

While researchers have devoted considerable effort to identifying traits, characteristics, values, affective states, and cognitive styles that are associated with innovation and entrepreneurial success, the particular competencies that support innovation and entrepreneurship remain elusive. Determining such competencies is further complicated by a failure among scholars to distinguish business skills from entrepreneurial skills. That is, both the academic literature and educational programs in entrepreneurship have tended to emphasize the need for competence at such general business functions as selling, producing, bookkeeping, supervising employees, coordinating logistics, arranging financing, and pricing, among. While such skills are vital for the day-to-day operations of any business, they do not address the unique requirements of the innovation and entrepreneurial context. It is our contention that a distinct set of competencies are critical for innovative action, and that they must be developed in concert with the more general business competencies mentioned above.

Our purpose in the present research is to develop further insights into the competencies that are most critical for innovation and entrepreneurial success among nursing managers. Progress in identifying, defining and measuring key competencies has valuable implications for both the advancement of innovation education and improving innovation practice. Competencies directly correlate with job performance, can be measured against standards, and can be improved with training. As a result, they can have significant implications for what is taught in innovation courses and training programs, how it is taught, and how learning outcomes are assessed.

A two-phase research methodology was employed. In Phase I, a Delphi study was employed to identify while the current study involved adaptation and validation of the competence model for the nursing profession. The more specific aims were to:

1. Validate the innovation competence model for nursing management
2. Assess the innovation competence of nurse managers
3. Identify most significant innovation competence gaps among nurse managers.
4. Develop and validate an innovation orientation tool for health care organizations

More than 1000 senior nursing managers and faculty members were surveyed with a response rate of over 30%. The data are currently being analyzed.