants total (n=7), of which two responses were from dental hygiene online faculty and five were from nursing online faculty. The results showed the faculty members represented in this study were female (n=7), mostly of the assistant professor rank (n=6), teaching in academia for either 1-3 years (n=3) or 11+ years (n=4), with 0-3 years (n=5), 4-6 years (n=1), and 7-10 years (n=1) of online teaching experience, and mostly over 50 years of age (n=4). In response to the research question regarding the types of administrative supports faculty members feel best support them for online teaching; the data revealed, all of the faculty respondents (n=7) received online course development training and reported having adequate support services in the form of technology assistance/help desk. Yet, three out of seven respondents felt they needed more training with course management tools. Additionally, faculty with 11+ years in academia and teaching online 4 years or more (n=4) felt there is a lack of support concerning policy and standardization, property rights and course ownership, and workload and time commitment valued for online teaching at their institution.

### **Interpretation, Alignment of Findings With Literature, Recommendations for Action**

Few studies have been conducted that examine the types of administrative support systems preferred by dental hygiene and nursing faculty who teach in baccalaureate degree completion programs in New York State, which offer more than 50% of their curriculum online. According to Seaman et al. (2018) the number of students exclusively taking face-to-face classes on campus has decreased by over one million from 2012 - 2016. Subsequently, colleges also face institutional and instructor obstacles to successful implementation, maintenance, and growth of



online programs (Palvia et al., 2018; Venable, 2020). One of the most significant challenges administrators report schools are facing when offering online programs is finding instructional designers and faculty members that are compatible to market demands (Venable, 2020). Other challenges include faculty training, technology infrastructure, and help desk staffing (Venable, 2020). Correspondingly, the data from this study showed that three out of seven faculty participants felt they needed more training. Specifically, dental hygiene and nursing faculty respondents of this study agreed with the statement “I feel I need more training with new tools added to learning management systems for online course development.” Similarly, a comparable study conducted in the state of Florida examined dental hygiene faculty unmet needs and found that faculty felt updating technology skills was an unmet need during professional development programs, and 55.33% of faculty respondents stated that using emerging technologies in the classroom was a high need and priority for dental hygiene faculty (Behar-Horenstein et al., 2016).

Faculty responses in this study showed those with 4 years or more online teaching experience (n=2) felt there is a lack of control over property rights and online course ownership, a lack of policies and standards for online courses, and that the workload of online teaching is not valued for promotion and tenure at their institution. In a national survey conducted by the American Dental Educators Association (ADEA, 2019) for allied dental programs the most common faculty incentives for tenure were job security (88.5%), professional development (47.4%), more control over responsibilities (41.0%), and more control over schedule (32.7%). Moreover, the factors most often considered when awarding tenure included, teaching (89.4%), service to the profession/institution (80.1%), and length of service (52.8%). In the same vein, this study found that dental hygiene and nursing faculty with 11+ years in academia and teaching

online for 4 years or more agreed the workload of online teaching is not valued for promotion and tenure at their institution. Additionally, four out of seven faculty respondents agreed there is a lack of faculty incentives for online teaching.

Other studies had similar findings concerning issues related to policy, faculty compensation for workload, and course ownership (Chow & Croxton, 2017; Herman, 2013; Hoyt & Oviatt, 2013; Kara & Yildirim, 2020). Hoyt and Oviatt (2013) surveyed administrators at doctorate-granting universities nationwide to determine organizational governance and institutional policies and practices regarding online courses, faculty incentives to develop and teach online, and course ownership. The study revealed 82% of universities gave faculty additional compensation to develop online courses, 94% provided faculty development training, and 84% had intellectual property policy in place or were developing one (Hoyt & Oviatt, 2013). The researchers also found that although these practices existed, they were not always implemented campus wide (Hoyt & Oviatt, 2013). Equally, it could be suggested the dental hygiene and nursing online faculty participants in this study may be unaware of the existing property rights and online course ownership policies and standards for online courses at their institution or these policies may exist but are not instituted campus wide.

