

Mothers of Hospitalized Children's Perspectives on Male Nurses' Care

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Abstract

Background: Many professions have been categorized by gender until recently. Various societies and businesses have differing views on whether particular jobs require men or women to succeed. These views, including Jordan's, have shifted in many world regions.

Objective: This study aimed to learn about the viewpoints of mothers whose children were in patients receiving hospital care from male nurses.

Design: A cross-sectional design utilizing a self-administered questionnaire collected data, recruiting 124 mothers of hospitalized children using a random sampling technique.

Results: There was a statistically significant difference in mothers' perceptions of male nurses working across all sociodemographic variables.

Conclusion: Mothers of hospitalized children had favorable attitudes toward male nurses.

Key Words: Children, Nurses, Male, Jordan

Introduction

Many professions are still being categorized by gender until recently. As a result, societies and enterprises had several assumptions about whether some professions needed male or female qualifications to fulfill them.

The healthcare system and the general population see males as prototypical leaders. Men are perceived to be assertive and to have a sense of dominance. On the other hand, female nurses are seen as compassionate and supportive by health care officials and the general population. These views have to some degree, shifted nowadays worldwide, including in Jordanian society.

Although nursing maintains to be mainly a female-dominated profession (Haigh, 2015), an ever-changing health sector redefines the nurse's position by increasing the number of men joining the nursing profession as they see it for economic opportunity. However, men have difficulties in getting their nursing roles accepted by society. Although some studies have shown that clients prefer male nurses (Ahmad & Alasad, 2007), other research provided reasons that influence the misconception which reinforces that men are unfit for nursing (Adeyemi-Adelanwa, Barton, Dawkins, & Lindo, 2015), such as negative stereotypes, where the

nurse has been labeled as gay, power-hungry and lazy (Genua, 2005) and the reference to the nurse as “she” in the nursing discourse (Hodes, 2005; Grady, Stewardson & Hall, 2008)

Male nurses confront several obstacles not only from the community but also from their clients and their families. The media's biased depiction of male nurses and society's cultural orientation regarding males' unsuitability to deliver care has the potential to influence male nurses' psychological attitudes who experience elevated levels of anxiety and stress in the workplace (Sochalsk, 2002; Armour, 2003; Lou, Yu, Hsu, & Dai, 2007). If these causes are not present, male nurses may be treated differently.

Even though men have recently regarded nursing as a desired profession for various reasons (Evans, 2004; Ahmad & Alasad, 2007; Yi & Keogh, 2016), conflicting emotions about clients' encounters with male nurses continue to exist. In some surveys, clients rated their happiness with male nurses (Younas & Sundus, 2018), while others viewed care as a trait of female nurses, implying a noncaring picture of male nurses (O'Lynn, 2007; Zamanzadeh, Valizadeh, Negarandeh, Monadi & Azadi, 2013). In addition, inconsistent studies have been published on client views and contentment with treatment rendered by male nurses, both within the same country (Ekstrom, 1999) and across countries (Adeyemi-Adelanwa et al., 2015; Younas & Sundus, 2018). These contradictions continue to spawn conflicting evidence about clients' preference for, overall attitude toward, and acceptance of male nurses (Hood, 2002; Harding, 2007). These mixed reactions and contradictions around clients' preferences for and satisfaction with male nurses' care (Ekstrom, 1999; Ahmad & Alasad, 2007; O'Lynn, 2007; Zamanzadeh et al., 2013; Adeyemi-Adelanwa et al., 2015; Younas & Sundus, 2018) call for further research to resolve these gaps.

Despite the discrepancies shown in low- and middle-income countries and developing countries, a survey on clients' and their carers' preferences for and fulfillment of nursing care offered by male nurses are yet to be conducted in Jordan. Therefore, the main objective of this research was to ascertain mothers' preferences regarding the treatment given by male nurses at the Queen Rania Al Abdullah Hospital for Children as caregivers to their hospitalized children. Having evidence of clients' and their family members' views toward the gender of their nurses can help allow nurses to provide care that is dignified, safe, empathetic, competent, and ethical.

The Purpose and Significance of the Study

Given the males' derogatory mark of nursing and the social-cultural orientation towards male nurses, this research visualizes possibly facilitating or inhibiting the choice of health clients and the acceptable use of nursing services by male nurses in the case of mothers of hospitalized children's demographic features.

It is widely assumed in the Jordanian culture that the caregiver is usually a female, especially in the maternity and pediatrics wards; mothers' perspectives on male nurses will vary. Hence, this study aims to learn about mothers' perspectives on male nurses' health care provided to their hospitalized children. More specifically, the study answered the following questions:

1. What are Jordanian mothers' perspectives on male nurses caring for their children?
2. Do the mothers' sociodemographic characteristics influence their perceptions of male nurses?

