



Socioeconomic Disadvantage Lowers On-Time Graduation Rate in an Accelerated Doctor of Pharmacy Program



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Background

- The PharmCAS application requests candidates to answer nine questions related to Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) statuses, which aim to identify if applicants are economically or environmentally disadvantaged.
- We previously found that at an accelerated pharmacy program, socioeconomic disadvantage had no significant effect on on-time graduation, whereas students who are black or African American had lower rates of on-time graduation.
- We aimed to further evaluate the relationship between socioeconomic disadvantage, race/ethnicity, and progression at another accelerated pharmacy program.

Methods

- On-time graduation rate (*i.e.*, within 3 years of matriculation) in five student cohorts was compared based on responses to the economic and environmental disadvantage questions, as well as race/ethnicity, sex and geographical area.
- Data were analyzed using Pearson Chi-Square.

Results

HRSA Question & Demographic Category	n	On-Time Graduates n (%)	p-value
Your parent's family income falls within the table's guidelines and you are considered to have met the criteria for economically disadvantaged.			
	Yes 43	32 (74.4%)	0.005
	No 185	167 (90.3%)	
I graduated from a high school at which many of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.			
	Yes 79	66 (83.5%)	0.22
	No 149	133 (89.3%)	
I am from a family that receives public assistance (e.g., Aid to Families with Dependent Children, food stamps, Medicaid, public housing).			
	Yes 30	24 (80.0%)	0.20
	No 198	175 (88.4%)	
I am the first generation in my family to attend college (neither my mother nor my father attended college).			
	Yes 50	41 (82.0%)	0.20
	No 178	158 (88.8%)	
English is not my primary language.			
	Yes 7	5 (71.4%)	0.20
	No 221	194 (87.8%)	
Sex			
	Female 165	148 (89.7%)	0.076
	Male 63	51 (81.0%)	
Race			
	Asian 22	19 (86.4%)	0.64
	Black/African American 44	35 (79.5%)	
	Hispanic 7	6 (85.7%)	
	American Indian 1	1 (100.0%)	
	Two or More Races 1	1 (100.0%)	
	White 153	137 (89.5%)	
Geographic Area			
	Urban 7	5 (71.4%)	0.22
	Large City 7	5 (71.4%)	
	Mid-Size City 31	27 (87.1%)	
	Large Town 67	61 (91.0%)	
	Small Town 75	66 (88.0%)	
	Isolated Rural 32	27 (84.4%)	
	Do Not Wish to Report 8	8 (100.0%)	

Conclusions

- Students who are economically disadvantaged had lower on-time graduation rates than students who are not. The reasons for this remain unknown.
- No other factors had a significant effect on on-time graduation, including race/ethnicity, although that was observed in our previous study.
- Future research could assess whether students who are economically disadvantaged graduate on-time at lower rates at other institutions or attempt to identify factors associated with the lower on-time graduation rate at our institution.