

Efficacy of Narrative Enhancement Cognitive Therapy on Stigma of Nursing among Male Nursing Students.

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Abstract:

Background: Stigma can hinder the productivity of the upcoming male nurses making them unable to perform their assigned roles. Moreover the nursing stereotypes and challenges faced by male nurses have negative impact on their job satisfaction, attention and recruitment in nursing profession (Roth and Coleman, 2008 & Fung C, 2018): The aim of this study was to determine the efficacy of narrative enhancement cognitive therapy on stigma of nursing among male nursing students. **Setting:** The study was conducted at the Faculty of Nursing, Damanhour University. **Subjects** the study subjects comprised 36 students. **Tools:** Socio-Demographic and, Academic Data Structured Schedule, male students' stigma of nursing questionnaire, were used as tools for data collection. **Results:** Findings of the present study revealed that there was a statistically significant decrease in the total mean scores of stigma among the studied subjects after intervention ($p < 0.001$). **Conclusion:** In conclusion, the findings of the present study support the hypothesis that Male nursing students who attend narrative enhancement cognitive therapy sessions exhibit lower levels of stigma. **Recommendations:** Nursing Faculty and administrators should ensure that the learning environment is welcoming for men. Further studies should be performed in the number of sample is bigger and studies with control group be conducted in order to get more reliable and more general result.

Key words: Narrative Enhancement Cognitive therapy, stigma of nursing, , male students.

Introduction

The nursing profession continues to be a female-dominated profession. WHO stated that 90% of the nursing workforce is composed of females (WHO, 2020). Men in nursing are clearly a minority. O'Connor (2015) revealed that the number of male nurses worldwide is approximately 10% of the total nursing population (Margaret, 2015 & O'Connor T, 2015). Moreover, male nurses remain at 11% in the past five years (2018).

Nowadays, male nurses have accepted the experience of studying nursing and

developing a career traditionally confined for females (Yang C et al 2004). Male nurse recruitment is recognized as a national and international priority. Although, male positions in nursing was minimal men have recently proven to be capable of caring for patients and being competent in all nursing activities (Zdemir A, Akansel N, Tunk G.2008, Abdel El-Halem GE2012)

Males in nursing are faced with stereotyping and cultural coping in entering a traditionally female profession (Younas et al., 2019; Zhang et al, 2020, Gaber M, Mostafa M.2013). Thus

researches revealed that men encounter various barriers when they choose nursing as a profession (Cheng M, Tseng Y, 2018, Abdel El-Halem GE2012). Male nurses are often considered to be unsuitable caregivers. The prevailing definitions of masculinity and questioning the ability of male to provide appropriate care have acted as powerful barriers preventing men from entering nursing (Ross D, 2017).

Male nurses are depicted in movies and television as effeminate, failed medical school applicants (failed doctors), homoerotic, ambivalent about masculinity, predatory, incapable, incompetent, and physician handmaiden, (Weaver et al., 2014). Because of their gender, men may be asked to do such tasks that require "muscle" such as moving heavy patients or restraining them (Meadus&Tomy, 2011, Rajacich, D., Kane, D Williston &Cameron, 2013). Stereotyping them with the stigma of being gay may expose male nurses to homophobia in the workplace (Williams D, 2006). The nursing stereotypes and challenges faced by male nurses have negative impact on their job satisfaction, attention and recruitment in nursing profession (Roth and Co leman, 2008 & Fung C, 2018). Additionally male nurses experienced discrimination and prejudice as well as criticism from their peers and co- workers (Abushaikha, et al 2014).

Prejudices against male nursing contribute to the low rate of enrollment of male nursing. Male nursing students also suffer from the negative effect of being nurse on their interpersonal relationships, social activities, and academic performance (Li, Xu, & Liu, 2014). Male nurses confront several problems from the general public, their own patients and colleagues; they also face several factors that influence their professional attitudes such as environmental, institutional and personal variables (Stott A., 2004).

