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CNA Status as an Admission Criterion for Undergraduate Nursing Students: A Comparative Case Study
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Purpose:
Undergraduate nursing programs continue to be unable to meet the current and projected demand for nurses. Choosing admission criteria that best predict student success is difficult for program administrators.

To investigate the perceptions of clinical faculty and undergraduate nursing students regarding the effects of the nonacademic admission criterion of status as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) on first year student preparedness for the clinical setting, self-confidence and anxiety in clinical decision making (CDM), and student success.

Methods:
A comparative case study design was used. Two similarly sized undergraduate baccalaureate nursing programs located within universities in the southeastern U. S. From the purposive sample of two nursing programs, or cases, a convenience sample of 9 faculty (Case A = 5, Case B = 4) and 54 students (Case A = 33, Case B = 21) consented to take part in various aspects of the study.

Qualitative comparative case study design with five data collection methods including semi-structured interviews (faculty, students), observations, document analysis, field notes, and the Nursing Anxiety and Self-Confidence in Clinical Decision Making (NASC-CDM) scale.

Results:
Three overarching, cross-case themes emerged from the study data: *student preparedness*, *student learning*, and *student program success*. A subtheme of student preparedness developed from Case A participant interview data regarding the CNA status program admission criterion, with faculty not supporting the criterion as having a beneficial effect on student preparedness for a nursing program or initial clinical experiences and students expressing the positive impact of the criterion on their preparedness. Researcher observations during simulated patient care experiences did not support faculty comments related to the effects on CNA status as students with CNA status exhibited less anxiety and greater self-confidence during simulation than those without this status. However, no statistically significant differences were found between cases in terms of student self-confidence and anxiety in CDM as measured by the NASC-CDM scale.

Conclusion:
Nonacademic admission criteria, such as required status as a CNA, could be important to consider as part of the undergraduate nursing program admission process; however, more research is needed.

Title:
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Keywords:
certified nursing assistant, education, nursing and undergraduate admission criteria

Abstract Summary:
A comparative case study investigating student and faculty perspectives on Certified Nursing Assistant as an admission criterion for undergraduate nursing programs. Faculty did not support the use of this criterion; however, students did.

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