

VARIABLES THAT INFLUENCE RETENTION IN RN-BS STUDENTS

A MULTISITE LONGITUDINAL STUDY

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Objective

Identify specific academic, environmental, professional integration and socialization variables that RN to BS completion program students perceive as influencing retention in their programs of study.

Background



Patients who are cared for by baccalaureate degree nurses have improved health outcomes and decreased length of hospital stays.



The Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommends that nurses achieve higher levels of education to ensure the delivery of safe, patient-centered care across a variety of healthcare settings.



Currently, 45% RNs are educated at the associate degree level in the United States.

Background

Having registered nurses continue their education brings personnel benefits to facilities

- increased retention
- better incentives to provide excellent care
- inspiring changes in attitude and enhanced collaboration

Legislation has been considered in several states that would require a BS degree within 10 years of receiving the RN license

- New York State “BSN in 10” (S6768/A1842) bill was recently signed

RN to BS Students

- ▶ Older than traditional nursing students
- ▶ Employed
- ▶ Families
- ▶ Balance stress of work, school and families



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Variables Influencing Student Retention



FRIENDS WITHIN
CLASSES



FRIENDS OUTSIDE
OF SCHOOL



CHILDCARE
ARRANGEMENTS



FAMILY
RESPONSIBILITIES

Variables Influencing Student Retention



FAMILY
EMOTIONAL
SUPPORT



ACADEMIC
SUPPORT SERVICES

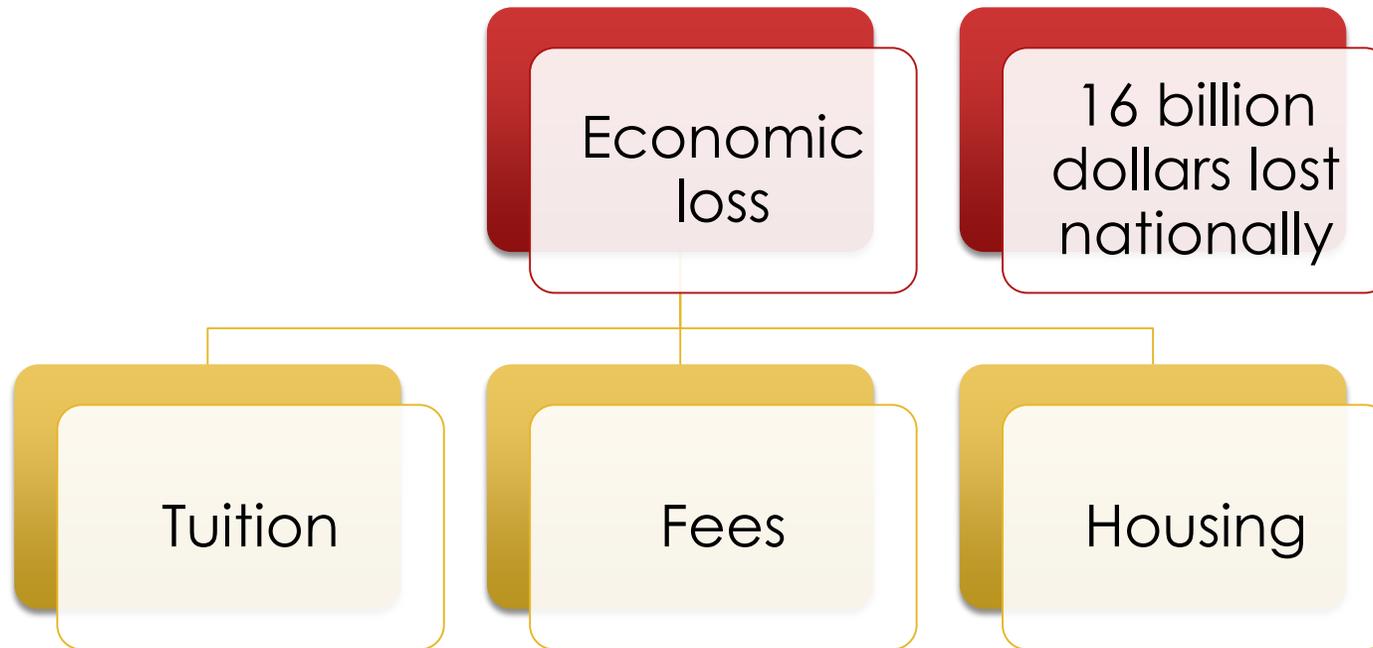


JOB
RESPONSIBILITIES



FINANCES

Impact of Attrition on Colleges



Identification of Factors Influencing RN to BS Student Retention



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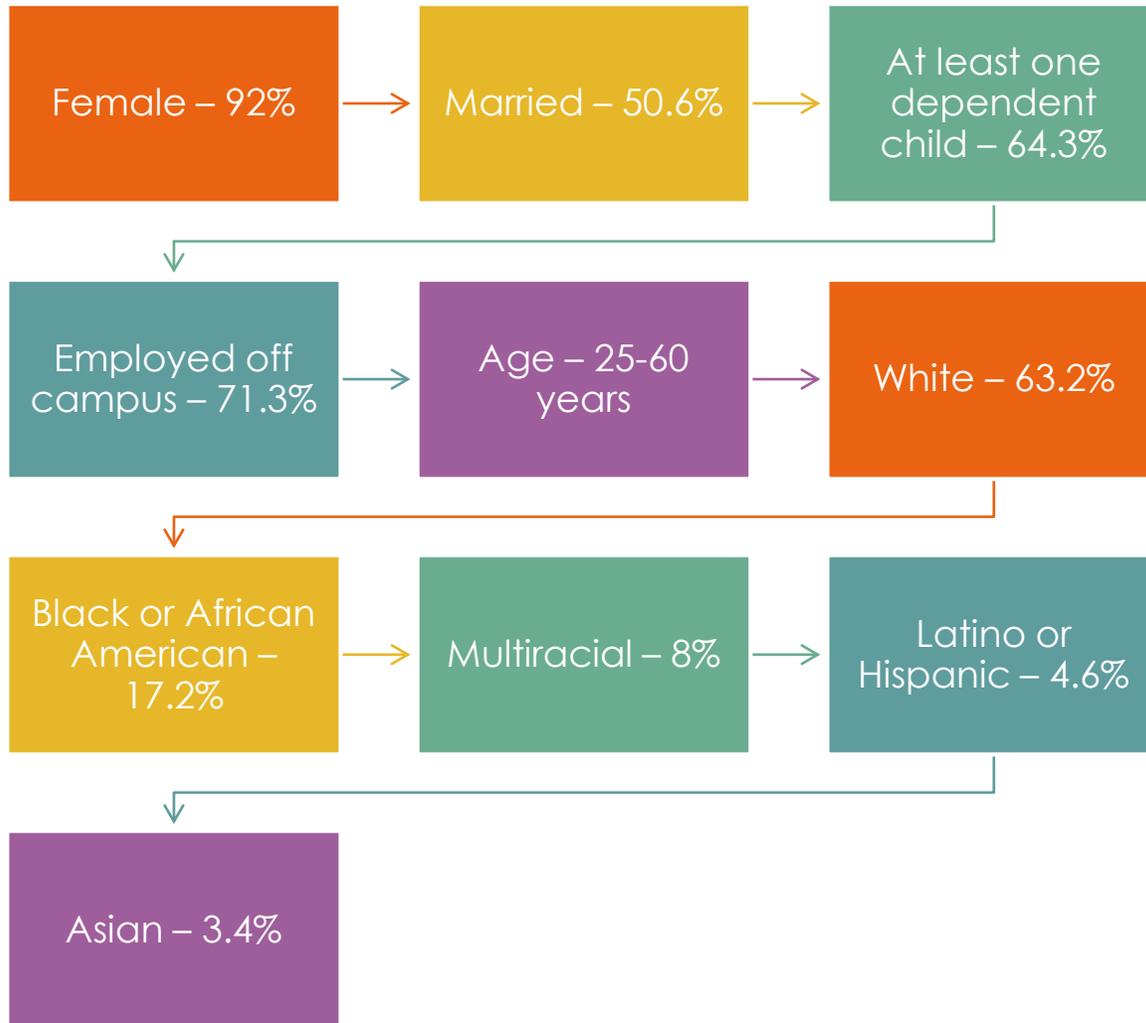
- ▶ Jeffreys developed a model for examining the multidimensional factors that affect RN to BS nursing student retention
- ▶ Factors were identified as restrictive or supportive of student retention
- ▶ It is important to identify which of these variables are perceived as supportive or restrictive by RN-BS Completion students to support retention

Methodology

- ▶ A longitudinal, non-experimental, pre-test, post-test, descriptive research design
- ▶ The sample consisted of RN-BS completion students enrolled in either one public or one private college in the Northeastern United States
- ▶ Using purposive sampling, participants were solicited during the first two weeks of their first semester in an RN-BS completion program.
- ▶ Data was collected each semester until graduation (2 years/5 semesters)
- ▶ Demographic questionnaire
- ▶ Jeffrey's Student perception Appraisal Tool-Revised-2

