Background and Purpose

By 2030, the number of U.S. adults aged 65 or older will more than double to about 71 million (CDC, 2015). Given this demographic trend, there will be an increase in the demand on health care and aging-related services, yet there is a problem of recruitment and retention of nurses in Gerontological Nursing. Our research aimed to explore Undergraduate Senior Nursing students’ attitudes toward and intentions to work with older adults after graduation; and to determine how clinical rotation experiences at SXU inform the attitudes and perceptions of undergraduate students as they choose work/career preferences after graduation.

Methods

Review of Literature:
- Peer-reviewed journal articles published within the last 10 years (2008-2018)
- Online Databases: CINAHL Complete, Cochrane Collection Plus, JBI ConNect, and Nursing Reference Center Plus
- Retrieved 29 journal articles

Ongoing Study:
- Participants: Through purposive sampling, the intended sample is approximately 70 undergraduate nursing students, which is the total number of students in May 2019’s Undergraduate Senior II Nursing graduating class.
- Design & Procedure: A non-experimental, exploratory survey was conducted in a classroom setting

References


Review of Literature Findings

Student Nurses’ Perception and Attitudes towards Older Adults
- “Nursing older people is mainly about basic care - it does not require much skill”
- “Nursing older people is a highly skilled job”
- Working with older adults is “unappealing, a dead-end job, and is not a good career move” but also “challenging and stimulating”
- Students generally like and respect older adults, appreciate challenges of aging process, and are respectful of nurses who work with older adults

Influencing Factors
- Culture; Chinese group have higher percent of students caring for older adults than Australian group (Cheng et al., 2015)
- Previous experience with older adults led to students’ self-efficacy and interest in working with them (Cheng et al., 2015)

Student Nurses’ Intention to Work with Older Adults
- Moderate Interest (Cheng et al., 2015)
- No interest; working with older adults remained most commonly last ranked destination (Stevens, 2011; Haron et al., 2013).
- Possibility later in their nursing career (Koskinen et al., 2012)

Influence of Gerontological Courses/Clinical Experiences
- Course dispelled myths & either met or challenged expectations (King et al., 2013)
- Increased understanding of older adults (Moquin et al., 2018)
- Evaluated teachers who teach gerontological nursing as more competent and felt that gerontology was more important (Koskinen et al., 2012)
- Exposure to ‘impoverished’ environment during clinical/extra-curricular work lead to negative perceptions
  - “inadequate physical environment, lack of resources and equipment, staff who lacked knowledge and skills, little or no investment in staff training, poor pay and conditions for staff, poor staffing levels”
- Feeling unprepared; RNs in nursing homes “functioned independently and as managers”