

Self-Efficacy: Perspectives from Alternate Nursing Students

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Background

Various admissions strategies have been utilized to admit students to nursing programs.

- Grade Point averages in pre-requisite courses
- TEAS (Test of Essential Academic Skills)
- Interviews

When accepted students are unable to matriculate, vacant spaces are filled by alternates on a waiting list. Their experiences are varied.

Purposes

•The purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore how nursing students are affected by the processes used to gain admittance in to an associate degree nursing program.

•Research question: What effects does being labeled an “alternate” have on students who are subsequently admitted into competitive nursing programs?

Literature Review

Alternate List Matriculants: Outcome Data From Those Medical Students Admitted from the Alternate List
•There were no consistent differences in GPA, scores for Clinical Knowledge Step 1 and 2, and students who retook a year (5.6% and 8.7%) between primary entrants and those who were accepted as “alternates.” -- Jardine, D.A., et. al. (2012).

Admission Rhetoric and Academic Self-Efficacy: The Importance of First Communications for Conditionally Admitted Students
•Increased attention should be given to college admission letters which may strengthen self-efficacy of students admitted to college conditionally. -- Stewart & Heaney (2013)

Predicting the Strugglers: A Case-control Study of Students at Nottingham University Medical School.
•“Significant predictors of students [identified as “strugglers] were negative comments in the academic reference, lower [GPA equivalent], and the late offer of a place...In UK students whose ethnicity was known, not being white was a significant predictor of struggling...Age at entry...and the possession of a previous degree were predictive.” --Yates & James (2006)



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Theoretical Framework

Albert Bandura, PhD (1977)

"People with high assurance in their capabilities approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided."

Carol Dweck, PhD (2007, 2000)
Responses to Life's Challenges

Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
Avoid challenges	Embrace challenges
Become defensive or give up when setbacks occur	Persist in the face of setbacks
Perceive effort as fruitless	Perceive effort as the path to mastery
Ignore positive negative feedback	Embrace criticism and learn from it
Feel threatened by others' successes	Find inspiration in the success of others

McGuire, S. Y., & McGuire, S. (2015). *Teach students how to learn: Strategies you can incorporate into any course to improve student metacognition, study skills, and motivation*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Methods: Design

- This qualitative study was performed using semi-structured interviews with a grounded theory approach.
- Participants: n=8, Associate Degree nurse graduates

Analysis of Data

- Inductive incremental analysis with constant comparative analysis methods from a grounded theory approach.

