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Men nurses: Masculine role stress and job satisfaction

Anita Bailey
Basic Care Clinic, USA

Men represent a minority in nursing who have until recently experienced limited scholarly interest. Existing studies indicate that men experience bias, discrimination based on sex, and disproportionate levels of discipline within the profession. In the face of a continuing nursing shortage the recruitment and retention of men, as well as the rates at which men leave the profession and elements associated with that turnover, are of concern.

Masculine Gender Role Stress (MGRS), a man's sense that he must behave in a feminized way that contradicts his masculine self-image, may play a part in men's responses to nursing culture and settings. MGRS may also negatively influence job satisfaction in a manner that affects behavior and tenure.

This descriptive co-relational study examined the relationship between MGRS and job satisfaction, as well as demographic variables of age, employment setting, education level, ethnicity, and sexual preference. IRB approval was obtained from Duquesne University. Participants (N=105) were from a population of all men nurses in Missouri, contacted by mail, and provided with informed consent. Questionnaire tools for the study were Eisler and Skidmore's 40 question MGRS level test, and McCloskey's MMSS survey of nurse job satisfaction. These were accessed online by computer.

Completed data were analyzed by non-parametric tests including Chi square and Kruskal-Wallis H. Results indicated that MGRS affected 5% of participants, whereas 76% were very low in MGRS. Job satisfaction was inversely related to MGRS (greater satisfaction correlated to lower levels of MGRS). Job satisfaction was also predicated on fulfilling status needs, and was associated with better pay. Incidental findings were that 19.8% of the male respondents' preference was for male sexual partners, and that the mean age for participants was 50.6 years. Sexual preference was not related to MGRS or nursing job satisfaction, but higher education level was related to job satisfaction.

director@basiccareclinic.com