

2023

The Feminine vs Masculine Nurse: The Effects of Gender Stereotypes in Nursing

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<https://doi.org/10.33015/dominican.edu/2023.NURS.ST.16>

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Lapitan, Makrisel, "The Feminine vs Masculine Nurse: The Effects of Gender Stereotypes in Nursing" (2023). *Nursing | Senior Theses*. 98.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33015/dominican.edu/2023.NURS.ST.16>

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The Feminine vs Masculine Nurse: The Effects of Gender Stereotypes in Nursing

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NURS 4500: Nursing Research and Senior Thesis

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Spring 2023

Abstract

Background

The field of nursing has been a predominantly female profession since the introduction of modern nursing by Florence Nightingale in 1860. While more men are beginning to enter the field, there are still many stereotypes surrounding the role of a nurse. For women, this may include qualities such as caring and being empathetic or motherly. Conversely, there are assumptions that men are unable to bestow those same qualities and are therefore unworthy of working within the occupation. Female nurses may experience difficulty progressing professionally or feel that their male counterparts are more favored. Male nurses may observe that the female dominated space is difficult to assimilate into. Both men and women face the challenges of being a nurse in traditional patriarchal societies around the world.

Objective

This literature review will investigate the impacts of gender stereotypes and patriarchal values within the nursing profession.

Literature Review

There are many similarities between the various studies used. Male nurses and nursing students complained that their culture's word for "nurse" directly translates to a female title. Females within the profession explained it is easier for men to progress professionally, and are often favored by instructors and managers. The men described their frustration with being refused by

female patients, or being looked down upon for joining a female dominated profession. Specific and general issues that men and women faced are explored.

Proposal

Six articles were collected for this literature review utilizing the CINAHL Complete database.

After reviewing the literature, a proposal for a further mixed-methods and longitudinal research study is presented using a purposive sample with male high school students.

Keywords: nursing, nurses, gender stereotypes, gender bias, gender roles, males, and females

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Introduction

The field of nursing has been dominated by women for over two centuries now. As little girls grow up, they are encouraged to become nurses. Not doctors, as that role is for men. Young women observe “sexy nurse” costumes being advertised in stores during Halloween. Even Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing, has been commemorated as the so-called Mother of Nursing (Prosen, 2022). This motherly role that nurses are assumed to have often implies caring, feminine, and nurturing undertones. Yet this feminine perception simultaneously leads to connotations such as seductive or subservient to the male doctor or patient.

Men are often hesitant to join the practice due to the overpowering number of women within this field. These men may be negatively perceived as effeminate, or even disgraceful. People may believe that men are unable to showcase the “necessary” nursing characteristics that female nurses may naturally inherit. In the U.S. alone, there are approximately only 250,000 male nurses compared to the staggering 2.4 million female nurses that comprise the field (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). There must be a reasoning behind this wide gender gap in contemporary society.

There are endless amounts of stories from female nurses and nursing students about the sexual harassment and mistreatment at the bedside by men (Ross et al., 2019). For example, the crude remarks and inappropriate touching by patients while these women try to perform care. On the other hand, male nurses and nursing students are shunned and rejected by both male and female patients. I have personally seen fellow male students being turned away by intrapartum patients at my maternal health clinical rotation. Male patients complain that it is homosexual for a man to give another man care and female patients are uncomfortable allowing a man to see

them naked. While this field has gained more respect compared to past years due to Covid-19, many shortcomings must still be addressed.

The purpose of this investigation is to determine how gender stereotypes and patriarchal values affect nurses and nursing students in healthcare and the impacts it has on patient care.

Literature Review

The studies within this literature review were retrieved using the CINAHL Complete database, via Dominican University of California's library. Six primary articles were chosen based on their relevance to the research question. Keywords that were used included: nursing, nurses, gender stereotypes, gender bias, gender roles, males, and females. The following articles explore the role that gender stereotypes have within the nursing field. The articles were chosen based on year of publication and specification of the samples to the nursing profession.

The literature review will be divided into three primary categories. The first category will focus on the male nursing perspective. The second category will investigate the female nursing perspective, and the third category will be from both the male and female perspectives. See Appendix A for a Literature Review Table summarizing each article.