Methods

Design, Settings, and Sampling

A descriptive cross-sectional approach was performed utilizing a self-administered questionnaire. One hundred twenty-four mothers of hospitalized children were recruited using a random sample approach from departments providing direct client care at the Queen Rania Al Abdullah Children's Hospital in Amman. Mothers who refused to participate or withdrew from the sample were excluded. The sample size was determined based on the general rule that each variable in the study required 20-30 participants. As the research has one significant variable, 20-30 participants were needed; thus, the 124 participants were more than satisfactory.

Data Collection and Ethical Consideration

The needed approvals were obtained from the university where the current researchers are working. Data were collected from early January to the end of February 2021. Participants were told about the study aims before collecting data and that their participation was voluntary. The research tools used did not contain a personal identification code. They were handled and collected exclusively by the researchers, preventing other personnel (such as hospital department administrators) from observing the individually filled forms.

Measurement

The questionnaire by Korkmaz, Büyük, & rızalar (2015) was adapted to assess Jordanian mothers' perspectives on male nurses' health care provided to their hospitalized children. The revised questionnaire consists of 2 sections: section A was designed to gather participants' demographic data: age, educational level, work status, residency, and income status to ascertain if they were a homogeneous or diverse group of Jordanian mothers. Section B, however, consisted of 8 questions aimed at gathering mothers' thoughts and views about male nurses providing health care to their hospitalized children.

The research questionnaire was submitted to a panel of specialists to ascertain that it was culturally appropriate for Jordanians. In addition, experts assessed the content validity index of the questionnaire, and they were asked to evaluate the items' relevance to the aims and provide the needed feedback.

A test conducted on 30 mothers outside the study's sample with a two-week time gap determined the study's reliability. The Pearson correlation coefficient was 0.88 after data collection and analysis of mothers' responses, which is satisfactory for the objective of the proposed investigation.

Data Analysis

Using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (version 25), data were analyzed using the number, percentage, Pearson, and Fisher chi-square tests at the significance level of 0.05.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

This research surveyed a total of 220 participants. 71 (62%) of the mothers were between 31-40 years of age; 56(45%) were high school/university graduates; more than half of the participants, 66(53%), had jobs, 64(52%) lived in rural areas; and the income status of 78 (63%) ranged

between 301 JD - 600 JD (Table 1).

(Table 1 is about Here)

To address the first research question, the frequency and percentage of the participant's responses to the questionnaire items were calculated, and the results were presented (Table 2).

(Table 2 is about Here)

Nursing is not a job only for women; according to 65% of the mothers, 68 % believe male nurses should work in healthcare. According to 49% of the mothers who responded to the survey, male nurses should be assigned to care for male clients., 26% stated that males should also pursue nursing careers due to the difficulty of the profession, and 15% said that gender discrimination should not occur in nursing. Of the mothers who felt there should not be male nurses, 45% claimed that nursing is for women, and 20% said nursing is not suitable for men.

When mothers were asked what nurses' duties were, 71% said monitoring vital signs and treatment.

However, when mothers were questioned about the nurse's responsibilities, 66% stated that they monitored vital signs and treated clients, 10% indicated that they treated clients, and 24% indicated that they took care of the whole lot.

73% of the mothers were aware of male nurses serving in hospitals. In addition, 55 % of mothers knew about male nurses as they visited the hospital, 27% learned from friends and family, and 18 % said they heard about male nurses from T.V., newspapers, and the internet.

To address the second question, means and standard deviations were statistically computed for age, educational level, work status, residency, income status, & family type, as shown in Table 3.

(Table 3 is about Here)

Results show statistically substantial correlations between mothers' sociodemographic characteristics and their perspectives on male nurses ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Discussion

This research is the first to examine Jordanian mothers' perceptions of male nurses providing nursing care to their children. Participants' perspectives on and satisfaction with male nursing care were functions of their age, educational level, work status, residency, & income status.

Even though men are not perceived or portrayed as natural caregivers, they seem to be successfully pursuing a career in nursing based on client perceptions (Budu et al., 2019).

According to the mothers who participated in this research, male nurses should be employed in the healthcare field. Therefore, when most participants in this survey had a favorable opinion of male nurses, it could imply broad acceptance of men in nursing roles and a diverse range of cultures represented in the sample.

The current research findings are analogous to those of Achora (2016), who stated that male nurses are accessible, courteous, and pleasant and do indeed create a favorable atmosphere for their clients, as well as those of Adeyemi-Adelanwa et al. (2015) and Sundus and Younas (2020).

