

Barriers to Student Success in Bronson School of Nursing Program



Karla Kline, Honors Student
Dr. Pamela Wadsworth, Thesis Chair
Professor Smith, Thesis Committee Member

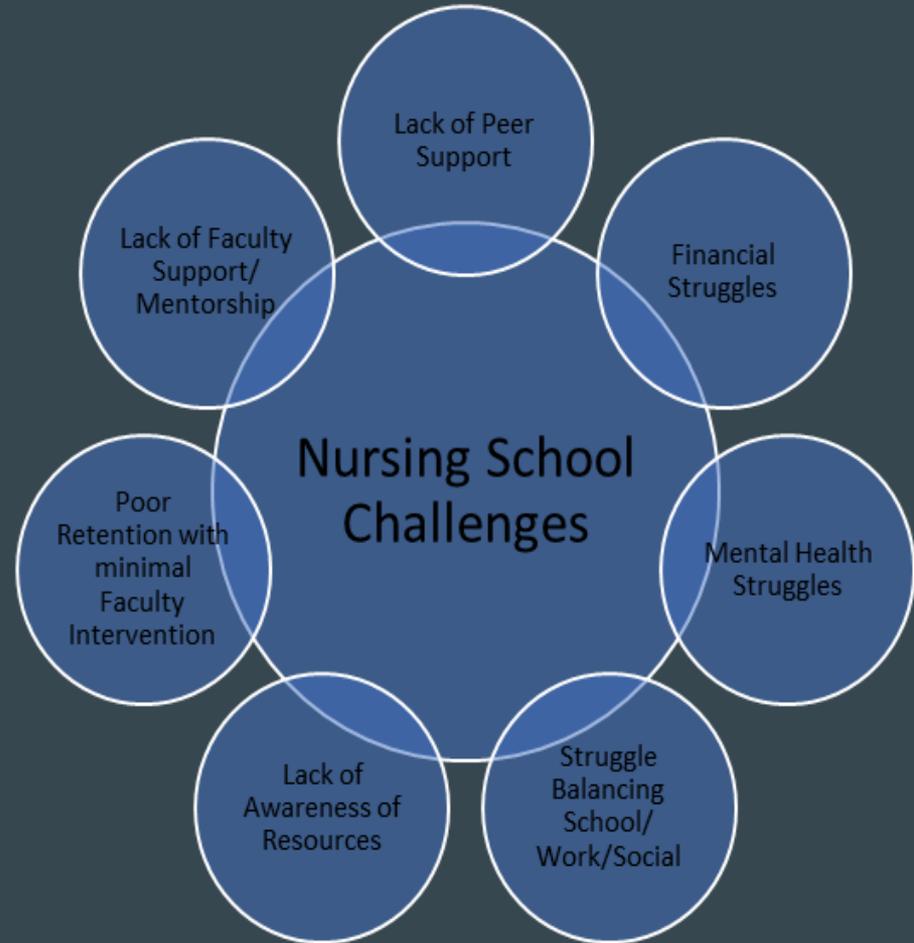
Purpose of Study

Explore the barriers nursing students are experiencing throughout their completion of the Bronson School of Nursing (BSON) program at Western Michigan University

- ❖ What current barriers and behaviors are impacting student academic success?
- ❖ Did the barriers Shaw (2015) identify in her research improve? Have her recommendations been implemented?
- ❖ How has the COVID-19 pandemic played a role?