The Male View

While the male to female nurse ratio continues to face an incredible gender gap, more males are slowly entering the field. With this rising number of male nurses, men are encountering the challenges that come with practicing in a female dominated profession. Two primary articles will be examined to understand the male nursing perspectives.

In the qualitative study “*I am called girl, but that doesn’t matter*” -*perspectives of male nurses regarding gender-related advantages and disadvantages in professional development,*” the benefits and drawbacks of being male in nursing were investigated (Mao et al., 2021). A purposive sample with 12 male nurses and 12 male nursing students were used in in-depth interviews. The participants were required to be currently enrolled in a bachelor’s nursing program or had previously graduated with at least one year of clinical experience. The participants were recruited through nurse educators and nurses which the researchers were acquainted with. Of the students, five were freshmen; three were sophomores, two were juniors, and two were seniors. The average years of employment for the nurses was 5.6 years. The specialities of the nurses consisted of ICU, hemodialysis, emergency, and others.

The themes that emerged from the study consisted of role strains, perceived advantages of masculinity, and an egalitarian viewpoint (Mao et al., 2021, p. 4). Younger nursing students felt that it was harder to lead discussion in class due to the overwhelming amount of females in the group. As the students advanced to higher grades, they experienced less of this marginalization. The male nurses explained that they were limited to certain specialties such as emergency, ICU, and hemodialysis (Mao et al., 2021, p. 5). Regardless of this limitation, the nurses within the study preferred to work in these specialties, so they did not consider it a disadvantage.

Almost all of the participants had experienced an instance in which they were refused by female patients. Some perceived the refusal to be a missed opportunity, while others did not mind it. This may be because the instances only occurred a few times a year and did not affect their work within a daily basis. One participant explained that the most important aspect is to explain interventions to the female patient throughout the procedure. Precise explanations may

relieve anxiety during patient hospitalizations and can alleviate worries regarding care from the opposite sex. Another issue that the men noted was the use of the word “Gu-niang” in Hong-Kong and Macua, which translates to “girl” (Mao et al., 2021, p. 6). All of the males had been addressed as “Gu-iang” despite the term being feminine, showing how ingrained the feminine nursing stereotype is within the culture.

The males stated that they had the advantage of strength and mechanical abilities compared to their female counterparts. For example, the male nurses perceived themselves to be quick learners when using machines within the operating room (Mao et al., 2021, p. 5). The participants found it easy to create relationships with female peers, saying that they could bring a lighthearted mood or steadfastness when dealing with difficult patients. Almost all of the male nurses pursued graduate programs, expressing that males are expected to advance professionally, while women usually focus on family development. The students stated that while people traditionally correlate women with empathetic and gentle characteristics, this does not constitute a good nurse. Instead, a capable nurse is created with education (Mao et al., 2021, p. 6). Lastly, the participants commented that male nurses are gaining more respect as nursing acquires more relevancy due to Covid-19.

By requiring the male nurses to have at least one year of clinical experience to participate in the study aided in ensuring they had the necessary knowledge to speak on the conditions. The use of participants from different backgrounds such as Macau, Hong Kong, and mainland China increased the prospect for generalizability. Choosing students from different grade levels instead of only one grade also assisted with generalizability. One limitation was the small sample size and use of students from only one school that may have decreased generalizability. At the end of

the study, only two of the twenty-four participants were invited to review the study's findings, which could have limited the study's rigor.

In the study, "*Male Nurses' Experiences of Workplace Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in South Korea: A Qualitative Study*," researchers explored the male nursing experience with sexual discrimination and harassment (Chang & Jeong, 2021). A phenomenological qualitative approach was taken with the use of convenience and snowball sampling. Ten male nurses in South Korea with at least six months of experience were interviewed with in-depth phone interviews. Nursing specialties of the participants included surgical, medical, pediatric, and ICU. Results from the study yielded two themes: sexual discrimination and sexual harassment.

