THE ROLE OF ETHNIC NURSING ORGANIZATIONS IN DEVELOPING FUTURE NURSE LEADERS

Maria Matza, Ph.D., RN
Maryanne Balderrama Garon DNSc, RN
Jasmin Que Laohoo MSN, RN
Learner objectives:

1. Identify at least 2 unique ways that ethnic nursing organizations help develop nurse leaders.
2. Discuss how ethnic organizations give their members both an “anchor and a rope”.

This research was supported by a California State University Senior Intramural Research Award.

The authors have no conflict of interest and received no sponsorship or commercial support.
Background

- There is a disparity between the ethnic makeup of the US population and nurses in general, but especially in nurse leaders and faculty.
- The nursing profession is challenged to recruit and retain a diverse workforce AND to develop diverse leaders and educators!
Nursing Workforce Diversity: Race/Ethnicity

- 85% White, Non-Hispanic
- 5% Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander
- 4% Non-Hispanic Black
- 6% Hispanic/Latino

FIGURE 4-8 Percentage of minority students enrolled in nursing programs by race/ethnicity and program type, 2008–2009.
Percentage of Minority Students Enrolled in Basic RN Programs by Race-Ethnicity and Program Type, 2012

Current Status

- The population of California is **42%** non-Hispanic whites (US Census Bureau 2012 statistics), as compared to the nursing profession which (nationally) is more than **83%** non-Hispanic whites (HRSA report, 2008).
- The disparity in nurse leaders and nursing faculty is even greater.
- At the national level: “Only **12.3 %** of full time nursing faculty members are from minority backgrounds” (AACN report).
In order to foster diversity amongst nursing leaders and nursing faculty, it is desirable to encourage minority nurses to develop into these roles.

One source of mentoring and development might be found in the ethnic or minority nurse organizations.
NCEMNA

National Coalition of Ethnic Minority Nurse Associations
It is believed that increasing the diversity of the nursing workforce and especially in leadership roles will contribute to reducing health disparities in ethnic minority communities (Phillips & Malone, 2014).

AONE (2005) identified that “Diversity is more than a compliance issue. It is an issue of human resources”.

Increased diversity of nurses, nursing leaders and educators can help ensure that patients get culturally sensitive and appropriate care.
The aim of this qualitative descriptive study was to explore the role of ethnic nursing organizations in developing their members for leadership.
Methods

- Following CSUF-IRB approval, notices were sent to contacts at local ethnic nursing organizations seeking study participants who held membership for at least 3 years in one of the ethnic nursing organizations.
- We had mixed responses, and used a snowball approach asking interviewees to refer others.
- As the nurses contacted us and agreed to participate, a member of the research team proceeded to conduct an in-depth interview.
Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured face-to-face or telephone recorded interview.

The questionnaire consisted of demographic characteristics and open-ended questions.

Focus of these interviews was aimed at discovering how the organization helped develop the participants’ career, provided mentorship, encouraged continuing education, or guided leadership.
18 participants were interviewed:

- 4 males and 14 females
- Age ranges from 32 – 65
- Years in nursing from 15-33
- Education levels ranged from BSN to Ph.D.
- 6 members of Black Nurses Association
- 8 from the Hispanic Nurses Association
- 4 from the Philippine Nurses Association

(Other groups were contacted, but did not respond)
Data analysis began as first interviews were transcribed.
First, research team read all transcripts then began coding.
In addition to “manual” analysis, Dedoose ©, a qualitative data analysis web-application was utilized.
We found many similarities as the concepts and themes emerged.
Results

- Just a small portion of the massive amount of data from the interviews can be presented here.

- The research team summarized and presented the key findings below and illustrated in the model.
Model developed
Mentoring and Leadership

- Participants in this study reported finding that ethnic organizations provide opportunities for leadership, mentoring, and encouragement to continue their education.
“First of all, it opened my eyes to the possibilities that are out there for my career choices . . . They encouraged me to pursue my passion”. (NAHN member).

“They really took me by the hand and showed me the ropes of becoming an editor . . . then I became the head and chair of education. So, every time they moved me to a different role, the mentoring was there, which was absolutely amazing and to this day, I still consider PNA that group has been my big, almost like my backbone in nursing”. (PNAA member)
Diverse Mentors

However, others remarked that mentorship from their ethnic organization was “not enough” and mentors were also found in other ethnic groups and in other professional organizations.

- One African American male reported: “all my mentors have been white women!”.
- “I want a person who fully supports me, even if they don’t look like me”, reasoned another nurse” (BNA)
Community - Connection

The participants noted comfort and a sense of community and “home” from being with persons from similar backgrounds:

- “You don’t have to explain where you come from” (NAHN)
- “You feel more at home when you’re with people who look like you and share the same background” (BNA).
- “there’s a special feeling . . .people are really welcoming, just like at home” (NAHN)
A large number of participants noted the importance of community and “giving back” to their communities as strength of these organizations.

- One summarized: “Leave a legacy; carry out goals; help the community” (NAHN)
- “I became a member because I loved the way they do community service: (BNA)
- “I really like doing things for my community” (NAHN)
- “I am very actively involved in the community, not just the nursing community but the Filipino-American community in San Diego”. (PNAA).
An interesting finding was the feeling of isolation felt by several of the participants, mainly the African Americans.

- As one noted, “The higher you go [in nursing]. . .the fewer people are like you. .prepare to be alone” (BNA)
- “. .few Hispanic nurses [were] pursuing a master’s degree . .you can imagine it is very lonely at the Ph.D. level”. (NAHN).
Other Information

- The interviews provided so much rich information!
  - Stories of how they entered.
  - Stories of racism.
  - Stories of opportunities provided by their organizations.
- We are still reviewing and making sense of the qualitative data.
Nursing implications

- The ethnic nursing organizations provide important mentoring, support and sense of community for their members.

- Encouraging young nurses to seek out and join these organizations can help in their development and hopefully increase the numbers of nurse leaders and educators.
Formal mentoring programs targeting ethnic minority nurses can help facilitate and promote higher education, prepare future leadership, and thereby address healthcare disparities through organizational involvement aimed at providing community services to diverse and vulnerable minorities. Healthcare delivery to a diverse cultures is a key role of nursing (Plumbo, 1995).
Recommendations

- The ethnic minority organizations can provide culturally-matched mentoring programs. A mentor can provide support to perceived barriers by offering emotional, social and financial resources through role-modeling, social networking, academic/career advising and by presenting opportunities for advanced education, leadership and career growth.
In addition, nurses need to find mentors who support them and their interests, regardless of ethnicity. Cross-cultural mentoring is also beneficial as it enhances cultural competence that fosters respects for other cultures and bridges cultural gaps (Williams, 2007).


Williams, D. (Fall, 2007). Degrees of success: academic forum: increasing the numbers, advancing careers: by providing students with financial and cultural support, the Native Nurses Career Opportunity Program is helping to increase the supply of master's-prepared advanced practice American Indian nurses. * Minority Nurse*, pp. 62-64.
For additional information..

- Please contact us!
- Maria Matza:  
  - mmatza@fullerton.edu
- Maryanne Garon:  
  - mgaron@fullerton.edu