### **The Adult Learning Theory**

The adult learning theory is comprised of the four principles characterized by adult learning, coined andragogy by Knowles (1984). The principles state adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction, experiences (including mistakes) provide the basis for learning activities, adults are most interested in learning subjects that have impacts on their job and personal life, and adult learning is problem centered rather than content oriented (Knowles, 1984). Faculty play a vital role in adult learning. On the other hand, faculty members

are also learning new methods of instruction delivery as they become more seasoned in their craft. Online education adds another layer to the learning dynamics as technology is constantly changing.

All faculty respondents of this study (n=7) received online course development training and reported having adequate support services in the form of technology assistance/help desk. Yet, three out of seven respondents still felt they needed more training with course management tools. Noticeably, online faculty are interested in learning more about the tools to teach online as this will effect and impact their teaching. Moreover, the addition of newer technologies and course management tools could become problematic for faculty. One faculty respondent of this study commented, “If the technology works, it is very efficient and fun. If not, it is very stressful”, and “I miss the one-on-one time with the IT and AV team, now they send links...it makes me very anxious to have to spend long hours on my own trying to remedy a problem.”

The adult learning theory lends itself to understanding how adults learn. In this study, the framework also serves as a lens linking higher education support administered to faculty adult learners and their perceived preparedness to teach online. Administrators will need to consider what skills faculty feel they need to teach in an online learning environment and think about the need for faculty to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.

### **Recommendations for Action**

The growing popularity of online education has mandated institutions of higher education to develop and implement policies related to administrative support and governance of online courses, incentives and compensation for course development and teaching, recognition for tenure and promotion, and ownership of developed courses (Chow & Croxton, 2017; Hoyt & Oviatt, 2013; Kara & Yildirim, 2020). The American Association of University Professors

(AAUP) stipulate faculty members should be given rights to the future use of courseware they have created or developed (Zhang & Carr-Chellman, 2006). However, existing research suggests policies vary among institutions as to whether there is a joint ownership or faculty or the institutions own the course content (Zhang & Carr-Chellman, 2006; Hoyt & Oviatt, 2013; Kara & Yildirim, 2020). Moreover, Hoyt and Oviatt (2013) found that, in conjunction with faculty workload adjustments and monetary incentives, the administration at doctorate-granting universities supported online teaching with on-campus workshops (94%), professional course designers (84%), and provided new software for teaching or developing online courses (54%). Thus, the recommendation for action consists of the implementation of faculty incentives for online teaching, including workload valued for tenure and additional compensation, online education policy that addresses intellectual property rights and course ownership, and increased faculty training and professional development with new tools added to learning management systems for online course development.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

This research has provided valuable information on the administrative supports needed by dental hygiene and nursing online faculty in baccalaureate degree completion programs offering 50% of their curriculum online in the state of New York. Unfortunately, this study was delimited by the small amount of survey respondents, possibly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the amount of information gathered was limited. Another limitation of the investigation was the time restraint and length of the study. Furthermore, the specific population from which the sample was drawn delimited the results of this study.

In acknowledgment of these limitations, following are recommendations for future study:

1. Include a larger sample of dental hygiene and nursing online faculty from across the U.S. in the study.
2. Implement an interview portion in the study for richer qualitative assessment of faculty experiences and perceptions with administrative supports and online teaching.
3. Future studies should allow more time for survey responses and for the possibility of gathering more information by extending the availability of the survey for a longer period of time.
4. Future studies should include faculty from other allied health professions offering online baccalaureate degree completion programs, to allow for diversification of population groups.
5. Implementation of a longitudinal study to assess the effects of continuous faculty training with technology tools.