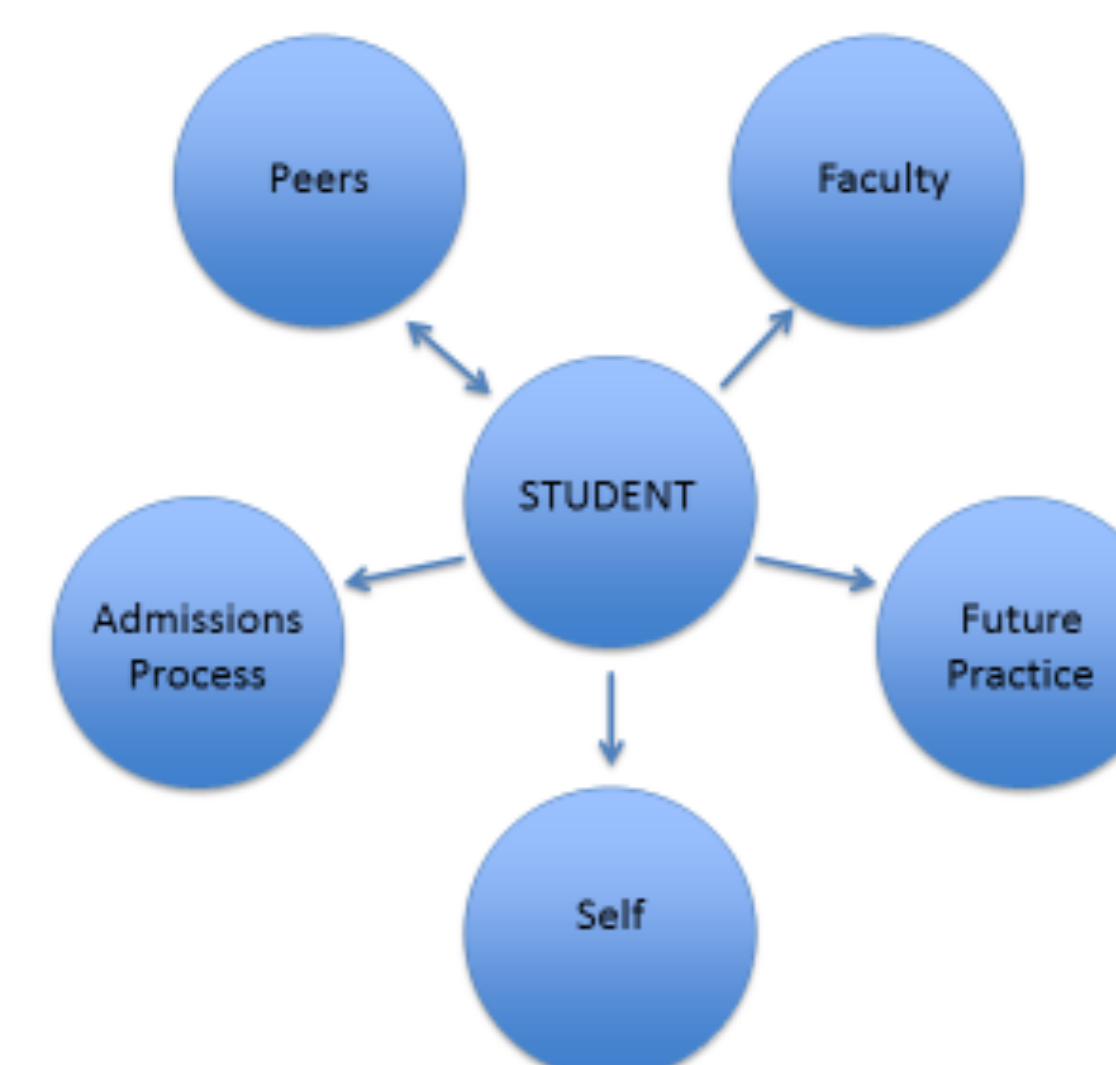
Participant Demographics

Demographic Categories	Results
Age Range	20-50
Average Age	34
Gender	Female: 6 Male: 2
Pre-requisite GPA ave:	3.9
Nursing GPA ave:	3.83
NCLEX passing rate	88% first time 12% second time
Other degrees or certifications?	3 ASN degrees 1 CNA license
Number of interviews for 1 st job	25% had 1 25% had 2 25% had 3
English as a 2 nd language	25%
Got 1 st job?	38% < 1 mo after NCLEX 25% 4-6 mo after NCLEX 1 has no job as RN

Findings

- Reactions to admissions were mostly negative, extending to questioning their choice of career.
- Student/peer interactions were impacted (+ and -) by alternate status.
- Reaction to alternate status propelled students to “work harder” and “try harder” to “prove” themselves.
- Student misperception of alternate status persisted.
- Absence of long-term effects of being an alternate.

Findings: Areas of Impact



Findings: Effects on Self Efficacy

1. Communication with Peers (+/-)
2. Relationships with Peers (+/-)
3. Relationships with Faculty (0/-)
4. Perceptions of peers: Glorify or Vilify
5. Short and long-term effects on self-efficacy

Findings: The Process of Change



Self-Identified Barriers to Self-Efficacy

1. Increased age (40's -50's)
2. Alternate status
3. English as a 2nd language
4. Self-categorized “Slow learner”

Limitations of Study

- Sample size: n=8
- Working with the feelings and perceptions of students
- Self-reported experiences of participants—transparency?
- Interviewer bias: faculty interviewing former students

Implications

Students	Admissions Personnel	Faculty
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Recommendations

1. Admissions Personnel
 - Elucidate the process of admissions
 - Elucidate what “alternate” means to students
 - Script first contact with students positively
2. Encourage students to connect with cohort early