Within the gender discrimination theme, the male nurses believed there was unfair treatment because of the perception that males are inherently stronger. For example, one participant was forced to work extra shifts to accommodate a female peer who was on leave due to childbirth, instead of supplemental staffing becoming available (Chang & Jeong, 2021, p. 306). The participants also expressed the frustration of being turned away by female patients, and the attitudes that male nurses are "slower, blunter, and less sensitive" (Chang & Jeong, 2021 p. 306). Female nurses are seen to have more leniency relating to vacation. In South Korea, women are allowed menstrual and maternity leave, but males have difficulty acquiring time off for the country's required military leave.

The second theme that was frequently seen during the interviews correlates to sexual harassment. The participants conveyed that the harassment was very subtle, in the form of "intimate jokes," and they were often confused whether or not the acts could even be considered as such (Chang & Jeong, 2021 p. 307). The sexual harassment done to the males were often not

seen as problematic because the actions were done by females to males. The participants stated that they could never do to their female peers what is often done to them, such as touching the shoulders, stomach, or back.

One limitation of the study was the use of a sample from one country, with most of the participants working at one hospital in the capital, therefore decreasing generalizability. The use of phone calls instead of in-person interviews may have limited the data. Using nurses from a variety of nursing specialties provides a deeper understanding of how gender stereotypes are perceived by male nurses. Only using participants with a minimum amount of clinical experience permits ample time for the men to acknowledge if there is any discrimination or harassment in the profession.

Similarities between the two articles consist of personalities, male strength, and rejection by female patients. Although the studies were conducted in two different countries, they suggest that male nurses may be facing the same difficulties regardless of culture.

The Female View

The second category focuses on the female position in regard to gender discrimination within the nursing field. Only one article was found that met the necessary criteria of this literature review.

The article, "*The experience of workplace gender discrimination for women registered nurses: A qualitative study*" examines the occurrences of workplace sexual discrimination from the female nursing position (Gauci et al., 2021). Ten female nurses within New South Wales were recruited via purposive and snowball sampling. Data was then collected through the use of semi-structured phone and video interviews. The questions were related to the participants' experience in the nursing field and interactions regarding any gender discrimination they may

have faced. Years of clinical experience of the participants ranged from four to thirty-eight years, varying from bachelors to masters degrees. The emerging themes from the data were “it’s a man’s world,” “gender stereotypes: just a nurse on the floor,” and “being a nurse and a woman” (Gauci et al., 2021 p. 1747).

The entire sample commented on the swiftness that male nurses progress within their careers compared to women. The men are aided in acquiring higher positions such as management roles, regardless of if they have the necessary skills to succeed. The participants noticed that women were often omitted from workplace committees, which may work as a stepping stone for professional advancement. The women expressed that while they were expected to have vast post-graduate experience to be promoted, male nurses would instead be chosen even without the same qualifications (Gauci et al., 2021 p. 1748). Female nursing leaders also participated in maintaining patriarchal standards. These leaders favored their male subordinates, who in turned used this to their advantage to progress professionally. The participants stated that there is a higher leniency towards male nurses in terms of uncleanliness or clinical mistakes such as medication errors (Gauci et al., 2021 p. 1748).

The second theme of gender stereotypes accounts for the differences in characteristics between men and women. The participants explained that while men have strong personalities (i.e assertive or confident), women are more submissive and do not take action in order to advance in their careers (Gauci et al., 2021 p. 1748). The established qualities that women are expected to have (i.e empathy, caring, or motherly) may reinforce the idea that women should not be in leadership positions. One participant described that males prefer the “business strategic side rather than the caring side” (Gauci et al., 2021 p. 1748). This can explain why many male nurses attempt to work in higher positions such as a nurse manager.

The last theme of “being a nurse and a woman” focuses on the status of being a female on the floor. The participants disclosed that women lose respect as they age and after entering motherhood. After age forty, women are often recommended to work in less acute units or areas where there is a lower opportunity for career advancement (Gauci et al., 2021 p. 1749). After becoming mothers, the participants were expected to focus on their familial role instead of working to become promoted. Even with years of experience, women are cast aside by their male peers who see them as incompetent.

One strength within the study is the use of phone and video calls. Using open-ended questions gave the opportunity for the participants to give in-depth information and researchers an opportunity to thoroughly explore participants’ perceptions.. Generalizability may have been decreased due to the small sample size and because all participants were derived from only New South Wales. The experiences of the women may have been incredibly specific to that particular state in New Zealand.