Background

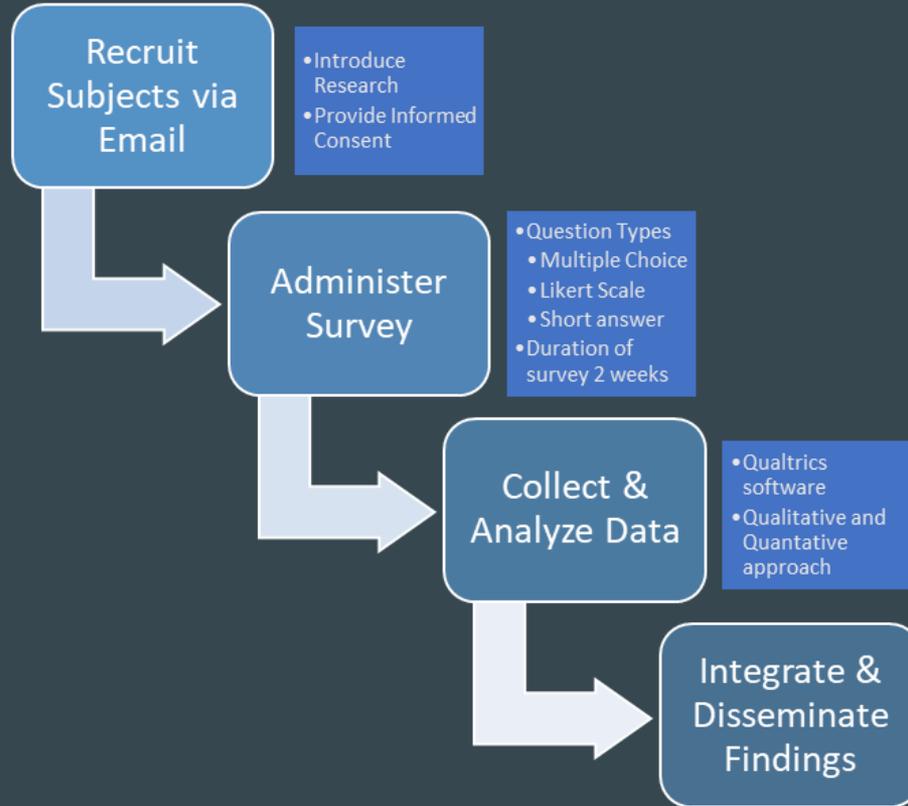
- ❖ Nursing programs are environments of high stress and intense academic work
- ❖ COVID-19 has disrupted clinical experiences and impacted learning



Need for Research

- ❖ Continuation of Shaw (2015) research assessing nursing student barriers and behaviors within BSON program
- ❖ Limited research regarding how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted nursing students
- ❖ Necessary to explore how students are coping while uncertainties continue
- ❖ Potential to foster academic improvements

