

## Assessing Staff Nurses' and Female Patients' Perceptions of Male Nursing at Tanta University Hospital

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### Abstract:

**Background:** The demand for registered nurses is growing substantially disproportionately with the predicted supply over the next 2 decades. Progress has been made towards providing a friendly environment to men entering the profession. There has been wide support from female nurses as well. Female are now growing more amenable to males in nursing. More and more men are entering this profession because they realize that nursing is a highly respected, highly technical field that pays pretty decent. **Aim:** The aim of this study was to assess staff nurses' and female patients' perceptions of male nursing at Tanta University Hospital. **Design:** A comparative design was used. **Setting:** The study was conducted at Tanta University Main Hospital. **Sample:** The sample consisted of (350) staff nurses and (300) female patients from different departments of Tanta University Main Hospital. **Tool:** The data was collected using a questionnaire sheet. It was developed by the researchers after thorough review of literature. **Results:** Close to half of the staff nurses (43%) and more than half (57.53%) of female patients prefer that male nursing working in emergency departments. More than half (68%) of staff nurses consider male nursing as staff nurse, while, fifty percent (50.78%) of female patients were seen male nursing as an administrator. 74% & 63.03% respectively of staff nurses and female patients perceived males that they will be improve the image and status of nursing. The majority (93%) of staff nurses and high percentage (72.61%) of female patients are disagree about nursing should be a female profession. Slightly more than half (51%) from staff nurses perceived men nursing as totally low, while, 60.3% percent from female patients perceived men nursing as totally medium. **Conclusion:** It can be concluded that high percent of the staff nurses and female patients prefer that male nursing working in emergency departments, and they will be improve the image and status of nursing and they are disagree about nursing should be a female profession. The main study **recommendations** included, develop and/or support recruitment efforts designed to attract men and women equally, portraying both men and women as representatives of the nursing profession, strategies for increasing the quantity and quality of available recruitment information that depicts both masculine and feminine qualities, media campaigns that promote nursing as a well-rounded profession, having both men and women as nurses and the use male recruitment and mentorship programs in nursing schools and nurse practice environments.

**Key words:** Staff nurses', Female patients', Male nursing, Perception.

### Introduction

“Educational institutions, health care employers, professional nursing and health care organizations, and the government all have a role in working to ensure the continued supply of an adequate number of nurses to meet the increasing demands of our aging population” (LaRocco, 2007).

Although nursing has established itself as a respectable profession with a solid historical presence of men, the

public perception of nursing as a “female” profession has changed very little throughout the centuries. A majority of male high school students still do not think of nursing as a career option, despite the great demand for male nurses all over the world. This trend is changing by the graduation of men from the Nursing Colleges. However, this change is slow. A news article by Azhari (2007) states, “the

government wants males to join the nursing profession and its target is to produce 300 male nurses from the 3,000 qualified nurses produced every year". If males pursued nursing at the same rate as females, this would be an easy target to achieve and there will no longer be a nursing shortage **(Alexander, 2010)**.

Currently, the shortage in the field of nursing, and as this occupation is crucial to the function of society. And because women comprise the majority of these jobs and the shortages still persist, men become the logical place to recruit more labor and employees. Nursing and health care occupations are majority female. For example, registered nurses were the largest occupation in health care in 2006, but only eight percent were men **(Women's Bureau, 2006)**

Florence Nightingale considered nursing as a suitable job for women because it was an extension of their domestic roles. Nightingale's image of nurse as a subordinate, nurturing, domestic, humble, self sacrificing as well as not too educated became prevalent in society. The social construction of what it means to be a nurse has typically meant a caring, hard working woman. Roles like nurturing, caring, dependency, submission given to her are opposite from the ones that are attributed to men in society **(Evans, 1997)**.