The Male & Female View

The last category uses three articles that incorporate both male and female perspectives of gender stereotypes in nursing. The studies were performed in three different countries, with each implementing a variety of different ages, grade levels, and nursing specialties.

In “*Nursing students’ perception of gender-defined roles in nursing: a qualitative descriptive study*,” the experiences of both female and male nursing students with gender stereotypes is studied (Prosen, 2022). The convenience sample included 72 second and third year nursing students in Slovenia. Of the students, 58 were female and 14 were male. It must be noted that the nursing degree is completed in the third year in Slovenia. Data was collected via open ended questions, with the last question requiring the students to draw how they view themselves

within nursing. Emerging themes included “reasons for choosing nursing,” “gender-based perspective in academia,” “men in nursing,” “moving beyond stereotypes,” and “fighting entrenched gendered cultural beliefs” (Prosen, 2022 p. 5). The perspectives were divided between the males and females.

The male students noticed that they were often favored by instructors. Although there were instances in which they were excluded due to the majority of the group being female. The men disclosed that there are not always separate facilities, such as changing rooms. Similarly to the previous male studies mentioned, these students claimed they were occasionally rejected by female patients, especially in the maternity rotation. The male participants stated that there are instances in which they are not allowed to perform care, such as cleaning the perineal areas of younger female patients (Prosen, 2022 p. 6). A majority of the sample claimed that male nurses were more suitable to work with. Reasons for this claim included physical strength, completion of tasks that female nurses did not wish to perform, and a higher chance of advancing within the career. The gender stereotype is also deeply rooted within Slovenian culture. In Slovenian language, “nurse” directly translates to “medical sister.” This was viewed as questionable by the majority of the males. The female students also acknowledged the use of “medical sister” within the curriculum.

Most of the women did not think gender was an issue in nursing, yet some believed their male counterparts were favored by instructors. The female participants sometimes felt uncomfortable sharing changing rooms in instances where there was not a male designated room. The women commented on occasions in which patients preferred male nurses, such as when physical strength was required, despite the women being capable of performing the task. A handful of the women stated they preferred working with male students because of their ability

to provide new and different perspectives (Prosen, 2022 p. 7). Men may contribute a refreshing atmosphere to predominantly female units.

When asked to draw themselves, the female participants expressed altruism and positive self images while the males drew management, leadership, and technical skills (Prosen, 2022 p. 7). The women often drew suns or hearts, and some made use of colored pencils. The men depicted drawings of themselves delegating tasks, ambulances, or participating in the operating room.

Strengths of the study consisted of the use of questionnaires and students from different grades. The open-ended questions gave students the opportunity to create thoughtful answers, aiding in data collection. Utilizing students from second and third grades allows different views based on level of education within the program. Conversely, one-on-one interviews could have created more detailed or personal answers that written questionnaires may not be able to provide. The presence of the researcher during the study may have affected the responses of the participants. The study does not include other gender identities, which are becoming increasingly important within modern research. Lastly, the use of drawings may have created ambiguous or biased interpretations by the researchers.

The article "*Psychometric properties of the Gender Role Attitudes Scale among Turkish nursing students and factors affecting their attitudes,*" describes the attitudes of nursing students towards gender roles and women's work. A psychometric, cross-sectional, and descriptive study was performed on 916 nursing students within two different Turkish universities through convenience sampling. Of the participants, 83.5% were female and 16.5% were male. Ages ranged from 18 to 50. The majority of the sample was currently enrolled in the undergraduate program, while 6.65% was enrolled in the graduate program. The students were provided with a

personal questionnaire in which they were asked five open ended questions regarding their sex, number of siblings, age, education level, and the geographic region born/raised in (Celebi Cakiroglu & Harmanci Seren, 2021, p. 707). The Gender Roles Attitude Scale (GRAS) was also implemented.