Research Procedure

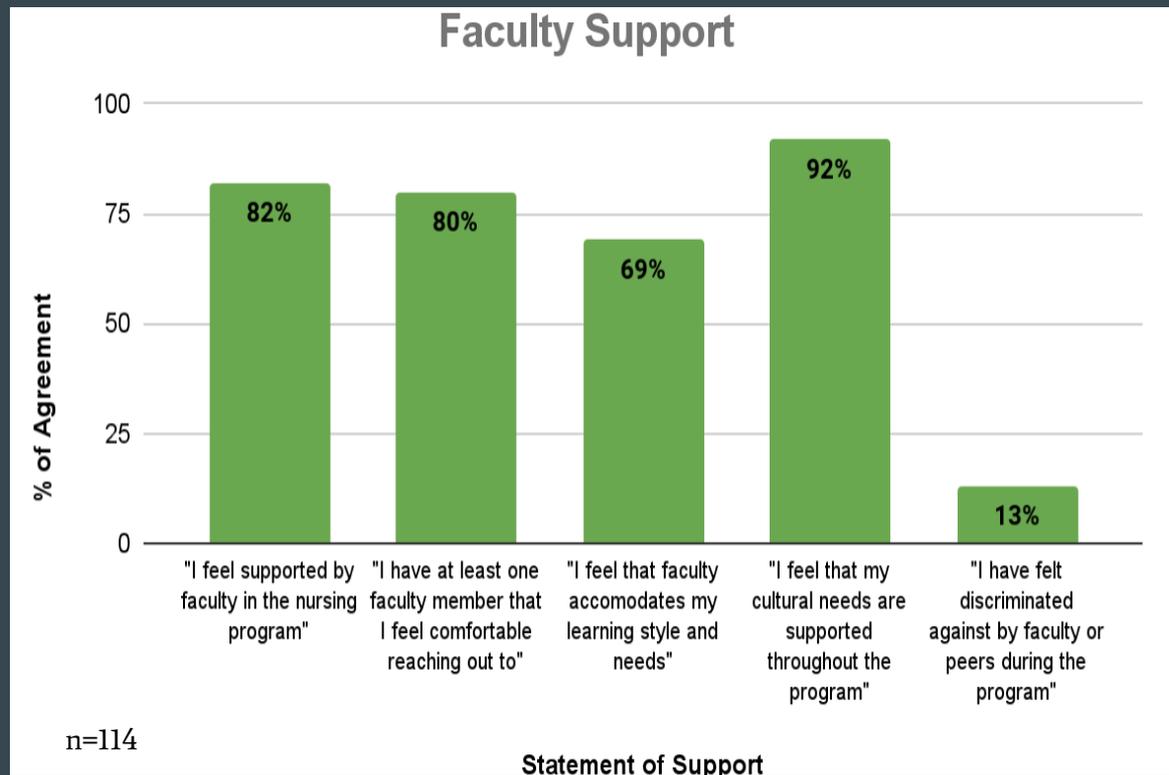


Sample of Respondents

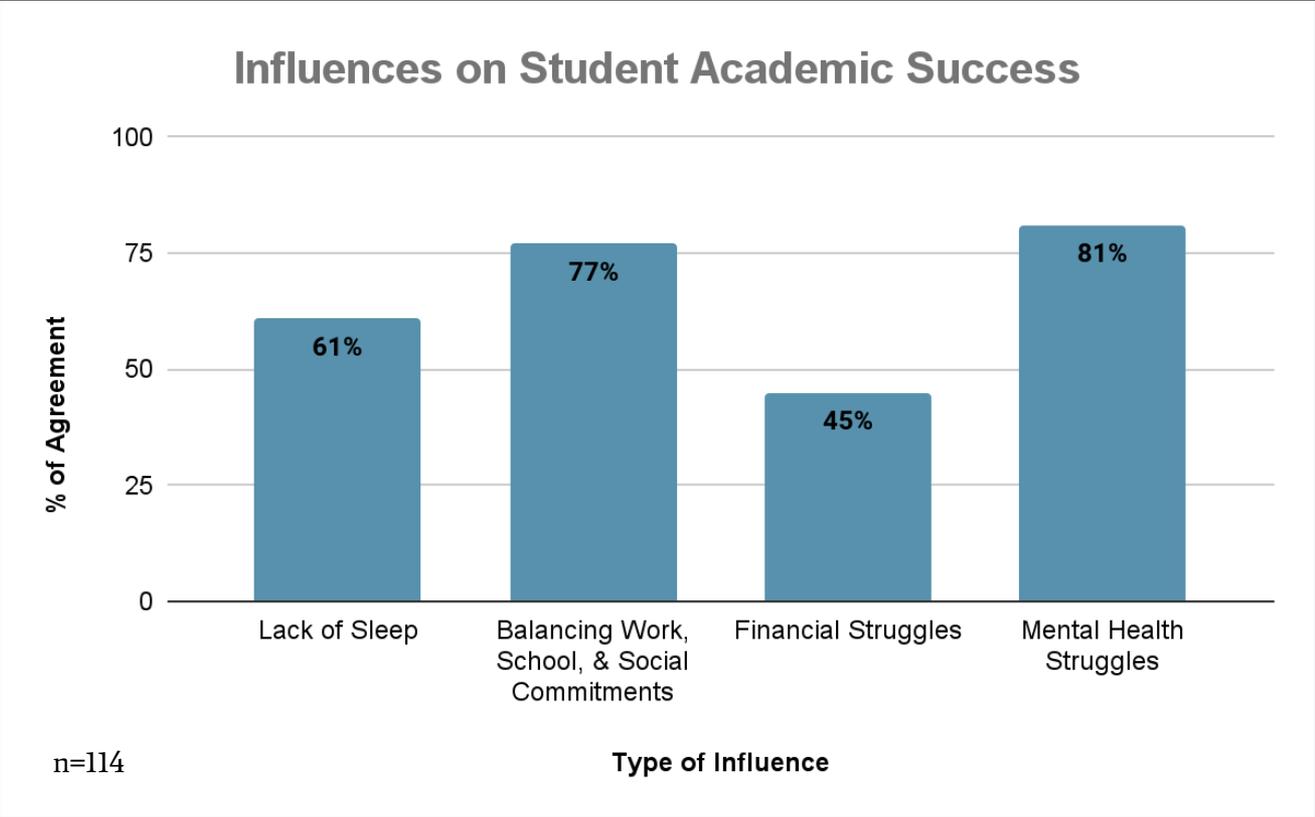
- ❖ 114 total respondents
- ❖ All at least 18 years old, all students of BSON program
- ❖ Majority live with friends
- ❖ Majority live in a positive/neutral living environment
- ❖ Lifestyle
 - 75% work during program
 - Of the 75%, most work 9+ hours/week
 - Primary reason for working is to pay for food/gas
 - 67% spend 11+ hours/week studying
 - Majority get 5-7 hours of sleep
 - 63% experience high stress during nursing school, 31% experience moderate stress