Instrument

- ▶ SPA-R2
 - ▶ 27-item questionnaire
 - ▶ 5 categories of variables perceived as supportive or restrictive
 - ▶ Environmental (10 items)
 - ▶ Professional integration factors (5 items)
 - ▶ Personal academic (5 items)
 - ▶ College facilities (5 items)
 - ▶ Friend support (2 items)
 - ▶ High reliability = 0.89



Results

Overall Results

Pre-test

Supportive			Restrictive		
Variable	M	SD	Variable	M	SD
Encouragement by friends within classes	4.44	.657	Childcare	2.91	1.08
Encouragement by friends outside of school	4.23	.820	Family responsibilities	2.75	1.01

Post-test

Supportive			Restrictive		
Variable	M	SD	Variable	M	SD
Encouragement by friends within classes	4.51	.577	Childcare	2.79	1.17
Encouragement by friends outside of school	4.25	.593	Family responsibilities	2.75	1.10

Correlations

- ▶ The number of weekly hours of off campus employment was significantly negatively correlated with:

	Pre-survey	Post-survey
▶ Personal study skills	-.353	-.294
▶ Faculty advisement and helpfulness	-.292	-.275
▶ Academic performance	-.308	-.286
▶ Encouragement by friends in classes	-.362	-.246

Differences Between Sites

Public College

Supportive Variables

- ▶ Financial aid/scholarships
- ▶ Encouragement by friends outside of school
- ▶ Encouragement from friends within classes

Restrictive Variables

- ▶ Hours of employment

Private University

Supportive Variables

- ▶ Student support services
- ▶ College library services

Restrictive Variables

- ▶ Family responsibilities



Discussion



Maintaining balance between work, school, and personal life is a challenge for nurses returning to school to complete their BS degree



Support from families, friends and coworkers is essential and pivotal to their success in school

Discussion

Employers may consider:

- ▶ reducing employee work load while their nurses are in school
- ▶ increasing available tuition benefits

Universities may consider:

- ▶ increasing available scholarships as only a small percentage of nurses receive funding or scholarships

Sound familiar?



Discussion

- ▶ Students in public colleges indicated that financial aid and scholarships were more supportive than students from the private university
 - ▶ Surprising finding since private colleges usually provide more financial aid to students compared to public colleges
 - ▶ More research is needed to determine the impact of financial aid on student retention

Discussion

- ▶ Private university students found student support services and college library services more supportive than their counterparts at the public college
 - ▶ Sample included hospital cohorts – classes held at healthcare facilities
 - ▶ RN-BS students do not use many on-campus services



Implications for Nursing



Develop educational pathways and services specific to the needs of RN-BS nurses.



Understanding which variables this population of nurses perceives as supportive or restrictive for retention in a nursing program is imperative to the development of those pathways and services.



Retention of college students should be seen holistically, exploring interrelated variables that can support student retention.



Open communication between students and faculty can identify and address specific supportive or restrictive retention variables for individual students.

Implications for Nursing

- ▶ More research is needed to explore factors that can affect retention such as retention practices between private and public institutions.
- ▶ Research on institutional characteristics such as type, size, minority enrollment rate, admission policies, and retention rates might provide more information on variables that can influence retention of students.
- ▶ Research examining which factors, internal or external, motivate associate degree registered nurses to advance their education can facilitate elimination of barriers to educational mobility and advancement, and cultivate different approaches to facing challenges.
- ▶ A larger sample and mixed method research can provide more detailed information about the variables that influence retention in RN-BS students.

Implications for Nursing

- ▶ Facilitating educational mobility of RN-BS Students may lead to improved patient care and outcomes.
- ▶ Health care organizations can create a culture that encourages academic progression and provide incentives or opportunities for advancement
- ▶ Health care organizations can build support systems for nurses to complete their education.
- ▶ Collaboration models among colleges, universities, and health care institutions can facilitate educational mobility for nurses in order to achieve the national goal of 80 percent of RNs having a BS degree by 2020

Conclusions

- ▶ Healthcare organizations require or strongly prefer to hire nurses with baccalaureate degrees.
- ▶ Registered nurses returning to RN to BS completion programs may need support to overcome barriers to successful achievement of a BS degree.
- ▶ Gaining insight into students' perceptions is particularly valuable for meeting the needs of diverse, adult learners.
- ▶ The findings of this study provide insight as to which variables RN to BS completion students perceive as being supportive or restrictive in completing their education.
- ▶ Nurse educators and academic institutions need to:
 - ▶ •Identify variables that support or restrict retention.
 - ▶ •Provide opportunities and experiences to mitigate barriers and foster retention.

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