The data revealed that the five personal characteristics affect the student's view of gender roles. While the participants had an “egalitarian gender role attitude in all areas,” there was a “less egalitarian attitude in the employment area” (Celebi Cakiroglu & Harmanci Seren, 2021, p. 710). This implies that the students do not believe that men and women are equally suitable in certain professions, such as nursing. The female participants exhibited a more egalitarian attitude compared to the men. This suggests that because men benefit more from a patriarchal society, they are less inclined to submit to an egalitarian culture. Higher age and education level also correlated with a higher egalitarian attitude. Participants with fewer siblings were seen to have an improved egalitarian view as well. This may be due to the implemented roles of sons and daughters within families that may not be seen in single children households. Students that grew up in rural areas were observed to have more sexist outlooks. Overall, the scale was useful in analyzing the factors that may affect gender role attitudes.

Implementing a study in such a large sample allowed for better population representation. Using students from both undergraduate and graduate programs permitted varying data within different levels of education. Although a large sample size was used, students were only recruited from two universities in Istanbul. This limits generalizability, as the data was from one specific area of Turkey. The scale has not been adapted to other cultures yet, so further research is needed to test the validity outside of Turkey.

The article “*Self-reported competence in female and male nursing students in the light of theories of hegemonic masculinity and femininity,*” studies the individual perceptions of competence within male and female nursing students (Carlsson, 2019). A cross-sectional study was performed in 2012 and later in 2017 using Swedish nursing students. In the 2012 sample, 946 females and 137 males were chosen. Five years later, 631 females and 90 males were recruited. Data was collected using the Nursing Professional Competence Scale (NPC) (Nilsson et al, 2018). The different background nursing programs of the students included caring/nursing, natural science, social science, and others.

Differences in self-competency were seen between the male and female students. Females scored higher self-competency in the value-based nursing care and documentation and administration of nursing categories (Carlsson, 2019, p. 195). Conversely, the males believed themselves to have higher self-competency in the development, leadership, and organization or nursing category (Carlsson, 2019, p. 195). These results correlate to gender stereotypes seen in the studies previously mentioned. For example, females may see nursing as a career requiring compassion and empathy. On the other hand, males are more involved in technical and leadership roles that require the delegation of tasks. Those leadership roles relate to higher power within the profession, which corresponds with the patriarchal idea that males should hold more power in society.

Implementing a large sample size in both the 2012 and 2017 data creates a better representation of the chosen population. However, the unequal ratio of males to females may decrease the study’s validity. Recruiting an equal number of males to females while still having a large sample size may be particularly difficult in nursing, where there is a large gender disparity.

Summary of the Research Literature

Throughout the six research articles, many similarities were highlighted. Both men and women from different countries, ages, and nursing specialties were selected. In the literature, the characteristics of caring, empathetic, and compassionate were mentioned when speaking about female nurses. Male nurses discuss the feelings that arise when they are rejected by female patients, as well as being told they are in an unsuitable profession for them. The women mention the ease that males are able to advance professionally, and data suggests that males gravitate towards these leadership roles as well. These gender stereotypes may hinder both men and women to reach their highest potentials within the nursing profession.

Research Proposal

After reviewing the literature, an obvious gender ratio disparity in the nursing profession is seen. Within the co-ed studies chosen in this literature review, the female participants outnumbered the males by more than half. This is because there continues to be a shortage of males who are interested in pursuing nursing. Strategies to implement effective recruitment of men within nursing must be researched. The research aim for the following proposed study will be to determine the efficacy of high school nursing outreach in recruiting male students within the nursing field.

Theoretical Framework

The research will be guided by the social role theory by Alice Eagly and Wendy Wood. Eagly began developing this theory during the 1980s, focusing within the field of psychology

and sociology. The theory explains that gender stereotypes are heavily influenced by the “divisions of labor” within societies (Eagly & Wood, 2016, p. 459). For example, women are designated as homemakers while men work outside of the home as the head of the family. Innate characteristics of men and women such as having a stronger physical build or child rearing abilities, respectively, contributes to gender stereotypes. Wood and Eagly explain that because people are more likely to approve “behavior that is consistent rather than inconsistent with these roles,” one will try to act consistently within the designated gender role (Eagly & Wood, 2016, p. 467). This may explain why men continue to gravitate towards leadership or labor intensive roles, while women continue to pursue nurturing or caregiving occupations. This relates to the proposed research, where women are supposedly better suited for nursing than men due to their nurturing qualities. Contrarily, men are perceived as too callous and insensitive to thrive within the profession. Male nurses are approached for certain tasks requiring strength or for management positions. Men—who may thrive within nursing if given the opportunity—are hindered by outdated gender stereotypes.