Support

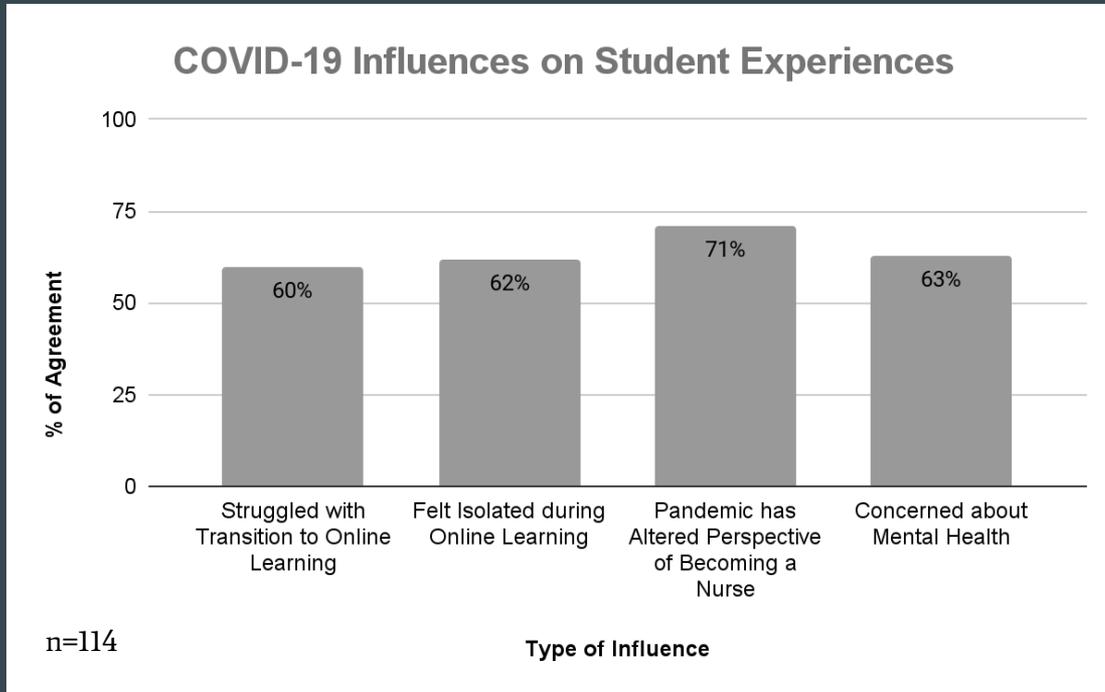
- ❖ Support from family was highest, followed by peers, then faculty



