

Facilitators and barriers in attracting and retaining men in the nursing workforce

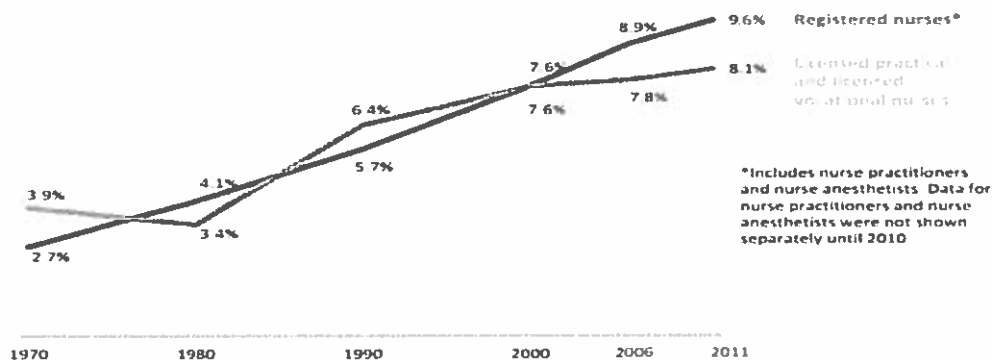
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Study Background

- Although the number of men in nursing has increased from 4% in 1994 (88,623) to 11.5% in 2012 (280,000), men in nursing remains to be a minority in the profession.
- Societal perceptions and the media portrayal of male nurses are still unfavorable.
- Key determinants of Registered Nurses' job satisfaction such as job stress, work settings, pay and opportunities for growth have been studied in general but have never been investigated particularly among male nurses.

Figure 1. Percentage of Nurses Who Are Men From 1970 to 2011



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970 Decennial Census, 1980, 1990, and 2000 Equal Employment Opportunity Tabulation, and 2006 and 2011 American Community Survey

Purpose of Study

- Explore factors that may affect men in nursing. Specifically, to obtain feedback from male nurses regarding the facilitators and barriers to attracting and retaining men in the nursing profession.

Methodology

- A qualitative descriptive study using focus group methods.
- Focus group: the method used to gather information where participants are free to give their opinion without being judged (Kreuger and Casey, 2009).

Sampling

- **Purposive sampling** (Munhall, 2006)
Emailed flyers to personal and professional network.
- **Snowball sampling** (Polit & Beck, 2012)
Established a contact person in each healthcare facility
- **Inclusion and exclusion criteria** (Polit & Beck, 2012)
Strictly employed.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

- Inclusion criteria include:
 - a) current employment as a nurse; and
 - b) employed as a nurse for at least a minimum of one year in the US.
- Exclusion criteria include:
 - a) not employed in nursing;
 - b) less than a year nursing experience; and
 - c) nurses who occupy administrative responsibility (i.e., nurse manager, director, supervisor, chief nurse executive or higher).

Setting

Settings chosen were private conference/meeting rooms situated with a door that closed

Adequate lighting

Seating arrangement around a rectangular or round table

Data Collection

- IRB approved
- Researcher informed participants of ground rules
- Written informed consent obtained from participants
- Demographic questionnaire completed

Focus Groups

- Five focus groups were conducted in different locations
(Northeast NJ, Northwest NJ, Central NJ, South NJ, Philadelphia)
- All focus groups were held 60-75 minutes duration
- Focus groups were audio recorded and translated verbatim
- Observations recorded regarding: body language, tone of voice, and other non-verbal expression in field notes
- Focus group questionnaire (open ended questions)

Demographic Findings

- N = 28 participants; 16 (57%) US educated and 12 (43%) foreign-educated
- Average age is 36 (range is 23 – 65)
- Initial nursing degree: Associate (8 = 28.5%), BSN (20 = 71.5%)
- Highest educational attainment: AAS(2=7%), BSN (20=71.5%), BA (2 = 7%), MSN (3 = 11%), DNP (1 = 4%)
- Mean # of years in nursing (11 years)
- # of times they left their RN jobs: 0x = 2, 1x = 12, 2x = 8, 3x = 5, 4x = 1