Research Design

The study will be conducted in two parts through a mixed-methods, longitudinal design using purposive sampling. Data will be collected with questionnaires that use a quantitative approach with closed-ended questions and a qualitative approach with open-ended questions. The questions will be assessed for validity and reliability using sample testing with content experts (school nurses and nurse administrators).

Research Population and Sample Size

From the population of high school (HS) students in the SF Bay Area. A total of 120 ninth grade students will be recruited across two public high schools within the Bay Area. Sixty participants from each school will be chosen. Inclusion criteria will be: currently enrolled in ninth grade in one of the chosen high schools and identifying as male.

Strategy for Recruitment

The research team will collaborate with teachers to request permission for 20 minutes of class time. The team will explain how the study will be conducted. Interested students who meet the inclusion criteria will be invited to a pizza party. The study will be explained further & a link will be provided for potential participants to access to obtain more information and to give their contact information. Potential participants & their guardians will be contacted and given additional information about consent/assent.

Ethical Considerations

The proposed study will be reviewed by Dominican University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Approval by the IRB will be obtained prior to collection of the data. Parental guardians' consent and participants' assent must be obtained after thorough explanation of the study purpose, risks, benefits, and maintenance of confidentiality of students' personal information. For data analysis, each participant shall be given a pseudonym to remain

confidential. The participants and their parental guardians will be informed of the participants' right to withdraw from the study at any given time, without any repercussions.

Methodology

Part 1

Part 1 will take place at the beginning of the school year. The study will be conducted afterschool at the high school's cafeteria with a time frame of one hour. A randomized controlled trial will be conducted to divide the sample within two groups. Group A will receive a short presentation on the nursing profession by a male RN. Group B will have an open discussion session on how well they are transitioning from middle to high school.

The presentation that Group A will receive shall be composed of personal experiences by the male RN, the responsibilities of a nurse, average pay, and specialties within the profession (i.e. emergency, cardiac, intensive care units). Following the presentation, each participant will receive a questionnaire from the researchers. The questions will be as followed:

1. Are you interested in becoming a nurse in the future?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Maybe

Why or why not?

Please comment: _____

2. What characteristics do you associate with nursing?

Please comment: _____

3. How do you feel about men joining the nursing profession?

Please comment: _____

4. Do you personally know any male nurses?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Maybe

5. Do you believe that women are better suited for nursing?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Maybe

Please comment: _____

6. If you were to be a nurse, what specialty would you be interested in?

____ Emergency department

____ Intensive care unit

____ Labor and delivery

- Pediatrics
- Cardiac
- Dermatology
- Flight nursing
- Hospice
- Medical surgical
- Neonatal intensive care unit
- Other

7. What aspect of nursing sounds the most interesting to you?

Please comment: _____

Group B will receive the same questionnaire but will not be given a demonstration by the male RN. Group B's discussion will involve topics such as resources to make the transition easier, extracurriculars available at the school, and advice for making new friends.

Each year at the beginning of the school year, the groups will receive similar sessions throughout high school. This will ensure that the research team is continuously tracking each of their participants. Doing so may also increase the likelihood that the nursing education is impacting the male participants.

Part 2

The second part of the study will take place four years after the start of the study using the same sample. The criteria to participate will include: previous participation in Part 1 of the

study and are currently enrolled as a college student. Both groups will receive another questionnaire. The questions for Group A will be as followed:

1. What is your major?

Please comment: _____

2. What helped you choose your current major?

Please comment: _____

3. Are you currently satisfied with your choice?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Maybe

4. If it is nursing, why did you choose it?

Please comment: _____

5. Did the presentation from four years ago help in your decision to join the nursing profession?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Maybe

6. What characteristics do you associate with nursing?

Please comment: _____

7. How do you feel about men joining the nursing profession?

Please comment: _____

8. Do you believe that women are better suited for nursing?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Maybe

Group B will receive the following questions:

1. What is your major?

Please comment: _____

2. What helped you choose your current major?

Please comment: _____

3. Are you currently satisfied with your choice?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Maybe

4. If it is nursing, why did you choose it?

Please comment: _____

5. What characteristics do you associate with nursing?

Please comment: _____

6. How do you feel about men joining the nursing profession?

Please comment: _____

7. Do you believe that women are better suited for nursing?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Maybe

Analysis

The researchers will use the collected data from both part 1 and 2 to determine if the presentation affected whether or not the males decided to major in nursing. Quantitative questions will be analyzed using descriptive statistics. Answers to closed-ended questions will be

coded to create numerical values. To compare differences in the intervention and control groups one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) will be performed.

