IMPACTING STUDENT SUCCESS;

the importance of gender diversity within nursing education

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Approx 10% of students are male – only 5-6% practicing (CNA)

Rise in intake but only a slow increase in practicing men, attrition levels remain high (Stott, 2003)

Stott (2004) found that 40-50% of males entering nursing either fail or drop out

Social stigma associated with men in a female dominated profession is perpetuated by education and socialization process, which is isolating and marginalizing (Stott, 2004, Tumminia, 1981)
PURPOSE OF STUDY

- Explore the pedagogical experience of the male nursing students
- Examine the power influences and imbalances
- Change the socialization of nursing students and the construct of the ideal nurse to be inclusive and accepting of variation
 Behaviours are gender based

Contention that male nursing students are expected to perform in a feminine gender based way that meets social norms

Conflict between socialized male roles learnt from childhood and the “distinctly feminine attributes of nursing” (Butler, 1991)
Power relationships exist between professor and student.

Misuse or biased use of power towards male students result in stress, isolation and eventually withdrawal from program.

Those not conforming are subject to concrete or abstract forms of discipline – exercise of power.
Nursing faculty are functioning within an educational system designed to educate women.

Male nursing students are seen as a separate entity, not truly belonging and thus marginalized and isolated — “nurse” vs “male nurse”.

42% of male students reported lack of role models and mentors, 73% experienced negative stereotyping.

(Sherrod, 2003; Cude & Winfrey, 2007; Kouta and Kaite, 2011; Kelly, Shoemaker & Steele, 1994;)
LITERATURE REVIEW

- Frustration with the emphasis on feminine engendered feelings

- Faculty have expressed concern that male students have a less emotional and compassionate response to patient interactions

- Different perspective, technical aspects important, humour, lack of physical contact

- Anti-male remarks by faculty and other students, lack of gender neutrality in texts, conflicting and gender biased rules lead to withdrawal / failure

(Tumminia, 1981; Anthony, 2004; Grady, Stewardson & Hall, 2008; Dyck, Oliffe, Phinney & Garrett, 2009; Meadus, 2000; )
Male students discussed that nursing school was something to “just get through” and discussed the stress level associated with pressures to perform and conform to the role.

Need for empowerment of male students by utilizing role models and relating stories about male approaches to care.

Exposure and interaction with male clinical role models would motivate and provide practical advise on how to “get through it”.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- Feelings of isolation, exclusion and gender stereotyping
- Unequal clinical opportunities, lack of role models, teaching strategies geared to the feminine, sense of discouragement, evaluated less favorably
- Lack of understanding, on the part of the faculty, of the difference in learning strategies and communication styles of male students
- A sense of acceptance and belonging is important to students and their ability to succeed

Gender influences the retention of nontraditional students and plays an important role in academic achievement and experiences.

Significant relationship found between retention and number of students of specific gender taught by the same gender.

No influence stronger than faculty role modelling to provide students with support and retention within a program.

Faculty should consider promoting formal and informal contact between same gendered faculty and students.

- Feminist culture that is dismissive of men, efforts to preserve female dominance; No push to recruit men, lack of men and their difficulties are a non-issue to the profession

- Stereotyping and discrimination systemic but unintentional- men are an afterthought, tokenism towards males

- Focus on the female perspective in education topics, role of male ignored or given lip service

- Isolation, marginalization, singled out, higher expectations
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS – “BELONGING”

- Not able to be themselves- have to conform or pretend to avoid discipline- No direction on how to be a nurse and a male

- Female students and some faculty didn’t feel they should be there – wanted them to fail, “why are you here”, “You don’t represent us”

- “I’ll never meet the Gold Standard of the ideal nurse- so I have to just try and do the best I can and get through”- “I have no other image of nursing to draw on”
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS – “BELONGING”

- Male academics not seen as role models - “not really nurses”

- Push for male students to pursue graduate education

- Desire to have more male instructors in clinical and lab.

- “Those guys are very smart and educated but I wouldn’t feel comfortable talking to them, I think someone younger, more relatable”

- “I look up to the one male staff nurse we had, more than the faculty, you know, maybe if I was more academic but I’m not. He was so cool”
“I am outside myself from the outset, and must be, in order to survive and in order to enter into the realm of the possible” (2004, pg 32).
QUESTIONS

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