Although current research results are consistent with previous research indicating that clients were comfortable with nursing care regardless of the nurses' gender (Hall & Dornan, 1990; Sitzia & Wood, 1997; Korkmaz, Büyük, & rızalar 2015; Budu et al., 2019), they contradict findings from other studies demonstrating a clear gender bias in favor of female nurses (Kerssens, Bnesing, & Andrea, 1997).

Additional research that has been undertaken in various sectors of society was evaluated, and it was shown that 61.4 % in a study conducted by Ünver and Ürkmez (2010) believed nursing was a female-dominated profession. In a study done by Ünsal, Akalın, and Yılmaz (2010), it was discovered that 85.8 % of members of various vocations (police, academics, and teachers) agreed that males could be as excellent as females in nursing and that more teachers believed that males could be nurses (93.4%).

Kaya, Turan, and Öztürk (2011) researched to ascertain society's perception of male nurses; 62.6% of respondents replied that nursing is a profession open to both men and women. However, according to Ekinci et al.'s (2014) research, 44.7% of engineering faculty students believed nursing was a female-dominated profession, whereas 58.5 % indicated a preference for nursing care provided by female nurses.

When research involving health clients was examined, such as Koç and Sağlam (2010), who investigated the opinions of adult clients receiving hospital care, 60% of adult clients indicated that nursing is a gender-neutral career. According to Özbaşaran, Taşpınar, and Çakmakçı (2002), 44.4% of clients claimed that males could also be nurses. Çelik, Pasinlioğlu, Çilek, and Çelebi (2012) rendered that 53.2% of female clients (n:530) in gynecological clinics believe nursing is a female-dominated profession. On the other hand, Tezel, Balcı Akpınar, Yurttaş, and Çelebioğlu (2008), 47.8% of clients believe that it is unimportant what gender nurses are.

In this research, mothers indicated that male nurses should care for clients. Furthermore, from their point of view, nursing is a demanding profession that entails male nurse participation in the care process, and gender prejudice must not be present in nursing. 49% of the mothers claimed that male nurses should care for male clients, 26% claimed that males should also choose nursing careers due to the difficulty of the work, and 15% answered that there must be no discrimination based on gender in the nursing profession.

Ekinci et al. (2014) research suggested that the most often offered response to the question “what kind of a contribution does it make for men to join the occupation of nursing?” was “they will support female nurses in things that require physical strength” (41%).

In a study by Koç and Sağlam (2010), 73.8% of clients believed there would be fewer hurdles in the profession if more men became nurses, and 92.5% of clients thought that male nurses would aid their female colleagues in physically demanding work since they are skilled.

According to some mothers who took part in this research, nursing is a woman's work unsuitable for men. Ahmad and Alasad's (2007) study findings revealed that just 3.4% of mothers favored male nurses, stating that nursing fit women, male nurses may have difficulty relating with clients, and society may respond negatively to male nurses (Kocaer et al., 2004).

Koç and Sağlam (2010) reported that 55.2% of clients believed nursing was a more acceptable profession for women since it needed empathy and kindness.

Going through research conducted on clients' opinions toward requesting care from male nurses, Lodge, Mallet, Blake, and Fryatt's (1997) study revealed that 28% of clients receiving gynecological services stated that it would be awkward to receive assistance from a male nurse. While Chur-Hansen's (2002) research findings rendered that 47.6% of clients would feel uncomfortable with a male nurse bathing them.

Taşç (2007) claimed that 52.9% of clients believed male nurses must look after male clients and that 62% would have difficulty communicating with a male nurse if they faced any issues. Demiray, Olgun, Kaçar, and Eşer (2013) reported that while 69% of clients desire male nurses

to care for them and 76.5% believed male nurses could provide care, they claimed that female clients might have hindrance communicating with male nurses when an issue arose. Tezel et al. (2008) found that most clients reported experiencing communication hurdles and feelings of embarrassment and discomfort while cared for by a male nurse.

The participating mothers' statements regarding the examination of clients as one of the tasks of male nurses indicate that they view male physicians and male medical students as male nurses. In addition, most mothers claimed that they were aware of male nurses working in hospitals and discovered them during their visit to the hospital.

Ünsal et al. (2010) identified statistically significant variances across several professional groups, revealing the existence of male nurses, men who work as nurses, and men who are nurses. They observed that it is critical to be careful of male nurses due to their academic and law enforcement involvement.

According to Koç and Salam (2010), clients over 67 married and primary school graduates, lived in cities, had equal income and expenses, and had many children believed that nursing was a male and female occupation. In contrast, those who lived in towns and villages believed nursing was a female occupation.

