

Exploring Attitudes of Acceptance of Males in Nursing: A Pilot Study

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Purpose

- To compare male and female nurses' attitudes of acceptance of male nurses, utilizing the Sexist Attitude Inventory (SAI), and to examine if certain demographic variables were correlated to attitudes of acceptance.

Background

- Males represent 9.6% of the registered nurse workforce in the United States and have only grown approximately 7% over the past 40 years (United States Census Bureau, 2013).
- Efforts to increase the number of men in nursing are important to improve support for male patients and decrease health disparities (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2011; Sullivan Commission, 2004) in addition to enhancing the nursing profession (Committee on the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative on the Future of Nursing, at the Institute of Medicine, 2011).
- Attitudes of acceptance of male nurses among urban and rural female nurses was examined in 2006 utilizing a modified version of the SAI (McMillian, Morgan, & Ament). The scores obtained did not have any comparison data available, as this was the first time the tool was used to study nursing attitudes of acceptance.

Methods

Design: Descriptive, correlational design.

Recruitment: Email invitation with anonymous survey link sent to 3,190 male and female registered nurses from three medical centers located in or near a large, Midwestern city.

Instruments: Sexist Attitude Inventory (SAI) (Bentivegna, 1974) and Personal Data Sheet.

Sample Characteristics

- N=311 (251 females and 60 males)
- Highest-held Nursing Degree:* Bachelor's degree-75% of males and 66.8% of females.
- # of Male Pre-Licensure Program Faculty:* 0 (51% of males, 66% of females); 1 (34% of males, 19% of females)

Variable	M
Age	
Males (n=60)	35.33
Females (n=249)	44.07
Years of Nursing Experience	
Males (n=55)	8.99
Females (n=244)	18.18
Number of Male Pre-Licensure Program Classmates	
Males (n=52)	5
Females (n=221)	3

Results

- Cronbach's alpha = .83

Total SAI Scores (minimum 46, maximum 184):

	Range	M	SD	SE
Total SAI Score Males	118-154	137.4	9.06	1.17
Total SAI Score Females	108-160	130.5	9.45	0.59

- Mean difference in SAI scores was significant ($p < 0.001$).

Attitudes of Acceptance Correlations:

	Correlation Calculation	p-value
Highest-Held Nursing Degree (n=251)	$\rho = .21$	0.001
Age (n=251)	$r = -.08$	0.19
Years of Nursing Experience (n=244)	$r = -.09$	0.17
Number of Male Pre-Licensure Program Classmates (n=221)	$r = .07$	0.32
Number of Male Pre-Licensure Program Faculty (n=240)	$r = .10$	0.11

- Significant differences ($p \leq 0.05$) were noted on 24 of the 46 items on the SAI between males and females. (see handout)

Conclusions

- Female nurses attitudes of acceptance have improved since 2006 when compared to McMillan et al.'s results; however, male nurses still have greater attitudes of acceptance of male nurses than female nurses.
- A small, positive correlation between the female nurse's highest-held nursing degree and her attitude of acceptance was found.
- Greater recall by the male participants regarding the number of male faculty and students and the small number of male faculty reported by both genders may have impacted the correlation results.
- Individual SAI item comparisons between the genders revealed valuable insights regarding their working relationship and perceptions of one another. (See SAI item comparison handout)

References

(See handout)

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