A question that continuously challenges nursing program admission decision-making processes is who will be successful?

- Nursing programs across the United States continue to struggle to expand capacity to meet the projected needs for registered nurses, with one challenge being admitting students who will succeed and enter the nursing profession (ACAN, 2017).
- A question that continues to challenge nursing program admission decisions is predicting who will succeed. This is particularly relevant in associate degree nursing programs (ADNs), which often have diverse student populations and high attrition rates.
- Despite efforts to select qualified applicants, the attrition rate for ADN programs remains an issue, ranging between 20-50% (Harris, Rosenberg, & O’Rourke, 2014).
- A study by Young-Brice and Dreifuerst (2019) suggests the concept of grit may contribute to academic success and persistence in nursing programs.
- Could grit be the differentiating factor that could help predict who will be successful in ADN nursing programs?

Research Questions

- To address the problem of attrition following acceptance into an ADN program, four research questions are proposed to identify characteristics in those students who pass pre-admission tests and sustain their efforts over time by successfully completing their nursing program.
- To address the problem of attrition following acceptance into an ADN program, four research questions guide this study. The early findings presented in this poster partially address these questions in her Fundamentals course.

Background

- The purpose of this study is to quantify and explore the use of a grit assessment as a predictor of future success in ADN programs to identify characteristics in those students who pass pre-admission tests and sustain their efforts over time by successfully completing their nursing program.

Purpose

- To address the problem of attrition following acceptance into an ADN program, four research questions are proposed to identify characteristics in those students who pass pre-admission tests and sustain their efforts over time by successfully completing their nursing program.
- To address the problem of attrition following acceptance into an ADN program, four research questions guide this study. The early findings presented in this poster partially address these questions in her Fundamentals course.

Overall Study Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Study N= 451</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACE &amp; ETHNICITY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 57.6% reported being single (N=263)
- 60.0% reporting 1 child (N=273), with 27.2% reporting 2 children (N=123), and 12.4% reporting 3 or more children (N=63)
- All participants full-time student status at entry
- 64.7% reported part-time employment status (N=290), with 19.1% reporting full-time employment status.

Data Analysis

- The purpose of this study is to quantify and explore the use of a grit assessment as a predictor of future success in ADN programs to identify characteristics in those students who pass pre-admission tests and sustain their efforts over time by successfully completing their nursing program.
- To address the problem of attrition following acceptance into an ADN program, four research questions guide this study. The early findings presented in this poster partially address these questions in her Fundamentals course.

Early Qualitative Findings

- Common phrases uttered by participants included, “I knew it was going to be hard, but not his hard!” / “It’s a lot of studying. I can’t even explain. It’s just nerve-wracking. I didn’t expect it at all.”
- Although many participants entered the nursing program with prior training as a certified nursing assistant or medical assistant, they were still caught off guard by the immediate workload of the program. For some, the early struggle proved to be unsustainable.
- “I knew it was going to be hard, but until you’re living it, you don’t really know what that intensity is.”
- Additionally, many participants reported their employment conflicted with the workload demands of the nursing program, “I was pretty much told I need to get a different job, I was working 40 hours one week and 30 hours the next. I realized I just can’t do this.”

Another factor was the impact of varying orientations participants received for their program, with one participant stating, “We didn’t have an orientation. It was on [LMS] so I didn’t know what to expect”.

Another factor was the impact of varying orientations participants received for their program, with one participant stating, “We didn’t have an orientation. It was on [LMS] so I didn’t know what to expect”.

Research Questions

- To address the problem of attrition following acceptance into an ADN program, four research questions guide this study. The early findings presented in this poster partially address these questions in her Fundamentals course.

Early Qualitative Findings

- To address the problem of attrition following acceptance into an ADN program, four research questions guide this study. The early findings presented in this poster partially address these questions in her Fundamentals course.

Early Findings Methods

- Early qualitative findings tell the story of struggle, some of which was completely out of the control of the participant, but yet affected academic success.
- It was evident in the stories the participants told that they knew nursing was their “calling” and purpose. Despite the setbacks each participant faced, it is unknown if they continued in their program after the failure to reach their goals, (Grit)
- Duckworth (2016) suggests we can “grow grit from the inside”, through interest, purpose, practice, and hope. These strategies may or may not have assisted the participants interviewed for this study due to the nature of their struggles.

Next Steps

- Phase two of study: Qualitative Data
- In addition to completing the Grit Short Scale to obtain the participant’s Grit Assessment Score at the time of admission to their nursing program, some of the participants who were unsuccessful in completing coursework in their ADN program volunteered to be interviewed over the phone.
- Interviews were conducted by the PI, audio recorded, and transcribed

Acknowledgements

- Study funded by National League for Nursing Ruth Donnelly Corson Research Award (2018)
- Mary Grace McCormack, Marquette University, College of Nursing (Undergraduate Research Assistant)