

Public Abstract

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Title:Positive and negative influences perceived by minority students toward a career in athletic training.

Within the field of athletic training, the level of minority professionals has remained stagnant over the last 10 years. Though a great deal of research has been done in determining factors which affect minority enrollment in other health care fields, little to no research has been conducted in the field athletic training. This research used mixed methods of surveys and interviews to attempt to determine the factors which influenced and acted as barriers to minority students selecting an athletic training major. Surveys were sent to students who are currently enrolled in athletic training programs in the state of Missouri. Within the survey they were asked to volunteer for an interview. Survey data was analyzed and interviews were conducted.

The study found that there were a few areas of concern for students which need to be addressed by athletic training programs if they want to potentially increase their minority enrollment. The attitudes of faculty and staff toward diversity was a significant concern for minority students compared to their white peers. Minority students were also more concerned with providing health care to patients who are of the same race or ethnicity. In contrast, the white students surveyed placed more significance on the influence of a college counselor or advisor in choosing athletic training as a profession.

This research shows that in terms of enrollment decisions for athletic training students race matters. Policy changes in how college counselors and advisors are educated about the field of athletic training are highly recommended. Efforts to more actively recruit minority students into athletic training programs must also be included as program goals. These policies have the potential of increasing the diversity of athletic training education programs which will lead to an increase in diverse practitioners.