Qualitative, open-ended questions will be analyzed using Content Analysis. Words, phrases, and themes will be highlighted throughout the data to search for any significant relationships.

Conclusion

The opinions and personal experiences of male and female nurses and nursing students regarding gender stereotypes within the profession were explored within six research articles. Some of the stated experiences are well known obstacles, such as male rejection by patients. New information was also revealed, including the difficulty that women encounter when applying for leadership positions. This literature review may help introduce changes within nursing to make the working environment a more equitable place. The proposed research will attempt to recruit more males within the female dominated field of nursing by informing teenage students of the nursing role. There must continue to be a change of action to ensure that nursing may be seen as both a male and female role.

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Appendix A - Literature Review Table

| Purpose | Investigator | N | Sample | Design/Methods | Major findings | Strengths | Limitations |
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| <p>Male</p> <p>To explore the pros and cons of being male in the nursing field.</p> | <p>Mao, A., Cheong, P.L., Van, I.K. <i>et al.</i> "I am called girl, but that doesn't matter" -perspectives of male nurses regarding gender-related advantages and disadvantages in professional development. <i>BMC Nurs</i> 20, 24 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12912-021-00539-w</p> | 24 | <p>Purposive sample.</p> <p>12 male nursing students and 12 male nurses. Of the students: n = 5 freshmen, n = 3 sophomores, n = 2 juniors, and n = 2 seniors. Average employment for the nurses was 5.6 years.</p> | <p>Descriptive qualitative</p> <p>Semi-structured individual interview</p> | <p>Participants found there were limited opportunities in education and employment, related to care of refusal from female patients. Participants found it easier for men to pursue higher education. Males found it easy to build relationships with female peers.</p> | <p>All male nurses chosen had at least 1 year of clinical experience, helping ensure that participants had knowledge of the conditions.</p> <p>Participants had different work backgrounds and origins (Macau, mainland China, and Hong Kong), increasing the prospect for generalizability. .</p> | <p>Small sample size and participants from one nursing school limits generalizability.</p> <p>Only 2 participants were invited to review the study's findings which limits the studies rigor.</p> |
| <p>M&F</p> <p>To</p> | <p>Prosen, M. Nursing students'</p> | 72 | <p>Convenience sample.</p> | <p>Descriptive qualitative</p> | <p>Males acknowledged it is easier to advance in careers than female</p> | <p>Ability to choose more thoughtful answers with the questionnaire.</p> | <p>One on one interviews could have created more detailed or personal answers.</p> |