Common reasons for leaving their jobs

- Moved/transitioned to a different department/area of nursing
- Due to a move to the US (Foreign born nurses)
- Wanted a change in environment
- Moved/location change within the US
- End of contract
- Hospital closing

Measurement: Focus group questions

1. What are the reasons you chose Nursing as a profession?

2. How do you feel about being a nurse in a female-dominated profession?
3. What do you perceive to be the barriers to men going into Nursing as a profession?
4. What do you think would be helpful to attracting more male nurses into the nursing profession?

Measurement: Focus group questions

- 5. Based on your experience, what do you believe to be the barriers to effectively providing care to your patients? (*Barriers you feel are because of your gender*)=_____
- 6. Based on your experience, what do you believe to be the facilitators to effectively providing care to your patients? (*facilitators you feel are because of your gender*)
- 7. What do you think would be helpful to retain more male nurses in the profession?
- 8. If you have to do it all over again, would you choose nursing as a profession? Why or why not?
- 9. Is there anything else you would like to share about being a male nurse that you feel is important to know?

Data Analysis

- Data analysis started with self debriefing to capture first impressions (Kreuger, 1994).
- Data for analysis was obtained from the audiotapes transcribed verbatim and from the field notes.
- Data analyzed using Colaizzi's Analytic Method

Data Analysis

- Step 1
 - All audio recordings were transcribed by a graduate assistant.
 - Researcher reviewed data from transcripts obtained from audio recordings and field notes (include body language, tone of voice)
 - Bracketing and reflexive journaling employed
 - Immersion – have a feel for the statements and make sense of it
 - Summary of transcript completed after exhaustive review by researcher

Data Analysis

- Step 2
 - Summarized significant statements
 - Color coded and categorized line by line statements
- Step 3
 - Exhaustive review of significant statements/ checking transcripts/ quotes marked
 - Reduced the number of statements into manageable size to formulate meanings

Data Analysis

- Step 4
 - Formulated meanings and significant statements reviewed and organized into cluster of themes.
 - Cluster of themes were organized and referenced back to the formulated meanings and significant statements
 - The cluster of themes represented with sub-themes.

Data Analysis

- Step 5
 - This process unveiled 5 themes and sub-themes
 - The researcher completed an exhaustive review of the final themes for the final correlation of phenomenon under study to organize the themes into a systematic manner.

Results/Findings: Themes Identified

1. Economic Appeal
2. Job Satisfaction
3. Gender advantages/disadvantages
4. Characteristics of men in nursing
5. Societal Perception

Theme 1: Economic Appeal

- Economic opportunity
- Upward mobility
- Job security
- Diverse opportunities

Theme 1: Economic Appeal

- *“Men primarily choose nursing due to financial/job security reasons.”*
- *“The many opportunities that nursing provides along with a flexible schedule make nursing a good field for men.”*
- *The easiest way to get into the United States is to get into nursing, so I did that to be with my family in the US.*
- *“I knew I would be able to get some kind of job and experience and then it would open up to other opportunities, different fields, different units, advancing my career”*

Theme 2: Job Satisfaction

- Flexible schedules
- Family focused
- Positive mental health
- Positive physical health
- Life Satisfaction
- Helping others
- Teamwork

Theme 2: Job Satisfaction

- *"You know we save lives, we fight infection, we help the patient get better, and at the end of the day these are not numbers. We're taking care of people."*
- *"Its very rewarding, just on a personal level like when someone tells you "thank you so much you really changed my life." It's a special feeling, making people see that's it's okay to be caring. There's so many benefits to the career, if you make the most of it, not only can you change people's lives but you can change your own life for the better."*

