Natasha Cassara
Honors Undergraduate Student
Adult Health, Indiana University School of Nursing
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
Indianapolis, IN 46202-5107
317-430-6277
ncassara@iupui.edu

Diane Von Ah, PhD, RN
Adult Health, Indiana University School of Nursing
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
Indianapolis, IN 46202-5107
dvonah@iupui.edu

Statement of student’s role on the project: Natasha Cassara Honor’s Undergraduate Student at Indiana University (IU) School of Nursing and IU Diversity Scholars Research Program (DSRP) student at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) developed the idea for this independent research project, including completing a review of the literature to establish the significance and need for this research; selected an appropriate theoretical framework; obtained permission to use an appropriate instrument; obtained Institutional Review Board Approval for the project; collected, managed, and analyzed the data; and developed the abstract for dissemination of the results. This work was done with guidance and support from her research mentor, Dr. Diane Von Ah, Assistant Professor and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Nurse Faculty Scholar.
PERCEPTIONS OF CULTURAL COMPETENCY OF UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS

BACKGROUND: Cultural diversity is a significant issue to address in nursing curriculum. The United States (U.S.) is rapidly becoming a more diverse nation. More than one-third of the U.S. population identify themselves as a “minority,” an increase of 11% from 2000. Undergraduate nursing programs need to ensure that their graduates can provide culturally competent nursing care.

PURPOSE: The purpose was to examine the level of cultural competency of undergraduate nursing students at a large Midwestern University.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: The Cultural Self-Efficacy Model guided this study.

METHODS: A convenience sample of nursing students at a large Midwestern University completed a one-time electronic questionnaire assessing students' perceived knowledge, attitudes, and comfort with skills regarding cultural competency. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

RESULTS: 150 undergraduate nursing students who ranged in age from 18 to 57 (M=25) and who were mostly female (95%) and White (87%) completed the study. Nursing students’ overall knowledge and comfort regarding cultural competency was moderate (M=3.34; SD=.66). 77% believed it was important to include cultural diversity in the nursing curriculum; however, only 21% believed strongly that this content was addressed. Only 28% perceived themselves as very comfortable and 15% as very skillful in providing culturally competent care.

CONCLUSIONS: Our results indicate that nursing students do not feel confident in providing culturally competent care. These findings support the importance of adequately addressing cultural competency in undergraduate nursing curriculum. Developing cultural competence of nurses is critical if nurses are to respond effectively to the needs of our growing diverse society.

Keywords: Cultural diversity, cultural competency, nursing education, cultural self-efficacy