Influences on Academic Success



COVID-19



- ❖ 43% (n=114) of nursing students have had to quarantine due to COVID-19, and subsequently miss class
 - 27% of students have worried about passing the semester due to quarantining
- ❖ Agreement in feeling support from faculty has decreased
- ❖ Agreement in feeling support from peers has slightly decreased

Mental Health

- ❖ Of the 63% (n=114) of people that agreed to feeling concerned about their mental health due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only 43% have sought professional help
- ❖ **57% (n=114) have not sought professional help**, and here are the top reasons why...
 - Time - 59%
 - Money - 31%
 - Stigma/Fear - 17%
 - Lack of resources - 10%
 - Virtual format - 6%

Out of 29 responses, these were the most frequent themes

Why are Students not Seeking Professional Help?



“I barely have enough time to get daily necessities done, let alone seek professional advice on how to handle my stress.”

“Having a difficult time finding time. It is a priority, but school and work come first.”

“Not enough time to commit to appointments... Worried about stigma from others if they find out I am seeking help”

“Do not have enough money for it”

“Don’t know where to go, costs”

“I feel that there’s nothing anyone can say or do to change how worried I am about becoming a nurse during this pandemic/staffing shortage”

Top Student Concerns

1. Passing
2. NCLEX
3. Balance of responsibilities
4. Workload/time management
5. Communication issues

“Will I pass? Will I not? I’m so tired”

“I feel like we missed out on a chunk of hands-on learning and in person classes. I’m nervous for my success once I graduate, taking the NCLEX, and starting a career”

“My biggest concern is balancing needing to make money and needing to study”

“Trying to cope with stress and lack of sleep. I feel like it is constantly go go go all the time which has taken a big toll on my mental and physical well-being”

“Stress due to workload”

“Lack of organization and communication. Constantly feeling like we are waiting until the last minute to find out about things”

Advice for Faculty

“What advice would you give to faculty to better support your academic success?”

Top Faculty Advice

1. Flexibility/understanding
2. Provide study resources/opportunities
3. Communicate/check in more
4. Mental Health
5. Accountability

“Remember that students are humans too and school cannot always be above everything. Life happens and sometimes school cannot come first”

“Understand that some students NEED to work to support themselves throughout school. Saying that “you shouldn’t be working” offends some people”

“...I would love more programs and opportunities for out of class learning examples being organized study groups by professors or TA”

“Have the faculty keep reaching out and seeing how all the students are feeling every week. A few weeks of the semester are really tough, and a simple encouraging email from a professor or a check in with a professor would make it a little better”

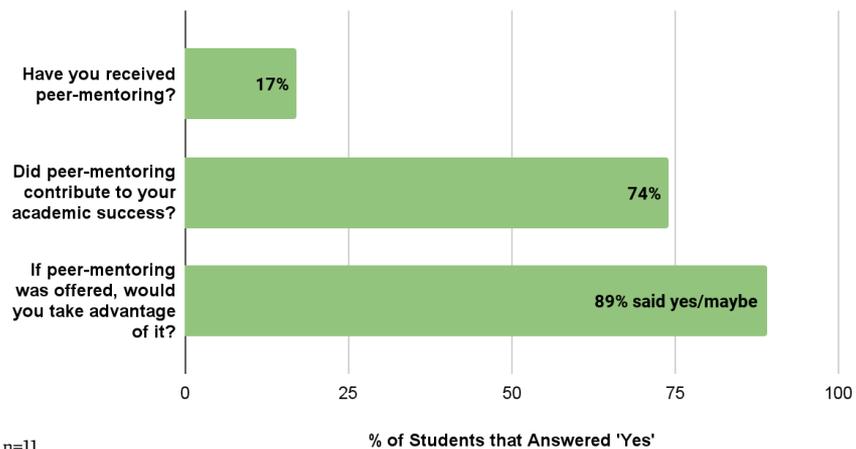
“Many professors emphasize the importance of mental health but then they do not provide opportunities for us to take care of our mental health. Those of us who work have little free time to be doing homework let alone self care or prioritizing our mental health”