Theme 2: Job Satisfaction

- *"I find it personally rewarding when I can help patients out and comfort family members, hug and hold hands with family members, when their family members who are patients are terminally ill and dying"*
- *When asked would you do nursing all over again? "Oh hell yes but I would even do it sooner, for me I love what I do even with all the complaints and everything"*
- *"I really enjoy what I am doing because I have the utmost respect of the physicians I work with"*

Theme 3: Gender advantages and disadvantages

- Gender equality/inequality
- Gender differences
- Gender superiority
- Cultural barriers
- Gender barriers

Theme 3: Gender advantages and disadvantages

- *"You can see a difference between the way females and males think. It brings an advantage to the career, being able to look at things from a different perspective than the female nurse would."*
- *"Male nurses do not gossip and bully as much as female nurses."*
- *"I also noticed with a lot of the elderly patients, some of them are confused. Pretty consistently they'll ask "Oh are you my doctor?" and they will forget, I'm like "No I'm your nurse" and they're like "Oh? Why aren't you my doctor?" which is annoying as hell."*
- *"The patient is usually okay, sometimes it's the family or the husband that questions the presence of a male nurse."*

Theme 4: Characteristics of men in nursing

- Technical knowledge
- Time management
- Caring and compassion
- Strength
- Analytical
- Scientific
- Organized

Theme 4: Characteristics of men in nursing

- *"I'm very straight forward, I speak with confidence and I let them know the entire plan of care for the night, I let them know what to expect and I tell them what is going to happen for the 12 hour shift, so that when I do come into the room, they are not surprised and that they don't know what is happening. They are more receptive to me, because I am a male and everything I say with confidence, and I say it "with my chest" so to say. "*
- *"A lot of the times I feel like I'm getting pulled away from my assignment to go help pull this patient, or this patient is acting out so they need the male nurse to calm them down."*

Theme 4: Characteristics of men in nursing

- *"It helps me to become more caring because I understand the feelings of my patients."*
- *"We tend to be more to the point, more factual without having any judgement type that this is better for you."*
- *"Male are more direct than women."*
- *"I think also one point is an advantage being a man is the emotional strength. We tend to be calm in a critical situation, we tend to be more analytical and so able to assess the situation and stabilize whatever critical situation is at hand"*

Theme 5: Societal perception

- Stereotypes
- Laborious
- Media Influence
- Peer influence
- Need for educational outreach
- Need for role models
- Social Status

Theme 5: Societal perception

- *"I told my friends I'm going into nursing, everybody started laughing at me. They started thinking that I'm gay."*
- *"Less men pursue nursing because they are a minority with regards to gender."*
- *"Men may be insecure because of public stereotypes of nursing being woman's work."*
- *"We should have more male role models to attract more male students."*
- *"I think just in general a lot of guidance counselors out there.....they still have that gender norm assigned in their brain."*

Theme 5: Societal perception

- *"...TV portrayal of nurses are on the sideline, doctors on the front row. The role of the nurse is not being portrayed properly when there's decision making that are to be done, that's a turn-off for some men"*
- *"Men are judged negatively for entering the field in high school"*
- *"There is still a perception coming from the patients' families that the nurse should be female. Even in some of our books they use she when referring to the nurse rather than being gender-neutral"*

Implications: Recruitment

- Schools of nursing in partnership with healthcare institutions to:
 - Provide educational outreach to students as early as elementary up to high school (re: diverse opportunities of men in nursing).
 - Conduct in-service to guidance counselors regarding the opportunities of men in nursing.
 - Provide summer internship for high school students to observe men in nursing at work.
 - Inclusion of men in nursing in bill board, flyers, websites and other media outlets, (e.g. Johnson and Johnson TV commercial)

Implications: Retention

- Equality in treatment: workload and work assignment.
- Decreasing stereotypes at work that men in nursing are less compassionate than female nurses.
- Increase awareness of male nurses being bullied by female nurses.
- Inclusion of men in social circles.