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CAN MALES BE NURTURING AND CARING?

Patient Attitudes Towards Male Nurses In The Labor And Delivery Unit

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BACKGROUND

According to the Institute of Medicine report in 2002, "diversification of the health care workforce is an effective way to narrow racial and ethnic disparities" (as cited in Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2011, para. 14)

Nursing is commonly seen as "women's work" (Wilson, 2009, para. 17). This role is associated with common "feminine" traits: caring, loving, nurturing, helping (Wilson, 2009; Shin, Kim & Lee, 2017). This association has turned men away from nursing (Wilson, 2009).

As of 2011, only 9.6% of nurses are male in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013).

Males who are nurses battle the stereotypes of being gay or effeminate, and face barriers in recruitment and retention (Adeyemi-Adelanwa, Barton-Gooden, Dawkins, & Lindo, 2016; Anchora, 2016).

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 1.2 million vacant nursing jobs will occur between 2014 and 2022, and another study states the nursing shortage would occur by 2025 (as cited in Grant, 2016). Another study pointed out that Canada and Australia are also facing a nursing shortage, and men in nursing can be a potential healthcare resource to alleviate this problem (Juliff, Russel, & Bulsara, 2016; Rajacich, Kane, Williston, & Cameron, 2013).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Florence Nightingale's contributions to nursing gave the modern nurse image today as a female, caregiving role because women are nurturing and caring by nature (Anchora, 2016; Cude 2004). Compared to female nurses, males in nursing were seen as less sensitive to people's emotions, less caring, and homosexual or having female qualities (Anchora, 2016). They were also thought to be better in leadership (Anchora, 2016).

Nurses who are male are referred to as "male nurse," but a study pointed out that people do not say "female doctor" or "male doctor" (Rajacich et al., pp. 77, 2013).

Barriers to males in nursing that were researched well include gender stereotypes, differences in learning styles, insufficient mentorship, and sex-related bias in obstetrics (Adeyemi-Adelanwa et al., 2016). More research is needed on patient attitudes towards male nursing care. Cultural influences can affect whether males want to enter nursing, especially if patients see them as insufficient to provide care (Adeyemi-Adelanwa et al., 2016).

The Adeyemi-Adelanwa et al., study (2016), suggests having "direct comparisons between male and female nurses in the perception of care received" (pp. 142).

Only 0.5% to 1% of male nurses are in labor and delivery (L&D), but 45.5% of obstetricians and gynecologists are male (AAMC, 2015). A huge bias exists for male nurses in obstetrics, even though obstetricians historically were male (Cude, 2004; McRae, 2003).

There has been controversy over men working in maternal-newborn areas (Cude, 2004). For example, there are two cases where being female was a legit qualification to be an L&D nurse, but the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission deemed this discriminatory (Cude, 2004).

Female patients who choose male physicians should be open to receiving care from a male nurse. If female nurses can receive education on how to act professionally when taking care of male patients, a male nurse can do likewise with female patients without violating their privacy and dignity (Brown, 1986).

PURPOSE

To assess the perceptions of mothers or mothers-to-be on receiving care during labor and delivery from a male or female nurse in order to:

1. address if male nurses should be in the obstetrics field
2. compare male vs. female inherent natures
3. suggest the support males entering the nursing field need from educators

"You can't put a gender on tender loving care."
– Larry Meneghini

METHODS

- Descriptive, quantitative design
- Target population: mothers and mothers-to-be
  Institutional review board and informed consent will be obtained before participants engage in research
- Tool: survey utilizing the
  Attitudes Towards Men in Nursing Scale
  (ATMINS) from Bartfay, Bartfay, Clow, & Wu study (2010), and modifications to this tool.

HYPOTHESES

A majority will:

1. rate male and female L&D nursing care satisfactory
2. report more positive attitudes towards female L&D nurses than male L&D nurses
3. report feeling less comfortable with care from a male nurse, if they originally had a female nurse in L&D

MODIFIED ATMINS

Modified Attitudes Towards Men in Nursing Scale

Age: _____ Location: _____
Ethnicity: ☐ White ☐ Hispanic/Latino ☐ Black/African ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
☐ American Native American or American Indian ☐ Other
Education level: ☐ middle school ☐ high school graduate ☐ vocational ☐ associates degree
☐ bachelor's degree ☐ master's and above
First Time Mom: ☐ Yes ☐ No
Obstetrician: ☐ Male ☐ Female
Midwife: ☐ Male ☐ Female
Nurse during labor delivery: ☐ Male ☐ Female
Nurse during postpartum: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Directions: We are interested in obtaining your personal opinions and insights regarding men in nursing in the obstetrics field. You may choose not to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable and leave it blank without penalty. All the information on this form is regarded as confidential and will be only accessible to members of the research team. Please **circle** the response that best describes your own personal opinion related to the following questions. Your participation is greatly valued and appreciated.

If you had a **female nurse** during **labor and delivery** please answer:

1. **I felt satisfied with the care I received in labor and delivery.**
   strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree
2. **I have positive attitudes towards female nurses in the maternal-newborn field of nursing.**
   strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree
3. **If I had a nurse of the opposite gender, I would feel comfortable with the nursing duties they performed.**
   strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree

If you had a **male nurse** during **labor and delivery** please answer:

4. **I felt satisfied with the care I received in labor and delivery.**
   strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree
5. **I have positive attitudes towards male nurses in the maternal-newborn field of nursing.**
   strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree
6. **If I had a nurse of the opposite gender, I would feel comfortable with the nursing duties they performed.**
   strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree

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