Several studies revealed the effect of narrative enhancement and cognitive therapy in reducing stigma (Finnegan W,2019, Hansson et al 2017, Yanos et al, 2011) .Narrative enhancement cognitive therapy enable male students to tell their individual stories this well help them address the fundamental impact of stigma on identity (Yanos et al, 2011). Narratives are the individuals' stories and how their experiences are perceived, felt, and incorporated into their interpretation of their specific reality. A person's story includes more than individual experiences; it may be influenced by contributory factors such as other individuals, the setting, time, social interactions, and social mores.

Narrative analysis in this case is preferable as it keeps the stories focused on the specific constructs of time, bias, and stereotyping. In this narrative individual share the challenges they faced as nurses and related to time (Creswell, 2016).

According to Riessman (2008), stories are a key resource that enables an individual to understand personal, social, cultural, and group experiences that can ameliorate action toward social change and overcoming stigma. Although the social stigma and social bias toward male nursing professionals, practitioners, and educators are not unique, only few studies approached this serious issue in the medical field and nursing profession (Dos Santos, L2020). So this study aims to determine the efficacy of narrative enhancement cognitive therapy on stigma of nursing among male nursing students.

Aim of the study

This study aims to determine the efficacy of narrative enhancement cognitive therapy on stigma of nursing among male nursing students.

Research hypothesis:

- Male nursing students who attend narrative enhancement cognitive therapy sessions exhibit lower levels of stigma.

Materials and Method

Materials:

Research design: Pretest –posttest quasi experimental design was used in this study

Setting: The study was conducted at the Faculty of Nursing, Damanhour University. The Faculty was established in 2007, and it has nine different scientific departments. The Faculty of Nursing offers both undergraduate & graduate educational programs

Subjects: The subjects of the study consisted of 36 students having moderate and high level of stigma.

Tools: the following tools were used to collect data for this study:

Tool I: Male students' stigma of nursing questionnaire:

The tool was developed by the researcher based on thorough review of literature and all tools used to measure nursing stigma. The tool is a self-report scale consisting of two parts. The first part is composed of 20 items that measure stigma of nursing among male nursing students. The items have to be rated on four point – Likert scale with 1 denoting "strongly disagree" and 4 denoting "strongly agree". The total score ranges from 20-80. A total score ranging from 20-39 denoting low level of stigma, scores from 40- 59 reflect moderate level of stigma and scores from 60-80 represent high level of stigma. The second part of the questionnaire comprises five open ended questions to determine the nursing effect on students relationships, emotions ,behavior and feelings toward nursing as for example "How does nursing affect your life, emotions, and behaviors?", "How does nursing affect your relationships?".

In addition, a demographic and academic data structured interview schedule was used:

Method:

Official written permission from the dean of the faculty of nursing, Damanhour University for conducting the study was obtained

The study tools (II,) was presented to a jury composed of nine experts in the field of psychiatric nursing and psychology to examine their face and content validity. Opinions of the experts on that tool were analyzed and this analysis revealed that this tool was valid.

The reliability of tools (II), for internal consistency was tested using Cronbach's alpha test. The reliability coefficient for the tool (II) was 0.773. Test re-test was A pilot study was carried out on 10% of the total subjects' size prior to the actual study.

Actual Study

A survey was done to select those students who have moderate to high level of stigma, Students with high level of stigma namely (20) and those with the highest moderate level (16) of constituted the studied subjects, total (36) students for this study. The study subjects were distributed randomly into 6 groups (6 students each).

Each group was interviewed 2-3 times to establish rapport, explain the therapeutic intervention and obtain oral informed consent to participate in the study.

The researcher met each group 3or4 times/week at the faculty when students were available to implement the program

After completion of training intervention students were interviewed individually using tool II, to determine the efficacy of narrative enhancement cognitive therapy. Evaluation was done after 2 months of the completion of the program.

Description of Narrative Enhancement and Cognitive Therapy (NECT)

NECT is a structured, group-based intervention composed of 20 sessions divided into 5 phases as following: (1) orientation (Introduction of participants and exploration of how participant think about themselves.), (2) Psycho-education (Provision and discussion about stigma, self-stigma, and personal experiences of male students related to nursing stigma), (3) cognitive restructuring (is a skill that can be learned. This phase includes developing strategies to identify and change negative thoughts about self), and (4) narrative enhancement (where participants are encouraged to write and share stories within the group).

