

Introduction

- People underrepresented in medicine (URM) is defined by the Association of American Medical Colleges as those belonging to racial and ethnic populations that are underrepresented in the medical profession relative to their numbers in the general population.¹
- 11.1% of practicing pediatricians identify as underrepresented minorities.²
- Focus groups from Howard University and Children's National have found that mentorship and family are major influences to pursue a career in academic pediatrics.³
- The lack of URMs in leadership positions, racism, gender bias, and implicit bias are major barriers for URMs in academic pediatrics.⁴
- There are other existing programs to help increase the number of URMs in pediatrics, like the Century Scholars Program for URMs, though these programs are largely focused on recruiting residents instead of medical students and specifically to academic pediatric medicine.⁵

Objectives of Intervention

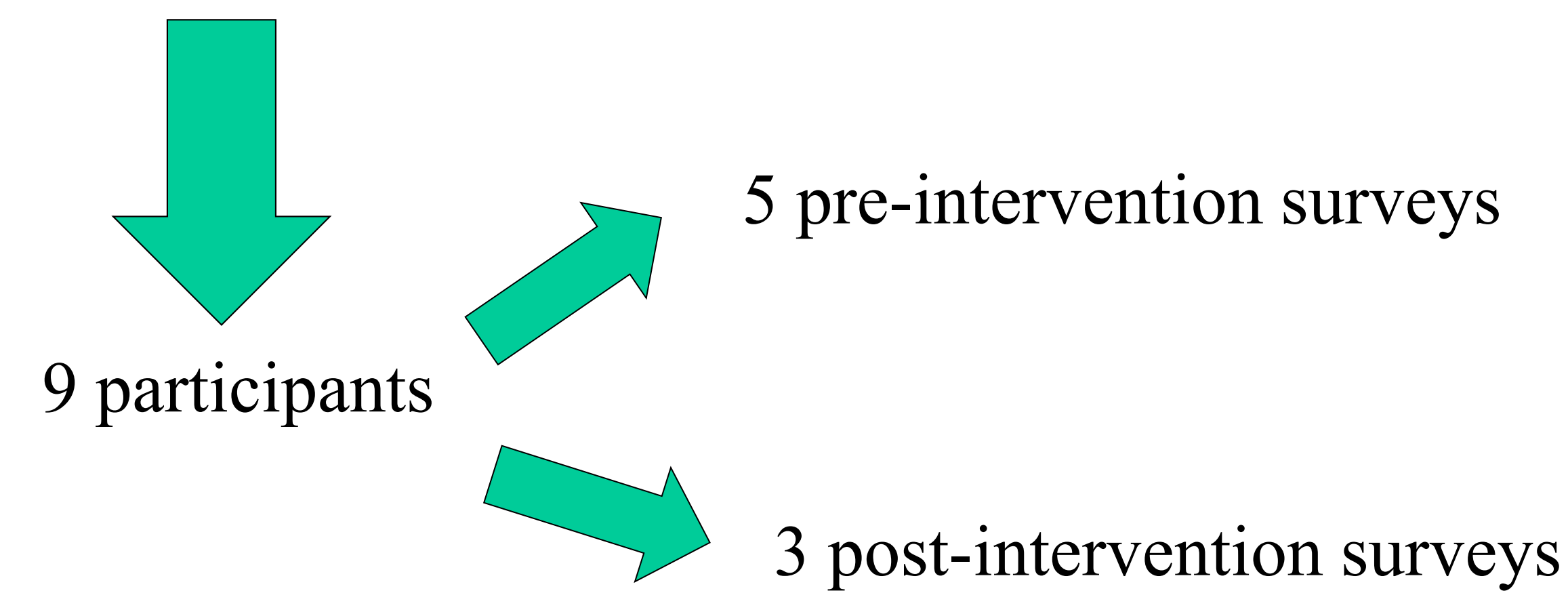
Aims: To create a mentorship program in order to attract URM student to pediatrics. Secondary aim includes identifying barriers to careers in pediatrics for URM students.

Hypothesis: Participation in a mentorship program will increase URM students' interest in pursuing a future career in pediatrics.

Methods

- Initial recruitment emails for the program were sent to 339 students first and second year medical students
 - 56 of whom self-identified as URM (based on admissions data)
- 9 students were enrolled in the program as mentees
- Pre-program surveys were sent out to all participants in September 2020
 - 5 students filled out pre-intervention surveys
- Post-program survey were sent in March 2021
 - 3 students filled out post-intervention surveys
- Study data were collected and managed using REDCap

56 URM 1st and 2nd year Medical Students



Description of Intervention

- 9 students were enrolled in the program as mentees
- 8 pediatricians (4 faculty and 4 residents) were selected as mentors
- Sessions were held monthly from October 2020 to February 2021
- Session topics included:
 - Introduction to Pediatrics
 - Building Effective Mentor-Mentee Relationships
 - Child Health Advocacy
 - Leadership and Feedback
 - One-on-one mentorship meetings

Results

- Data was collected September 2020-March 2021
- Students were asked, How likely are you to pursue a career in pediatrics?
 - Pre-intervention: mean 3.6 (Likert scale 1-5)
 - Post-intervention: mean 4.3 (Likert scale 1-5)
- Barriers to pursuing a career in pediatrics included:
 - Earning potential
 - Concern of finding a job in primary care given increased role of APPs
 - Engaging anti-vaxers
 - Approaching parents if their interests are conflicting with what may be in the best interests of the child
- Barriers remained consistent between pre and post-intervention groups

Conclusions

This data indicates that URM students who participated in the mentorship program are more interested in pursuing a future career in pediatrics.

Though not one of the original goals of the program, this work also demonstrates the efficacy of a distance mentorship model. Distance models, using Zoom or other video conferencing programs, can help students connect with mentors while minimizing scheduling and transit concerns. In an attempt to engage residents and fellows as mentors, distance mentorship models should be considered.

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Further Information

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