Abstract

Problem: The population of the US has become increasingly diverse. This diversity has not been reflected in the nursing workforce since approximately 70% of nurses are Caucasian and 85% are female. Hence, there is a disparity in healthcare delivery by minorities. The purpose of this project was to perform an analysis of race, ethnicity, and gender diversity in undergraduate nursing applicants and to develop a strategic plan for recruiting and retaining minority student to a moderately-sized, urban, Midwestern university school of nursing.

Method: A retrospective review of nursing applications, enrollment reports, and graduation rates were examined for three academic years. A strategic plan for recruiting nurses from minority populations was developed.

Results: 326 students (N=326) applied to the nursing program from Fall 2016 through Spring 2019. Of those 58.6% (n=191) were admitted, and 66% (n=64) of those admitted, graduated from the program. There were no significant differences between gender and admission for Fall 2016 (p=1.00), Fall 2017 (p=1.00), Spring 2018 (p=0.391), and Fall 2018 (p=1.00). However, significant results were found for Spring 2017 (p=0.018) and Spring 2019 (p=0.011). No significant differences were found between gender and graduation, ethnicity and admission, and ethnicity and graduation.

Implications for Practice: The admission and graduation of minority students in a baccalaureate nursing program was low over a three-year period. Strategies for recruitment and retention were developed in a strategic plan over the next five years to increase gender and ethnic diversity among applicants to an urban, Midwestern university nursing program.

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