Program Factors and NCLEX-RN Success
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**PURPOSE/BACKGROUND**
A non-experimental study design was used to examine the strength of relationships between variables using a retrospective, correlational design. Research Questions
- To what extent do nursing program accreditation, program length, and program location by region influence first-time NCLEX-RN pass rates?
- What is the strength of the relationships between variables?
- After controlling for nursing accreditation, does program length predict NCLEX-RN first time pass rates?

**LITERATURE REVIEW**
Student demographics such as age, grade point average (GPA), and earned course letter grades have been examined in the research literature in relationship to NCLEX-RN success
- Grade point average and assessment test scores were significant predictors of NCLEX-RN success (Romeo, 2013)
- Prerequisite psychology and nursing assessment course grades were found to correlate with NCLEX-RN success (Penprase & Huns, 2013)

**ANALYSIS**
Descriptive statistics were used to obtain thorough representation of the data. Distribution of the universities in the sample across regions were
- Northwest = 37.6%
- South = 27.7%
- Midwest = 20.8%
- Northeast = 12.7%

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test the difference between pass rates of the four regions. There was no significant difference between the pass rates of the four regions (F = .933; p-value = .428).

**RESULTS**
The results of this study indicated no relationship between program length, accreditation type, region, and success with first-time NCLEX-RN pass rates.

Based on this information, the researchers cannot reject the null hypotheses:
- There was no statistically significant difference between the nursing accreditation of a program and NCLEX-RN first-time pass rates.
- There was no statistically significant difference between the length of nursing program and NCLEX-RN first-time pass rates.
- There was no statistically significant difference between program location by region and NCLEX-RN first-time pass rates.

**CONCLUSIONS**
There was no dependence of first-time NCLEX-RN pass rates on either the length of a program or the accreditation type of the program found within the analysis.

The data limitations could be one of the reasons for this finding, but there could be other unobserved factors affecting the pass rates as well.

**LIMITATIONS**
- Limited variable data
- High percentage of observations excluded from the project due to failure to meet inclusion criteria
- Public information difficult to access

There was a high concentration in one variable category (e.g., accreditation) in the regression, leading to the inability to successfully differentiate NCLEX-RN pass rates. Additionally, there could be other factors affecting the pass rate which were not observed and included in the regional analysis.

The sampling method chosen for this project provided a certain level of control of the variables examined. However, limitations emerged throughout the development and implementation of the study. It was evident nursing programs and State Boards of Nursing (SBN) did not share information with the public through a consistent manner.

The researchers identified the need to limit the amount of time spent researching program information and the decision was made to exclude programs in which information was not attainable. This unforeseen exclusion resulted in no representation from certain states within the nation, which limits the generalizability of the project findings.

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