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Washington, D.C. Health Policy Immersion Experience of Doctoral Nursing Students: A Phenomenological Study
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Purpose: The purpose of this study was to describe the lived experience of doctoral nursing students’ (PhD and DNP) engagement in a week-long immersion trip to Washington, D.C. as a requirement of their mandatory Health Policy course. This immersion trip encompassed participating in numerous activities which focused on health policy, and nursing's presence and role in research and the political arena. In addition to describing doctoral nursing students' lived experience, the researchers wished to discover how this experience impacts doctorally prepared nurses to be politically aware and engaged in health policy in the future.

Methods: A qualitative study using a phenomenological approach was performed to explore the lived experience of doctoral nursing students’ week-long Washington, D.C. Immersion and its impact on future practice. After obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, data were gathered using Google Forms to obtain doctoral nursing students’ experiences after participating in a week-long Washington, D.C. Immersion as part of their mandatory doctoral coursework at a Mid-Atlantic college in the United States. The survey was emailed to a total of 43 doctoral nursing students (PhD and DNP), 30 of which met the inclusion criteria with a total of 15 participants (n=15). Demographic data analysis, in addition to thematic analysis of survey responses using NVivo, were performed.

Results: After thorough review of the data, using NVivo and thematic analysis of the 15 responses with saturation being obtained, four themes emerged from the analysis to describe the experience and impact the week-long Washington, D.C. Immersion experience had on doctoral nursing students. The themes that emerged were: Knowledge and Understanding of the Political Process; Nursing’s Role as an Advocate for the People; Empowerment through Increased Awareness; Recognition of the Role Professional Nursing Organizations Play in the Political Arena.

Conclusion: Through increased knowledge and awareness of health policy, doctorally prepared nurses may be more inclined to seek and engage in the political arena and actively participate in advocacy efforts to improve health policy and the healthcare system, overall.
Title:
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Keywords:
Doctoral Nursing Students, Health Policy and Washington, D.C.

Abstract Summary:
Today's political environment calls for nursing professionals to increase their awareness and efforts of advocacy to ensure ethical health policy. This study looked to determine the effect a week-long Washington, D.C. Immersion had on doctoral nursing students and its future impact regarding political awareness and engagement in health policy.

References:

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