Ethical considerations:

Informed written and oral consent was obtained after explaining the aim of the study. Also they have the right to refuse or withdraw from the study at any time. Students' privacy and data confidentiality were assured and maintained.

Results:

Table (1) shows the socioeconomic characteristics and academic characteristics of studied subjects.

The table shows that 27.8 % of the studied students aged less than 22 years. In relation to marital status, 97.2% of the subjects were single and 2.8% were either married or engaged

Among the studied subjects 86.1% were living in rural areas and 13.9% were living in urban areas. . The percent of the studied subjects enrolled in the 3rd academic year amounted to 33.3% and 66.7% of the students were enrolled in the 4th academic year. In relation to nursing specialty at the time of the study, 19.4% were enrolled in obstetric and gynecological nursing specialty, 30.5% were in pediatric nursing specialty and 8.3% were in psychiatric and mental health nursing specialty.

The table also shows that 22.2% had received excellent degree and 41.7% of the

studied subjects received a degree of "very good " in their last academic year and. It was noted that students who were working in hospital during their academic studies amounted to 52.8% of the total studied subjects. Studied subjects who reported having no relative or friends in the field of nursing amounted to 77.7% of the total studied subjects.

Table 2 shows comparison between the studied subjects' level of stigma pre, post and after two months of implementing narrative enhancement and cognitive therapy. It appears that 55.6% of the studied subjects had high level of stigma before implementation of the program, this percent dropped to 5.6% immediately after applying the program and this percent was the same after two months of applying narrative enhancement and cognitive therapy with a statistically significant difference (**Fr=51.774, $p<0.001$**). Before applying the intervention , 44.4% of the studied subjects had high moderate level of stigma and this percent decreased immediately after intervention and two months after to 25% & 19.4% respectively, with statistically significant difference (**$p<0.001$**).

The table also displays that the mean scores of the total stigma among studied subjects were significantly decreased immediately after and after two months of conducting narrative enhancement and cognitive therapy (mean score pre intervention 59.11 ± 4.43 , immediately after intervention 45.33 ± 8.84 , after 2 months 45.44 ± 9.28) (**$p<0.001$**).

Table 3 shows the relationship between socio-demographic and academic characteristics and stigma of nursing among the studied male students before receiving NECT intervention. It was found a significant positive relation between academic year and level of stigma among the studied students ($p=0.009$). It revealed that 85% of student in the 4th academic year experienced high level of stigma. The result also presented that there was a

significant relation between level of stigma and scientific department $p = (0.042)$. The studied students (30.0 %) who were enrolled in nursing who were enrolled in obstetric and gynecological reported high level of stigma. On the other hand there was no significant relation between age, marital status, and residence, degree obtained in the last academic year, and working in hospital with level of stigma.

Table 4 shows the relationship between socio-demographic and academic characteristics and stigma of nursing among the studied male students after receiving NECT intervention. The table revealed that there was no significant relation between level of stigma and age, marital status, and residence, academic year, scientific department, degree obtained in the last academic year, and working in hospital with level of stigma.

Discussion

All over the world the nursing profession has suffered greatly from public stereotyping and for being strictly linked with femininity and non-masculinity.

Nursing stereotypes and challenges faced by male nurses have negative impact on their job satisfaction and attention, or recruitment of men in the nursing profession (Roth and Coleman, 2008 & Fung C, 2018). In general few studies addressed the serious issue of male refraining from being nurses and developed several interventions to overcome this problem. Accordingly the present study was carried out to determine the efficacy of narrative enhancement cognitive therapy interventions on stigma of nursing among male nursing students.

NECT is a group-based intervention designed to assist male nursing students to recognize the effect of stigma on how they think about themselves, identify and reconsider stigmatized beliefs about themselves, and to construct a richer and more developed narration about their experiences. The results of the present

study revealed that Narrative Enhancement Cognitive Therapy (NECT) intervention was effective in reducing stigma (table 2).

