Title:
The Three Pillars for Success of African Americans in Bachelor of Science Nursing

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Session Title:
Developing the Nursing Workforce
Slot:
A 04: Saturday, 28 October 2017: 2:15 PM-3:00 PM
Scheduled Time:
2:15 PM

Keywords:
Dispositions, Learning and Support

References:


Abstract Summary:
Participants will understand when clustering African American under the umbrella of minority, specific characteristics hindering their recruitment and retention are missed. These students relied on their inner skills and dispositions as they redefined the learning context and embraced external support systems for successful recruitment and retention in a BSN program.

Learning Activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By the end of the presentation the learner will be able to identify specific determinants of African American students’ success in the nursing program.</td>
<td>The data that emerged from the study described how African American students relied on their inner skills and dispositions as they redefined the learning context and embraced external support systems for successful recruitment and retention in a BSN program. Nine themes that emerged from the study’s data: Theme 1: Honoring the silent contract Theme 2: Uncovering inner strengths</td>
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<td>Theme 3: Awakening the altruist within</td>
<td>Theme 4: Sacrificing on purpose Theme 5: Community of helpers Theme 6: Getting the emotional support Theme 7: Efficiently recruited Theme 8: Efficiently retained Theme 9: Special needs efficiently addressed Nine themes were later clustered into three categories: Inner skills and dispositions (themes 1-4), external support system (themes 5 and 6), and learning context redefined (themes 7-9). The category of inner skills and dispositions was the centerpiece of African Americans’ success. Possession of the inner skills and dispositions dictated how the students used the learning context initiatives and external support systems to their benefit.</td>
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<td>By the end of the presentation the learner will value the necessity to integrate innovative strategies in their curriculum to recruit and retain African American students in BSN programs.</td>
<td>Inner skills and dispositions. Students’ success was largely related to their psychological state. Those who brought to bear inner skills such as self-actualization, self-confidence, and self-motivation pursued their goals or intent and succeeded in the nursing program. Embracement of external support systems. The helpers were the family members and other members of the community such as friends, coworkers, and church members. To be successful African American students needed to reassign new roles to the members of their support systems. They also described their need for words of encouragements from their cheerleaders Learning context redefined. The graduates had to redefine their learning context. For example, they redefined financial support to go beyond paying their tuition. The participants recognized that such financial support could only recruit them to the program, but not retain them. To retain the participants financial support needed to be associated with a feasible class schedule, being valued, being treated as adult learners, and having feasible course schedules.</td>
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**Abstract Text:**

The Three Pillars for Success of African Americans in Bachelor of Science Nursing
African Americans students have been underrepresented in baccalaureate of science nursing (BSN) programs. The Sullivan Commission, on diversity in the healthcare workforce, stated the underrepresentation of African Americans in the nursing profession is the most significant variable for increased health disparities among African Americans (Groggins & Ryan, 2013; Sullivan Commission, 2004).

The primary purpose of this study was to explore the processes that African American graduates of BSN programs experienced during recruitment and retention.

Significance of the Abstract. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (2015) categorized the number of practicing nurses by race and concluded of the 13% composing the minority population of the nursing workforce, only 5.4% are African Americans. The report also reflected the percentage of African Americans who earn a baccalaureate in nursing has been stagnant compared to other minority groups, which have continued to increase by 2% annually. The Institute of Medicine (IOM, 2015) called for the nursing workforce to be composed of 80% baccalaureate-prepared nurses by 2020 on the premise that patients’ outcomes improve when nurses with a minimum of a baccalaureate education care for them (Aiken et al., 2015).

Scope of the Abstract: For the past decade, many recruitment strategies have been put in place to recruit minority students in higher education. When clustering African American students under the umbrella of minority, specific factors and characteristics hindering their recruitment and retention are not captured and understood to increase their representation in the healthcare system (Davis, 2012). The population in this study consisted of African American BSN graduates. Purposive sampling was used for this study. The sample frame consisted of recent BSN graduates from the target university located in the Mid-Atlantic region. All participants were African Americans, born, and raised in United States, and had graduated within the last 11 years from a BSN program. The participants had intimate knowledge of the factors affecting their recruitment and retention. The term African American was used to specify a third or earlier generation of the descendants of African immigrants, male or female, who were born and raised in United States and who were nursing graduates.

Significant of the study

Understanding why the number of African American students has been lower than other minorities recruited and retained in BSN programs is necessary, and providing answers about how to recruit and retain them is necessary (Dapremont 2011, 2014). Furthermore, this study may be used to explain how BSN programs have failed to specifically address issues concerning African Americans’ recruitment and retention. . Students, healthcare stakeholders, and significant others may be able to identify and access available resources for each phase of their rites of passage to make their recruitment feasible and their retention guaranteed (Jeffreys, 2012; Murray, 2015).