### **Conclusion**

The results of this study reflect how online faculty in dental hygiene and nursing baccalaureate degree completion programs describe their perceptions and experiences with online education in the area of administrative support. Examining the impact of administrative support for dental hygiene and nursing online faculty can enable administrators to meet the needs of online faculty and increase teaching effectiveness in the online learning environment. Moreover, understanding the challenges that online faculty face with faculty incentives for online teaching, workload valued for tenure and additional compensation, policy that addresses intellectual property rights and course ownership, and increased faculty training and professional development with technology tools for online course development will enable institutions of higher education to develop strategies for continuous administrative support and ultimately

improve online teaching and learning. The objective of this study was to provide institutions of higher learning with some insight and aid in reaching the goal of improving dental hygiene and nursing online programs.

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## Appendix A: Faculty Perceptions of Administrative Support Survey

### Demographic Information:

1. What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Prefer not to disclose

2. Please indicate your age range.

- a. Under 30
- b. 31-40
- c. 41-50
- d. 51-60
- e. Over 60

3. How would Human Resources classify your position?

- a. Assistant Professor
- b. Associate Professor
- c. Full Professor
- d. Adjunct Faculty
- e. Teaching Assistant
- f. Instructor
- g. Dean or Department Chair
- h. President, Provost, Vice President
- i. Visiting Professor
- j. Staff

4. Do you teach full time or part time?

- a. Full-time
- b. Part-time

5. How long have you taught in academia?

- a. Under 1 year
- b. 1-3 years
- c. 4-6 years
- d. 7-10 years
- e. 11+ years

6. How long have you taught online?

- a. Under 1 year
- b. 1-3 years
- c. 4-6 years
- d. 7-10 years
- e. 11+ years

7. How many online courses do you teach?

- a. 1-2 courses
- b. 3-5 courses
- c. 6-7 courses
- d. 8+ courses

8. Do you teach in a:

- a. Dental Hygiene baccalaureate degree completion program
- b. Nursing baccalaureate degree completion program

9. Please indicate your tenure status.

- a. Tenured
- b. Tenure track
- c. Non tenure track

10. Is there a training program for faculty who want to teach online at your institution?

- a. Yes
- b. No

11. Is there technical support available to faculty after a course has been developed?

- a. Yes
- b. No

12. Please comment on your overall experience with online teaching:

Please indicate with an X your answer to the following statements regarding administrative support (choose only one answer):

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree
13. Adequate instructional design support for online course development is available to all faculty members at my institution.						
14. Online instruction enhances my institution's ability to effectively serve students.						
15. I received training in online course development.						
16. Faculty at our institution have adequate access to support services (help desk, technology assistance).						
17. I feel I need more training with new tools added to learning management systems for online course development.						
18. I feel there is a lack of faculty incentives for teaching online courses.						
19. I feel there is a lack of control over property rights and online						

course ownership at my institution.						
20. Lack of policies and standards for online courses are a concern for faculty who teach online.						
21. I feel there is an increased workload and time commitment with online teaching.						
22. I feel the workload of online teaching is not valued for promotion and tenure at my institution.						
23. Insufficient faculty involvement in course decision-making is a concern with online teaching.						
24. I feel there is a lack of department recognition for faculty who teach online at my institution.						

25. Please comment on the changes that you would like to see in administrative support for online faculty at your institution:

### **Appendix B: Request for Faculty E-mail**

My name is Margarita Rivera. I am a graduate student at the University of New England. I am seeking your assistance in the pursuit of my doctoral degree by requesting the faculty e-mail addresses of faculty who teach online in your department at your institution, with the intention of inviting them to participate in my research study. My dissertation topic is: The Impact of Administrative Support for Dental Hygiene and Nursing Online Faculty. The purpose of my research is to investigate specifically the impact administrative support has on dental hygiene and nursing faculty with online teaching.

I understand privacy is important, and assure you that the sole purpose use for the e-mail addresses are for the reasons previously stated. Nonetheless, if you are unable to provide these e-mail addresses then I respectfully request that you please forward the attached consent cover letter with survey link to your faculty to facilitate their voluntary participation in my study.