This improvement could be related to the combination of psycho-education, cognitive restructuring, and narrative enhancement during the application of NECT program. In this therapy no attempts are made to assess the relative effect of each component, all three elements are designed to have an interrelated and collective effect. Yet one can claim that each part is contributed specifically to certain effect.

The narrative development part is the element that allows participants to tell their personal stories and describe their own experiences about nursing. It also helps to develop awareness of their real selves, and uniqueness, in addition to their role and its importance. Moreover, participants learn to face distress associated with stereotypes and challenges. The use of psycho-education may have increased the studied participants' positive sense of self, encouraged them to learn information about the nature of stigma, and increase their knowledge of the relationship between thought and affect. Moreover the use of feedback and support from group members may improve participant sense of worth and self-esteem.

Moreover, an important phase of the program is cognitive restructuring during which, participants redirect their attention in an attempt to manage difficult and highly stigmatizing stereotypes. Participants learn adaptive coping and how to think differently in more positive way. This also helped to enhance abilities to accept, tolerate, and modify the effect of painful nursing stereotypes.

Findings of the present study coincide with previous studies around the world (Roe, Hasson-Ohayon, Derhi, Yanos, & Lysaker, 2010). Recently (Yanos, Roe, West, & Smith, 2012) reported the impact of narrative enhancement cognitive therapy

on self-stigma in people with mental illness.

Findings of the present study also show that NECT program highlighted the importance of self-reflection and group discussion in producing positive change. Self-reflection is an important asset for persons to cope with challenges by moderating the associations between positive self-appraisal and social outcome (James, A. et al. 2016). In the current study, the process of reflection leads to a positive and clear sense of self as expressed by self-stigma amelioration.

In addition, students used positive self-talking during the intervention process. This may result in the development of new positive thinking and interviewing. In fact, having negative thoughts can lead to feeling sad and angry, having positive thought help students feel better, calm or more confident in managing difficult experiences.

Conclusion:

Male nursing students in general suffer from stigma of nursing. This stigma could be ameliorated by using narrative enhancement cognitive therapy. This in turn may lead to more acceptance of the nursing profession by males which in turn will lead to better recruitment and retention of male nursing.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the current study, the following recommendations have been generated:

- Regular meetings with male nursing students to discuss the problem encounter and enhance self-concept.
- Counseling male students suffering from stigma.
- Future studies are needed to determine the effect of narrative enhancement and cognitive therapy intervention in large sample and with control group.

Table (I): Distribution of the studied male nursing students according to their socio- demographic and academic characteristics (n=36)

Socio demographic and academic characteristics	No.	%
Age (years)		
<22	10	27.8
≥22	26	72.2
Marital status		
Single	35	97.2
Engaged/ married	1	2.8
Residence		
Rural	31	86.1
Urban	5	13.9
Academic year		
3 rd	12	33.3
4 th	24	66.7
Nursing specialty at the time of study		
Community nursing	7	19.5
Nursing administration	8	22.3
Pediatric nursing	11	30.5
Obstetric and gynecological	7	19.4
Psychiatric nursing and mental health	3	8.3
Students degree obtains in the last academic year		
Good	13	36.1
Very good	15	41.7
Excellent	8	22.2
Working during academic studies		
No	17	47.2
Yes	19	52.8
Having friends or relative in nursing field		
No	28	77.7
Yes	8	22.3

Table (2): Comparison between the studied subjects level of stigma pre , post and after 2 months of the application of narrative enhancement cognitive therapy and mean scores (n=36)

Tool 2: stigma of nursing among male students	Pre		Post		Follow up		Test of sig.	P
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Low level (20-39)	0	0.0	9	25.0	7	19.4	Fr= 51.774*	<0.001*
Low Moderate (40- 49)	0	0.0	16	44.4	20	55.6		
High Moderate (50 – 59)	16	44.4	9	25.0	7	19.4		
High level (60-80)	20	55.6	2	5.6	2	5.6		
Total score (NSQ)							Fr= 54.773*	<0.001*
Min. – Max.	53.0 – 67.0		26.0 – 62.0		30.0–76.0			
Mean ± SD.	59.11 ± 4.43		45.33 ± 8.84		45.44 ± 9.28			
% score (NSQ)							Fr= 54.773*	<0.001*
Min. – Max.	50.79 – 73.02		7.94 – 65.08		14.29 – 87.30			
Mean ± SD.	60.49 ± 7.04		38.62 ± 14.03		38.80 ± 14.73			