Abstract Text: Actual Text

The phases of Van Gennep’s (1964) rites of passage framework were used in this study to examine and explain the process of retention and recruitment for African American students in BSN programs. The rites of passage are composed of three phases: separation, transition, and incorporation. In this study, participants’ responses starting with words such as “at first,” or “at the beginning” were entered into the separation category. Responses that included words such as “during the program” or “while in the program” were entered under transition phase. Finally, responses referring to “the end” or “last semester” of the program were entered into the incorporation category (Groggins, 2013; Zhang, 2012).

An interview guide composed of nine questions was used. Prior to obtaining institutional review board (IRB) approval, a field test was conducted to assess the exact wording of the questions to be presented to individual participants. From the feedback received from the panel of three experts, the initial interview script was revised. Once approval was obtained from the human subjects institutional review board (IRB),
permission was solicited and obtained from the study site to distribute letters requesting volunteers for a pilot study as well as the main study. Consent was obtained from the participants who were asked to evaluate the risks and benefits of participating in the study. All of the aspects of involvement were explained to the participants in clear and concise language. Participants’ confidentiality was protected by capturing zip codes and ages in the informed consent form instead of participants’ complete address and date of birth. All participants were African Americans, born, and raised in United States, and had graduated within the last 11 years from a BSN program in The Mid-Atlantic region.

The participants were engaged in semistructured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews for the data collection process. Interview information was initially coded into many categories for analysis (Charmaz, 2014; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Computer software NVivo © 10(2014) was used to assist with organizing data to determine response similarity across participants. Constant comparative approach and theoretical sampling were used as primary data analysis methods. The data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously. Data saturation was reached after 14 interviews. The data that emerged from the study described how African American students relied on their inner skills and dispositions as they redefined the learning context and embraced external support systems for successful recruitment and retention in a BSN program. Nine themes that emerged from the study’s data were later clustered into three categories during selective coding of African Americans graduates’ perceptions and experiences of their recruitment and retention. The researcher compiled the number of nodes composing the three categories that come from the nine themes: learning context (185), inner skills and dispositions (179), and external support system (105). The category of inner skills and dispositions was the centerpiece of African Americans' success. Possession of the inner skills and dispositions dictated how the students used the learning context initiatives and external support systems to their benefit. 1) Inner skills and dispositions. According to the findings of this study the students’ success was largely related to their psychological state. Those who brought to bear inner skills such as self-actualization, self-confidence, and self-motivation pursued their goals or intent and succeeded in the nursing program.2) Embracement of external support systems. The helpers were the family members and other members of the community such as friends, coworkers, and church members. To be successful African American students needed to reassign new roles to the members of their support systems. The graduates also described their need for words of encouragements from their cheerleaders who also tolerated them and forgave their transgressions. 3) Learning context redefined. To be successfully recruited, the graduates had to redefine their learning context. For example, they redefined financial support to go beyond paying their tuition. The participants recognized that such financial support could only recruit them to the program, but not retain them. To retain the participants financial support needed to be associated with a feasible class schedule, being valued, being treated as adult learners, and having feasible course schedules.

Evaluation Process

Traditional strategies designed for mainstream students have failed to satisfy the needs of African American students by not integrating pluralism in lieu of individualism into their teaching approaches. The data shared by the participants supported the need for nontraditional strategies. And curricula, pedagogical organizations, tests, and instructions should be redesigned. This research’s study may help the educators to identify, foster, and capitalize on students’ inner skills and dispositions. Nurse educators can also use this revelation as stimuli to update resources in their programs and to acknowledge the members who contribute to students’ recruitment and retention.

Implications for research this study only captured the perception of successful graduates and left room for future studies that may focus on current students and those who failed as a way of capturing different perspectives of recruitment and retention of African Americans in BSN programs. The perspectives of faculty and academic leaders on how they contribute to students’ recruitment and retention are also needed to extend the scope of the students’ recruitment and retention in BSN programs.

Implications for leadership and nursing practice. The recruitment and retention of students has policy significance to nursing programs. Governments want nursing programs to be effective and efficient not only because of labor market considerations, but also because they must account to the people for the
investment made on their behalf. The AACN (2015) posited a solution for eliminating health disparities should begin with the nurses’ understanding and sharing the sociological, cultural, and political perspectives of the patients. Nursing leaders have used strategies from models that were created to retain students in college and nursing programs. Very few initiatives from the borrowed models have conveyed the experiences of African Americans concerning their recruitment and retention in BSN programs to increase their representation in nursing workforce.