Your support in this matter is greatly appreciated. It is my belief that the findings in this study will contribute to the dental hygiene and nursing body of knowledge in the area of online learning and assist faculty and administrators in improving the delivery of online education.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, you may contact me, Margarita Rivera via e-mail at [mrivera6@une.edu](mailto:mrivera6@une.edu).

Thank you for your time,

Margarita Rivera RDH, MSDH

## Appendix C: Consent Cover Letter

### Consent Form

#### University of New England, Department of Education/Doctor of Education

Title of the Study: The Impact of Administrative Support for Dental Hygiene and Nursing Online Faculty

Researcher Name(s): Margarita Rivera (718) 791-6172 [mrivera6@une.edu](mailto:mrivera6@une.edu)

#### Study Background

The general purpose of this research is to investigate the impact administrative support has on dental hygiene and nursing faculty with online teaching. Participants in this study will be asked to click on the link provided and complete the online survey. Findings from this study will be presented in a graduate student dissertation and may be used to support additional studies and/or published in scholarly journals.

#### Possible Risks and Benefits of Taking Part in this Study

- The probability and magnitude of harm/discomfort anticipated as a result of participating in this study are not greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.
- The potential benefits of this study include serving as a building block for future studies regarding online education in dental hygiene, nursing, and related allied health fields, contributing to the dental hygiene and nursing body of knowledge in the area of online learning, and assisting faculty and administrators in improving the delivery of online education.

#### Your Rights as a Study Participant

I understand that:

- My participation in this study will take approximately 15 minutes.
- My participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and I may leave any question blank, leave the study at any time, without giving any reason.
- I will not be compensated for participating in this study.

My responses will be recorded anonymously, and will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. The data will be stored in a password-protected computer, study, you may contact the researcher Margarita Rivera at [mrivera6@une.edu](mailto:mrivera6@une.edu).

If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Ella Benson at [ebenson2@une.edu](mailto:ebenson2@une.edu).

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call Mary Bachman DeSilva, Sc.D., Chair of the UNE Institutional Review Board at (207) 221-4567 or [irb@une.edu](mailto:irb@une.edu)

Please print a copy of this consent form for your records.

Click the checkbox to the left to indicate that you are 18 years of age or older, you have read and understand your rights, and that you consent to voluntarily participate in this online research study. Please click on the continue button below to access the survey and participate in the study.

### Appendix D: Permission to Use Survey Instrument

**From:** Stan George Guidera <guidera@bgsu.edu>  
**To:** margarita rivera <maggiedental@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 22, 2013 3:00 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Permission to use survey instrument

Fine with me

Stan Guidera

On Mar 22, 2013, at 11:02 AM, "margarita rivera" <[maggiedental@yahoo.com](mailto:maggiedental@yahoo.com)> wrote:

Dear Dr. Guidera,

My name is Margarita Rivera. I am currently pursuing my Master's degree in Dental Hygiene with a specialization in education at the University of Bridgeport. My thesis topic is: "Distance Education in Dental Hygiene: Faculty Perceptions and Experiences with Online Baccalaureate Degree Completion Programs and Master's Degree Programs".

The purpose of my research is to investigate specifically the experiences of dental hygiene faculty with distance education and their perceptions of online teaching.

I have read your study entitled: "Perceptions Of The Effectiveness Of Online Instruction In Terms Of The Seven Principles Of Effective Undergraduate Education"

I am requesting permission to adapt portions of your survey instrument as a foundation for the development of my research instrument.

It is my belief that the findings of this research will support additional studies done on distance education in dental hygiene and related allied health fields, and serve as a building block for future studies.