“Advocate for your students, support them no matter what, and put your personal biases aside. Practice what you preach”

“The staff should be required to take anti racist courses to learn about their biases and how those impact their teaching methods and the way they interact with students”

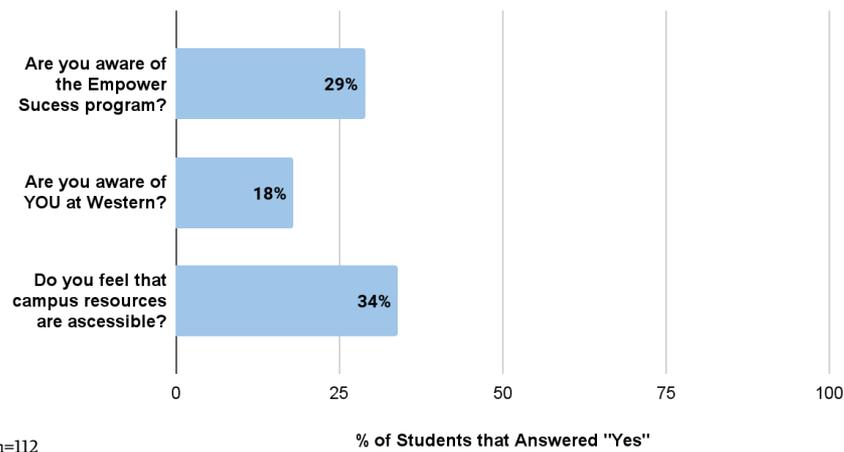
Resources

Peer-Mentoring



2

Awareness & Accessibility of Resources



Changes/Trends from Shaw's Research

- ❖ Students are working more than they were in 2015
 - In 2015, working students averaged 0-5 hrs/week
 - In 2021, working students averaged 9+ hrs/week
- ❖ Students were more comfortable asking peers for help in 2015, compared to faculty, and that has remained true in 2021
- ❖ Shaw suggested implementing peer-mentoring as a way to increase academic success, believing that tutoring would help academically and providing mentorship would help socially
 - Empower Success program implemented in Fall, 2017
 - 74% of students that received peer-mentoring thought it contributed to academic success in 2021
 - Empower Success program was cut in Fall, 2021 due to funding

Discussion of Pertinent Findings

- ❖ Students are concerned about their mental health, yet are struggling to seek professional help
- ❖ Students are struggling to balance work and school
- ❖ Students want more support from faculty
- ❖ Student awareness of campus resources is lacking
- ❖ Students would take advantage of a peer mentoring program

General Recommendations

- ❖ Faculty should be made aware of research findings
- ❖ Faculty are encouraged to be more open, flexible, and understanding of their students
- ❖ Encourage faculty to communicate more with students
- ❖ Implement peer-mentoring program
 - Could provide leadership hours for senior nursing students
- ❖ Provide more educational/study opportunities and chances to connect with students
- ❖ Engage in cultural workshops/anti-racism courses
- ❖ Promote use of YOU at Western
- ❖ Collaborate with Public Health Professionals

Limitations

- ❖ Convenience sample
- ❖ Sample population of 114

Questions?

Thank you for listening, and thank you to Dr. Wadsworth for her commitment and encouragement throughout this research project and to Professor Smith for her collaboration and support.

Any Questions?

References

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