

Nursing Education Research Conference 2020

Transforming Nursing Education Through Collaboration: Breaking Down Barriers for Diverse Students

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Purpose:

There is disparity in the racial and ethnic make-up of the nursing workforce. Minority nurses represent only 16.8% of the nursing population, yet, the minority population of the U.S. is 22% and expected to rise to over 50% by 2043 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2015). Increased numbers of minority nurses are needed to provide culturally appropriate care to a growing racially and ethnically diverse U.S. population.

Organizations have called to increasingly diversify the nursing workforce and establish learning environments that better engage and support students (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2015; Institute of Medicine, 2011; National League for Nursing, 2016). Early intervention has been shown to improve retention rates (Fitzpatrick, 2015; Fuller, & Mott-Smith, 2017; Graham, Phillips, Newman and Atz, 2016; Harris, Rosenburg, O'Rourke, 2014). Therefore, a baccalaureate nursing program partnered with a Metropolitan School District and public foundation to establish a success program for pre-nursing students, those applicants who wish to pursue a degree in nursing but fail to fully meet academic requirements for direct admittance. Specific goals include: 1.) Recruit diverse students from inner city high schools; 2.) Retain 75% of students to graduation within six years; 3.) Partner to employ 80% of the students as State Tested Nursing Assistants (STNA); and 4.) Achieve an 80% satisfaction rating from programming evaluations. The program employed strategies that support development of critical thinking, reading, math, study and test-taking skills, computer literacy, and medical terminology. Emphasis was placed on time management, goal setting, communication skills, self-esteem and factors linked to student attrition such as financial need, social isolation, peer pressure, lack of role models, and family responsibilities (Beauvais, Stewart, De Nisco, & Beauvais, 2013; Latham, Singh, & Ringl, 2016). Vygotsky's Social Development Theory was used to frame the study.

Methods: A descriptive, exploratory design was used for the study. Data were collected from a convenience sample of 44 students. Descriptive statistics and t-tests were used to evaluate outcomes.

Results: Two cohorts were recruited for this program. GPA's of the first cohort of students were significantly higher as compared to students prior to the implementation of the program ($t [28] = 2.65, 16, p = 0.01$). GPA's of the second cohort were also significantly higher ($t [33] = 2.31, p = 0.01$). There was found to be a large effect size. One hundred percent of the students completed the STNA course and testing and were offered positions at local healthcare agencies. Seventy-three percent of the students from the first cohort remain at the college or in a nursing program; only one student has failed out of the program. One hundred percent of the students in the second cohort remain in the program. Student evaluations of the program are positive, ranging from 80% to 96%.

Conclusion: The student success program improved retention and the academic performance of diverse pre-nursing students in a baccalaureate nursing program. Further research is needed fully evaluate the impact of ongoing mentoring, advising and academic support on student graduation rates.

Title:

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Keywords:

Diversity, Partnerships and Success strategies

Abstract Summary:

There is disparity in the racial and ethnic make-up of the nursing workforce. Collaboration with community partners and schools to recruit diverse students and establishing early intervention programs can improve both program diversity and outcomes. Preparing a competent and diverse workforce is a priority in working toward eliminating health disparities.

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