

Examining the Needs of Ethnically Diverse Graduate Nursing Students

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Background

Health disparities for racial and ethnic groups are a major public health problem

- 48% of the total population will be ethnically diverse by 2050 (US Census, 2000)
- Minorities nurses leaders are positioned to create and analyze strategies aimed at reducing disparities (Mingo, 2008)
- Increasing the supply of ethnically diverse nurses can alleviate health disparities

Problem

Underrepresentation of ethnically diverse nurses

- 12% of the total population of RN's are from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds (HRSA, 2004)
- < 13% complete doctoral programs
- < 19% complete master's programs
- < 9% hold faculty positions
- < 7% hold dean positions

Aims

Increase enrollment & retention of ethnically diverse nursing students

- Assess diverse graduate students' needs
- Identify challenges faced during their graduate study
- Use information from needs assessment to enhance: cultural climate, recruitment, retention, and academic success of ethnically diverse graduate students

Method

- Qualitative design
 - focus groups

Sample

- Purposive sample of diverse graduate students
- 36 students were invited to the focus groups
- Three of five focus groups (1hr) completed

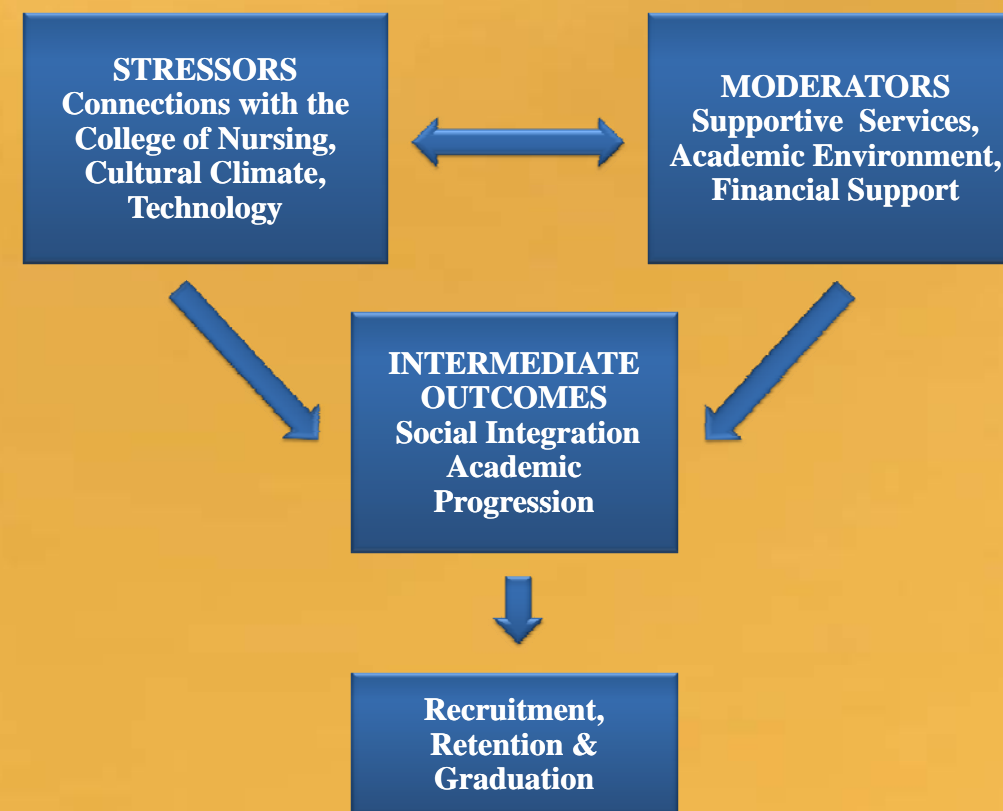
Sample Questions

- What were your expectations about your program of study?
- To what extent have your experiences matched these expectations? What has gone well for you?
- In what way(s) do you feel apart of the College of Nursing? What things impede or distance you from the College of Nursing?
- What are your concerns about the program?
- What suggestions would you have to improve the program?

Data Analysis

- Narrative data were examined for themes by diversity recruiter and off campus investigator
- Conceptual framework developed based on themes

Conceptual Framework



Stressors

Connections with the College of Nursing

- "I really don't feel like overall we are with the college."
- "As an undergrad I felt more apart of the college, as a graduate student the functions that are held at the College of Nursing do not fit my schedule."

Cultural Climate

- "You have be one of those people that is able to stand on your own and not necessarily need a bunch of people that look like you."
- "[In the classroom], alternative views compared to the Anglo Saxon view...are not there, cause it is not experienced."

Technology

- "I struggled coming back after 8 years. I struggled going online and registering for classes and I was not familiar with D2L or blackboard."
- "For nurses who have been out of school for some time, [they] aren't aware of the advances that have been made in technology [database searches]."

Moderators

Supportive Services

- "Staff at the school made me aware of the Black Nurses Association."
- "Having someone [staff] that the graduate students can go to if they have any kind of problem or concern."
- "Some kind of support from those who are ahead of you, someone you can go to."

Academic Environment

- "I did my master's here and I really had a good experience."
- "I know the College of Nursing has a great reputation."

Need for Financial Support

- "I need to have support both financially and academically."
- "It is very important to have financial support if the college is interested in recruiting more students."

Intermediate Outcomes

Social Integration

- "My cohort has supported each other. It's our strength from within and our community."
- "I have a cohort that encourages each other."

Academic Progression

- All students have maintained a minimum GPA of 3.000
- All students have been retained in their programs of study

Implications for Nursing Education

- Create hospitable environments which foster and support ethnically diverse nursing students
 - Provide in person orientation to technologies & campus resources
 - Create a student to student community
 - Create an environment within the College of Nursing that supports adult learners
- Promote advance degrees internally starting at the undergraduate level
- Support the continual need to recruit ethnically diverse nursing faculty
- Support continual efforts to recruit, retain, and graduate ethnically diverse nurse leaders



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