



Addressing and Dismantling Structural Racism in Nursing Education

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Objectives

- Define institutional, systemic, and structural racism
- **Discuss the impact of micro-aggressions on students, faculty, and nursing education**
- **Identify policies and practices aimed to dismantle racism within nursing education and clinical practice**
- **Discuss strategies to dismantle structural racism in nursing education**



Racism in Nursing Education

- Has existed since the formalization of nursing education
- Towards students, it is exemplified through
 - Admission criteria – racial/ethnic background, religion, and sex
 - Advancement criteria – different standards applied to work and performance
 - Discrimination against diverse students in the classroom and clinical setting
- Towards faculty, it is exemplified through
 - Hiring criteria – racial/ethnic background, religion, sex, specialty area, credentialing
 - Promotion and Tenure criteria
 - Discrimination against diverse faculty in the classroom and academia



Unspoken Rules

- Appearance
- Language
- Service: Tokenism and the Minority/Diversity Tax
- Pay Differentials
- Lack of recognition for ideas
- Microaggressions – Verbal/nonverbal, intentional/unintentional slights, snubs, insults that belittle and demoralize persons of color

Racism in Nursing Curricula

- Failure to include nurses of color in the history of nursing
- Myths about physiological and psychological differences in groups of people based on race/ethnicity and sex
- Use of race/ethnicity as a non-modifiable risk factor for health conditions
- Diagnostic criteria that fail to consider the variations in skin color (melanation)
- Nurses, including those of color, are taught these erroneous indicators and the misconceptions are reinforced in the clinical setting → implicit bias



Racism in Nursing Practice

- Implicit Bias – the unconscious collection of stereotypes and attitudes that we develop toward certain groups of people, which can affect our patient relationships and care decisions.
- Allowing structural and systemic racism to influence nursing care or failing to question policies and procedures that support or result from structural and systemic racism
- Continuing to use equipment or lab value calculations that are based on misconceptions that there are variations due to a social construct (race) or fail to reflect variation due to actual differences such as skin color

pulse oximeters

estimated GFR

- Nurses do not demonstrate trustworthiness to the patients in their care





Racism in Nursing Theory and Research

- Many theories are based on perceptions of nursing, environment, health, and patients that reflect a Western and European view.
- Many transcultural nursing theories focus more on differences of cultural and religious groups and other (verb) communities.
- The healing traditions of communities, especially Indigenous, Asian, and African, are not given the same consideration in nursing scholarship.
- Knowledge about these communities and healing traditions is limited and impacts the sharing of information.



Microaggressions in Nursing Education & Academia: Impact on Students

- Feeling devalued, isolated
- Stress, anxiety, concentration concerns
- Disconnecting from peers
- Getting accustomed to these experiences

Ackerman-Barger, et al (2020).



Microaggressions in Nursing Education & Academia: Impact on Faculty

- Sense of not being valued, feeling unappreciated
- Overwhelming sense of responsibility for the students of color
- Failure to connect with colleagues to learn and feel supported in the system
- Take on the biases connected to microaggressions targeting students
- Disillusionment with academia and leave to seek better employment and compensation elsewhere



Microaggressions in Nursing Education & Academia: Impact on Patient Care

- Patients also experience microaggressions when their lived experiences are minimized and/or their needs are ignored.
- Patients do not see their nurses as trustworthy and will not share pertinent information about their condition and how they have been managing their care at home (traditional healing practices) leading to potential drug-drug/food interactions or will not trust the recommendations of the healthcare team.
- Patients are labeled non-compliant, and bias will be reinforced leading to a failure to recommend a treatment and disparities in care.

Call to Dismantle Structural Racism in Academia

- AACN – Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion <https://www.aacnnursing.org/Diversity>
 - DEI Faculty Toolkit
 - Diversity Symposium
 - Diversity Leadership Institute
 - DEI Leadership Network
- NLN – Taking Aim Initiative: Structural Racism, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Implicit Bias & Social Justice <https://www.nlntakingaimdei.org/>
 - Webinars, Workshops, Resources
- ANA – National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/workforce/clinical-practice-material/national-commission-to-address-racism-in-nursing/>



Dismantling Structural Racism in Nursing Theory and Research

- Nursology <https://nursology.net/>
 - Decolonizing Nursing (blogs, essays, panel discussions) focused on calling out the racism and sexism that exists in nursing practice, theory, research, and education
 - <https://nursology.net/2021/10/05/decolonizing-nursing-what-why-how/>



Dismantling Structural Racism in Education

- DEI: Mission and Vision alignment strategic plan,
 - Associate Dean role, Committee, Budget, Diverse Faculty Hiring (Cluster Hiring)
- Climate Assessment survey, create a sense of belonging, engage in difficult conversations, hold safe spaces for all students, faculty, staff, and administration
- Faculty of color in classrooms as well as in clinicals
- Faculty mentoring, training, clear promotion requirements, supporting work-life balance
- Admission & Retention: Holistic Admissions, supportive programming (mentors, coaches, affinity groups), financial aid (grants versus loans)

AACN (August 2021) DEI Faculty Tool Kit



Dismantling Structural Racism in Clinical Education

- Teaching Threads: health equity, health disparities, SDH, cultural humility, social justice
- Teaching critical analysis skills
- Creating an inclusive teaching environment
- Reviewing curricula to thread the constructs noted above and
- Reviewing teaching materials for bias <https://aecarusobrown.com/the-upstate-bias-checklist/>
- Slowing down to leave space to hear biases and microaggressions to address in real time
- Cultural Humility Competencies (Campinha-Bacote, 2002)

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References

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- American Nurses Association (n.d.). *National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing* <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/workforce/clinical-practice-material/national-commission-to-address-racism-in-nursing/>
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Resources

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Questions?