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| <p>investigate the experiences of male/female nursing students and their views on gender roles.</p> | <p>perception of gender-defined roles in nursing: a qualitative descriptive study. <i>BMC Nurs</i> 21, 104 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12912-022-00876-4</p> | | <p>Obtained at a 3- year undergraduate nursing program in Slovenia. 72 second & third year male and female nursing students.</p> | <p>Open ended questionnaire</p> | <p>counterparts. Both genders believed their instructors favored male students. Males were favored doing tasks r/t physical strength, while women were told it was the job of a man in the same circumstances. Males saw themselves in more technical and management roles (OR, delegating tasks). Females saw themselves as more altruistic, doing more empathetic pt care.</p> | <p>The use of second and third year students allows different perspectives throughout nursing school.</p> | <p>Researcher's presence during the study may have affected the responses. Does not include other gender identities. Use of drawings for the methods could create ambiguous or biased interpretations.</p> |
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| <p>M&F</p> <p>To discover the perspectives of nursing students towards gender roles & women's work.</p> | <p>Celebi Cakiroglu, O., & Harmanci Seren, A. K. (2022). Psychometric properties of the Gender Role Attitudes Scale among Turkish nursing students and factors affecting their attitudes. <i>Perspectives in Psychiatric Care</i>, 58(2), 706–714. https://doi.org/10.1111/pc.12840</p> | <p>916</p> | <p>Convenience sample.</p> <p>Obtained at 2 universities in Turkey.</p> <p>Ages 18 to 50 Mean age = 20.84</p> <p>Undergraduate program = 93.4% Graduate program = 6.65%</p> <p>Females = 83.5% Males = 16.5%</p> | <p>Psychometric, cross-sectional, and descriptive study.</p> <p>Open ended questionnaire and GRAS tool</p> | <p>Overall, the students displayed an egalitarian attitude in social, family, and employment areas. Factors that increased egalitarianism were female sex and older age. It decreased in participants from rural areas.</p> | <p>Large sample allows for better population representation.</p> <p>The use of undergraduate and graduate students shows how advanced education may affect results</p> | <p>The use of only 2 universities, both being from Istanbul made the sample only specific to that city.</p> <p>Scale not adapted to other cultures</p> |
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| <p>Male</p> <p>To inquire the experiences of male nurses within a female dominated workplace.</p> | <p>Chang, Hyoung Eun, and Suyong Jeong. "Male Nurses' Experiences of Workplace Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in South Korea: A Qualitative Study." <i>Asian Nursing Research</i>, 15(5) 303-309. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anr.2021.09.002</p> | | <p>Convenience & snowball sampling</p> <p>Male RN's with at least 6 months of work experience.</p> | <p>Phenomenological qualitative</p> <p>In-depth phone interviews</p> | <p>Participants felt that it is harder to receive welfare benefits and vacation compared to females.</p> <p>Less facilities for the men (i.e bathrooms) or they are farther away.</p> <p>Male nurses experienced subtle forms of sexual harassment by peers and patients.</p> | <p>Use of participants from multiple nursing units may show different experiences between the nurses.</p> | <p>Using a video call instead of a phone call may have allowed better interpretations with the use of facial expressions.</p> |
| <p>M&F</p> <p>To explore the</p> | <p>Carlsson, M. (2019). Self-reported competence</p> | <p>20 12 : 18 10</p> | <p>Convenience sample</p> <p>2012 data</p> <p>Females =</p> | <p>Cross-sectional</p> <p>NPC scale</p> | <p>Women scored higher self-competence in value based nursing care and documentation and administration of nursing</p> | <p>Large sample size</p> | <p>Unequal number of males and females</p> |

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| <p>individual views of self-competency within male and female nursing students</p> | <p>in female and male nursing students in the light of theories of hegemonic masculinity and femininity. <i>Journal of Advanced Nursing</i>. 76(1), 191-198</p> <p>https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.14220</p> | <p>20 15 : 72 6</p> | <p>946 Males = 137</p> <p>2017 data Females = 631 Males = 90</p> | | <p>categories</p> <p>Males scored higher self-competence in the development, leadership, and organization or nursing category</p> | | |
| <p>Female</p> <p>To investigate the experience of gender discrimination among female nurses in the workplace.</p> | <p>Gauci, P., Peters, K., O’Reilly, K., & Elmir, R. (2022). The experience of workplace gender discrimination for women registered nurses: A qualitative study. <i>Journal of Advanced Nursing</i></p> | <p>10</p> | <p>Purposive and snowball sampling</p> <p>Female RNs n = 10</p> <p>Recruited through social media</p> <p>Average age = 41.8 years</p> <p>Average clinical experience = 15.4 years</p> | <p>Qualitative exploratory</p> <p>Phone & video call interviews</p> | <p>The participants expressed that it is easier for their male peers to progress in their careers due to their gender. They acknowledged that female nurses must have an extensive amount of credentials/experience to compete against male nurses with less qualifications. Participants who became mothers were no longer given leadership roles.</p> | <p>Phone & video call interviews allowed for more in depth and personal statements.</p> | <p>Small sample size. The participants were all employed in New South Wales (Australia), so answered may not be diverse.</p> |

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| | <i>(John Wiley & Sons, Inc.), 78(6), 1743–1754. https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.15137</i> | | | | | | |
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