If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,  
Margarita Rivera  
[margarir@bridgeport.edu](mailto:margarir@bridgeport.edu)  
[maggiedental@yahoo.com](mailto:maggiedental@yahoo.com)

Ms. Rivera,

I grant you permission to adapt some of the questions from the survey I constructed for my dissertation titled, "Online Delivery at Traditional Institutions: Faculty Concerns and Knowledge about Intellectual Property Rights". I request that you give me credit for the items that you use for your thesis.

If you need anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me. Best wishes with your thesis!  
Respectfully,



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La Toya M. Hart, Ph. D.  
 Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment  
 Alcorn State University  
 1000 ASU Drive #959  
 Alcorn State, MS 39096

- accessible solely by the researcher, and research reports will only present findings on a group basis, without any personal identifying information.

For questions or more information concerning this  
 601.877.4187 (voice)  
 601.877.6319 (fax)  
 lhart@alcorn.edu

**From:** margarita rivera [mailto:maggiedental@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 22, 2013 10:35 AM  
**To:** LaToya M. Hart  
**Subject:** Fw: Permission to use survey instrument

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** margarita rivera <maggiedental@yahoo.com>  
**To:** "latoya.hart@usm.edu" <latoya.hart@usm.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 22, 2013 10:51 AM  
**Subject:** Permission to use survey instrument

Dear Dr. Hart,

My name is Margarita Rivera. I am currently pursuing my Master's degree in Dental Hygiene with a specialization in education at the University of Bridgeport. My thesis topic is: "Distance Education in Dental Hygiene: Faculty Perceptions and Experiences with Online Baccalaureate Degree Completion Programs and Master's Degree Programs".

The purpose of my research is to investigate specifically the experiences of dental hygiene faculty with distance education and their perceptions of online teaching.

I have read your dissertation entitled: "Online Delivery At Traditional Institutions: Faculty Concerns And Knowledge About Intellectual Property Rights"

I am requesting permission to adapt portions of your survey instrument as a foundation for the development of my research instrument.

It is my belief that the findings of this research will support additional studies done on distance education in dental hygiene and related allied health fields, and serve as a building block for future studies.

If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,  
 Margarita Rivera  
[margarir@bridgeport.edu](mailto:margarir@bridgeport.edu)

[maggiedental@yahoo.com](mailto:maggiedental@yahoo.com)

Hello Maggie,

You have my permission to adapt any portions of my survey instrument for use in your research. Advancing the body of knowledge in this area is critical to our profession and the field of education and I wish you the best in your pursuit of this research.

Dr. Tsokris

Dr. Maureen Tsokris  
Associate Professor/Assistant Chair  
Department of Dental Hygiene  
631-420-2732

Farmingdale State College  
2350 Broadhollow Road  
Farmingdale, New York 11735

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From: margarita rivera [[maggiedental@yahoo.com](mailto:maggiedental@yahoo.com)]

Sent: Friday, March 22, 2013 11:53 AM

To: Maureen Tsokris

Subject: Permission to use instrument survey

Dear Dr. Tsokris,

My name is Margarita Rivera. I am currently pursuing my Master's degree in Dental Hygiene with a specialization in education at the University of Bridgeport. My thesis topic is: "Distance Education in Dental Hygiene: Faculty Perceptions and Experiences with Online Baccalaureate Degree Completion Programs and Master's Degree Programs".

The purpose of my research is to investigate specifically the experiences of dental hygiene faculty with distance education and their perceptions of online teaching.

I have read your dissertation entitled: "Distance Education In Dental Hygiene Bachelor Of Science Degree Completion Programs: As Perceived By Students And Faculty".

I am requesting permission to adapt portions of your survey instrument as a foundation for the development of my research instrument.

It is my belief that the findings of this research will support additional studies done on distance education in dental hygiene and related allied health fields, and serve as a building block for future studies.

If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Margarita Rivera

[margarir@bridgeport.edu](mailto:margarir@bridgeport.edu)

[maggiedental@yahoo.com](mailto:maggiedental@yahoo.com)