Fr: Friedman test

p: p value for comparing between the studied periods

*: Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Table (3): Relation between socio-demographic and academic characteristics and stigma of nursing among male students before receiving NECT

Socio-demographic and academic characteristics	Stigma of nursing among male students						χ^2	P
	20-39 low level		40- 59 moderate level		60-80 high level			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Age (years)								
<22	0	0.0	7	43.8	3	15.0	3.662	FE p= 0.073
≥22	0	0.0	9	56.3	17	85.0		
Marital status								
Single	0	0.0	15	93.8	20	100.0	1.286	FE p= 0.444
Engaged	0	0.0	1	6.3	0	0.0		
Residence								
Rural	0	0.0	12	75.0	19	95.0	2.973	FE p= 0.149
Urban	0	0.0	4	25.0	1	5.0		
Academic year								
3 rd	0	0.0	9	56.3	3	15.0	6.806*	0.009*
4 th	0	0.0	7	43.8	17	85.0		
Nursing specialty at time of study								
Community nursing	0	0.0	2	12.5	5	25.0	9.540*	MC p= 0.042*
Nursing administration	0	0.0	5	31.3	3	15.0		
Pediatric nursing	0	0.0	8	50.0	3	15.0		
Gerontological nursing	0	0.0	1	6.3	6	30.0		
Psychiatric nursing and mental health	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	15.0		
Student degree obtains in last academic year								
Good	0	0.0	4	25.0	9	45.0	4.953	MC p= 0.084
Very good	0	0.0	10	62.5	5	25.0		
Excellent	0	0.0	2	12.5	6	30.0		
Working during academic studies								
Yes	0	0.0	6	37.5	11	55.0	1.092	0.296
No	0	0.0	10	62.5	9	45.0		
Having friends or relative in nursing field								
Yes	0	0.0	11	68.8	17	85.0	1.358	FE p= 0.422
No	0	0.0	5	31.3	3	15.0		

 χ^2 : Chi square test

MC: Monte Carlo

Table (4): Relation between socio-demographic and academic data and stigma of nursing among male students after receiving NECT

Socio-demographic and academic characteristics	Stigma of nursing among male students						χ^2	MC p
	20-39 low level (n =9)		40- 59 moderate level (n =25)		60-80 high level (n =2)			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Age (years)								
<22	2	22.2	8	32.0	0	0.0	0.763	0.838
≥22	7	77.8	17	68.0	2	100.0		
Marital status								
Single	9	100.0	24	96.0	2	100.0	1.751	1.000
Engaged	0	0.0	1	4.0	0	0.0		
Residence								
Rural	8	88.9	21	84.0	2	100.0	0.440	1.000
Urban	1	11.1	4	16.0	0	0.0		
Academic year								
3 rd	4	44.4	8	32.0	0	0.0	1.242	0.597
4 th	5	55.6	17	68.0	2	100.0		
Nursing specialty at time of study								
Community nursing	1	11.1	4	16.0	2	100.0	6.065	0.689
Nursing administration	2	22.2	6	24.0	0	0.0		
Pediatric nursing	3	33.3	8	32.0	0	0.0		
Gerontological nursing	2	22.2	5	20.0	0	0.0		
Psychiatric nursing and mental health	1	11.1	2	8.0	0	0.0		
Students degree obtains in the last academic year								
Good	1	11.1	11	44.0	1	50.0	5.005	0.256
Very good	4	44.4	10	40.0	1	50.0		
Excellent	4	44.4	4	16.0	0	0.0		
Working during academic studies								
Yes	4	44.4	12	48.0	1	50.0	0.339	1.000
No	5	55.6	13	52.0	1	50.0		
Having friends or relative in nursing field								
Yes	6	66.7	20	80.0	2	100.0	1.137	0.789
No	3	33.3	5	20.0	0	0.0		

 χ^2 : Chi square test

MC: Monte Carlo

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