Sigma's 30th International Nursing Research Congress
"I Am a Competent Nurse": Predicting Novice Male Nurse Competence and Satisfaction Levels
Bitsy Wedin, PhD, FNP-BC, BA
School of Nursing, Northern Michigan University, Marquette, MI, USA

Purpose:
A priority for the American Association of the Colleges of Nursing (AACN) is to attract students from underrepresented groups, most particularly men (AACN, 2017). The National League of Nursing (NLN) reports 15% of Baccalaureate in Nursing (BSN) students in the United States are men (NLN, 2016). Unfortunately, the national attrition rate of these male nursing students far exceeds female nursing student attrition rates (MacWilliams, Schmidt, & Bleich, 2013). Kirk, O'Lynn and Ponton (2013) contend that barriers for men in both traditional and online nursing education environments are pervasive. However, studies focusing upon these “barriers” are scarce. The purpose of this research is to explore the professional role development of male nursing students utilizing mixed methods to better understand and predict variables conducive to their success.

Methods:
Giordana and Wedin (2010) found abnormally high anxiety levels among male nursing students when compared to female nursing students. After successful Institutional Board Review, School of Nursing faculty from a rural Midwestern university conducted qualitative exploration of these anxiety levels through gender-specific focus groups of 34 nursing students. Findings suggest professional role development is difficult for male nursing students. Researchers proposed that students who struggle with owning their professional role, may give up on nursing school and fail more often than other students. Men in the study reported that what exactly a nurse who is a man does or is, is vague. In fact, as one research participant declared: “It was never like someone ever looked at me and said oh well, clearly this gentleman here should be a nurse whereas my mom would always tell stories of her mother saying oh you should be a nurse” (unpublished research data, March 16, 2016). Even after getting into this rural Midwestern American nursing school, male nurse role models were not easily found at clinical sites consequently working with a male nurse professional role model prior to graduation eluded most participants in this study. Exploring the nature of Midwestern male nursing student professional role development as operationalized by self-reported competence levels as novice nurses and satisfaction with career as a nurse, served to loosely triangulate the research. “Examples of triangulation, or mixed methods, are as varied as there are research studies” (Heale & Forbes, 2013, p. 98). Following successful Institutional Board Review, research utilized the New Careers in Nursing (NCIN) data set of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF, 2016). NCIN was a joint scholarship effort begun in 2008 by both the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the American Association of College of Nursing (AACN) designed to address the nursing shortage within the United States while also increasing the diversity of nursing professionals (RWJF, 2016). This data was gathered from 130 programs of study in the United States, including 3500 accelerated nursing students at three points in time and covering over 400 variables. A variable specifically
asking about professionalism or professional role development as a nurse was not included in the NCIN dataset.

**Results:**
Secondary data from this NCIN data included Midwestern responses from male nursing students numbering 191 with nearly 25% identifying as non-white. Nearly 14% of these nursing students withdrew from the program in which they had enrolled. Limited and varying numbers of nursing students completed all aspects of the NCIN dataset questions. Descriptive statistics were utilized as well as logistical regression analysis to predict the self-reported competence level of novice male nurses. Nearly 25% of Midwestern male novice nurses reported agreeing with being a competent nurse, while 70% reported tended to agree with being a competent nurse. Gender did not correlate with competence leveling as a novice nurse. Being assigned a mentor, participating in a leadership program both before and during the nursing student experience and availability as well as effective relationship with faculty were all significant in predicting self-reported competence as a novice nurse (p <.05). Further analysis revealed the importance of mentoring with satisfaction with career as a nurse.

**Conclusion:**
Aligning quantitative findings with qualitative suggestions serves to triangulate and strengthen the data. If nursing faculty especially in Midwestern America understand better how to get these men to identify and connect with becoming professional nurses perhaps their withdrawal rates would decrease. With the nation needing over a million new nurses by 2024, not only attracting men to the nursing profession but retaining these care providers through school and beyond is paramount (Grant, 2016).

**Title:**
"I Am a Competent Nurse": Predicting Novice Male Nurse Competence and Satisfaction Levels

**Keywords:**
male nursing students, professional role development and triangulation

**References:**


Abstract Summary:
Exploring professional role development of male nursing students utilizing mixed methods to better predict nurse competence and career satisfaction levels after graduation from American Midwestern Schools of Nursing. Phenomenological and logical regression analysis reveals insight into retaining this diverse and vulnerable group of students.

Content Outline:
I. Introduction
   A. Increasing nursing shortage, need to retain students especially vulnerable ones once admitted.
   B. Push to increase diversity in workforce but nursing students who are male struggle
I. Body
   1. Main Point #1 – Qualitative findings of exploring the experience of being a nursing student who is male.
      Supporting point #1 – Current known findings in this area
      1. Review that research is scarce in this area of inquiry
      2. Authors qualitative findings suggest professional role development difficult for these students
         Supporting point #2 – The So What of the author qualitative findings
         1. Rural areas have fewer male professional nursing role models in clinic and practice
         2. Focus groups request of informal talks on the professional role development for men who are nursing students.
   1. Main Point #2 – Quantitative exploration of massive New Careers in Nursing dataset focusing on qualitative findings
      Supporting point #1 – The New Careers of Nursing dataset explained
      1. Information of the NCIR dataset through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
      2. Methods surrounding the quantitative inquiry
      Supporting point #2
      1. Descriptive analysis reveals differences between men in areas of the country, gender, attrition
2. b) Logistical regression analysis of predicting variables concerning competence and satisfaction levels of novice nurses who are male.

C. Main Point #3 What does it all mean?
   Supporting point #1 What can schools of nursing do to retain these students?
   1. a) mentoring, faculty support, leadership components all supported in students success
   2. b) Professional role modeling series
   Supporting point #2 – more research is needed.
   1. How these findings compare with what is already known.
   2. Suggestions for future studies

III. Conclusion
   1. The challenges of mixed method exploration, stretch as researcher personally.
   2. Decreasing nursing shortage by increasing diversity in nursing workforce is possible!

First Primary Presenting Author

Primary Presenting Author
Bitsy Wedin, PhD, FNP-BC, BA
Northern Michigan University
School of Nursing
Professor of Nursing
Marquette MI
USA

Author Summary: Bitsy Wedin is a professor of nursing at a small rural university in Northern Michigan on the shores of Lake Superior. She teaches pharmacology and population health and is actively researching why certain students in nursing programs struggle more so than others. She works as a camp nurse in the summers and is an MBA student due to graduate Fall 2019.