The current study demonstrated that as mother's level of education increased, their perspectives toward male nurses grew, and they embraced male nurses. These findings align with Çelik et al.'s (2012) research which indicated that women with poor education had less choice for male nurses. Additionally, Demiray et al. (2013) reported that uneducated and secondary school patients were more likely to choose the term "Nursing is a female-dominated career." However, high school graduates were more likely to choose the statement "Men can also be nurses."

Finally, this research aims to provide a more thorough understanding of the processes of male socialization to facilitate the projection of the image of men in society. The change will require shifting sexual stereotypes: "Caregiving is not feminine-it's universal" (Hebert, 2002)

Limitations

The study did not enquire about mothers' attitudes about specific personal care services, such as whether or not they would allow male nurses to care for their children. Assuming that age, educational level, work status, residency, and income status all influenced mothers' perceptions of male nurses caring for their children, giving such specifics (kind of care) may have assisted in identifying other essential patterns. Even though this study claims that the study sample is homogeneous and that the study findings are generalizable, care should be used since convenience sampling is vulnerable to certain hidden biases.

Conclusion & Implication to Nursing

Based on the results, it was concluded that mothers had favorable attitudes toward male nurses. Since nursing has historically been a female-dominated profession, it is critical to understand societal views toward male nurses to boost the number of male students enrolled in nursing schools. For citizens of society to respond to a transition, a certain amount of time must elapse. Thus, to raise societal realization, it is proposed that the media be used to educate the public about the efforts of male nurses.

The research examined a murky area in mothers of hospitalized children's attitudes and perspectives on care quality provided by male nurses at the medical and surgical wards of the Queen

Rania Al Abdullah Hospital for Children. Although age, educational level, work status, residency, & income status, were just the significant factors in their perspectives on male nurses' care, the effect of the other variables should not be underestimated. Therefore, it is advised that male nurses' professional socialization be reinforced via the development of role models and increased public knowledge of the function of male nurses in the healthcare delivery system to foster acceptance of gender diversity in the nursing profession.

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Table 1. Distribution of mothers by their demographic characteristics (N=124).

Characteristics	Variables	N	%
Age	Less than 30 years of age	33	26.6
	Between 31-40 years of age	71	62
	Over 41 years of age	20	16
Educational Level	Illiterate	11	9
	Primary school	25	20
	Secondary school	32	26
	High school- university	56	45
Work Status	Housewife	58	47
	Has a job	66	53
Residency	Urban	60	48
	Rural	64	52
Income Status	300 JD or less	26	21
	301 JD - 600 JD	78	63
	601 JD or more	20	16

Table 2. Mothers' perspectives on male nurses(N=124).

Variable		N	%
Is nursing a woman's profession?	Yes	81	65
	No	43	35
Are male nurses necessary?	Yes	84	68
	No	40	32
If your answer is yes, why?	There should be no discrimination based on gender.	18	15
	Since it is a difficult job	32	26
	To take care of male patients	61	49
	No answer	13	10
If your answer is no, why?	Because it is a female-dominated occupation	56	45
	Since it is inappropriate for males	25	20
	Yes answer	43	35
What are a nurse's responsibilities?	Vital signs monitoring and treatment	88	71
	Vital signs monitoring and wound dressing	16	13
	Vital signs examination and blood sample collection	14	11
	All	6	5
What responsibilities do male nurses have?	Vital signs monitoring and treatment	82	66
	All	30	24
	Treatment	12	10

Did you know that male nurses work in hospitals as well?	Yes	90	73
	No	34	27
How did you find out that male nurses work in hospitals?	When I first arrived at the hospital	68	55
	friend+relative+family	34	27
	TV+internet+media	22	18

Table 3. The association between sociodemographic characteristics of the mothers and their perspectives on male nurses (N=124).

Characteristics	Variables	Yes		No		X ² ,p
		N	%	N	%	
Age	Less than 30 years of age	24	19	12	10	8.31* 0.05
	Between 31-40 years of age	60	50	14	11	
	Over 41 years of age	6	5	8	6	
Educational Level	Illiterate	10	8	8	7	7.11* 0.05
	Primary school	30	24	13	10	
	Secondary school	20	16	10	8	
	High school- university	26	21	7	6	
Work Status	Housewife	71	57	18	15	13.06* 0.05
	Has a job	25	20	10	8	
Residency	Urban	78	63	15	12	14.06* 0.05
	Rural	18	15	13	10	
Income Status	300 JD or less	16	13	8	7	7.70* 0.05
	301 JD - 600 JD	40	32	15	12	
	601 JD or more	30	24	15	12	

*Pearson Chi-Square