On the other hand, gender and sex role stereotyping are recognized as having the potential to limit the professional development of males within the nursing profession. History appears to indicate that men had a place in nursing for as long as records are available, but their contribution has been perceived as negligible, largely because of the dominant influence that the 19<sup>th</sup> century female nursing movement has had on the occupation's

historical ideology **(Keogh & O'Lynn, 2007)**.

Although men who enter this profession still face subtle prejudices, a lot of effort has gone in to bring about a change in perception. Many universities are actively working towards removing perceived barriers to this occupation and encouraging the participation of men in their on-campus and online nursing programs. Frameworks such as American Assembly for Men in Nursing have also been formed to promote and support nursing as a profession amongst men. It may come as a surprise to many, then, that nursing was a male dominated profession historically, as the first nursing school established in India in 250 B.C. was a men-only school **(Scott, 2010)**.

Traditionally, men who decided to enter this woman-dominated profession have faced many biases. While some thought men became nurses because they were unfit to be doctors, others questioned men's abilities to be nurturers and caregivers. In fact, until very recently, male nurses were not allowed to enter maternity wards and labor rooms **(Scott, 2010)**. The key challenges to men in nursing are the stereotyping and cultural adaptation required for entry into a traditionally female profession. In the latter case, lack of male role models and appropriate career preparation for males are also seen as impediments. Male nurses indicated they, too, were influenced by such widely-held misconceptions, such as the nursing profession being dominated by females and not "appropriate" for men. **(Bernard group, 2004)**.

In fact, men come to nursing for much the same reasons as their female counterparts, primarily to help others and for the growth opportunities the profession offers. There were many

comments about nursing being a “calling”, not just a profession as well as numerous comments about being able to “make a difference”. Perhaps due to their minority status such as the influence of other health care professionals, parents or a lifelong ambition built on an early awareness of career possibilities. Many RNs plan to return to school for an advanced degree as well as pursue health care education and training opportunities (Bernard group, 2004).

The perception of nurses being not as professional as the other professions should be highly fought by all members of the profession with the aim of establishing professional uniqueness. The role of gender in the choice of a career is an extremely important concept, because men constitute nearly half of the potential recruitment pool. Likewise, female patients in particular might be uncomfortable with a male nurse providing this type of care. On the other hand, patients sometimes view men as more authoritative and might be more compliant with treatment administered by a man. The Obstetrics department is one of the biggest barriers that a male nurse faces. Some male nurses have even had to resort to legal action to be allowed to work in obstetrics (Achilles, 2010).

It may appear that the perception of male nursing as a profession in the Egyptian community was not improved properly even after the male nurse has been qualified a university level. Therefore, for recruiting and retention of male nurses, there is a need to promote nursing professional perception to enhance its standing in the community especially for males.

#### **Aim of the study:**

The aim of this study is to assess staff nurses' and female patients'

perceptions of male nursing at Tanta University Hospital.

#### **Research question:**

What are the perceptions of staff nurses' and female patients' about male nursing at Tanta University Hospital?

#### **Subjects and Method:**

##### **Design:**

A comparative design was used.

##### **Setting:**

The study is conducted at Tanta University Main Hospital, (854 beds) distributed across its clinical departments. The nursing staff (1021) staff nurse and baccalaureate nurses (422), from them (86) nurse manager.

##### **Sample:**

The subjects included in the study were two groups:

1. A sample of 350 staff nurses at Tanta University Main hospital from different departments (Urology, orthopedic, cardiology, tropical and pediatric) and available at the time of study
2. A sample of 300 female patients from different departments of Tanta University Main Hospital (Urology, cardiology, and tropical) and available at the time of study

##### **Sample size:**

- A sample of available staff nurses were selected randomly from aforementioned setting according total number (1021) of staff nurses in hospital.

A sample of all available female patients were randomly selected from aforementioned setting according hospital bed capacity (854 beds) by using the following formula for the two samples:

$$n = \left[ \frac{z_{\alpha/2} \sigma}{E} \right]^2 \text{ Where:}$$

The margin of error  $E$  is the maximum difference between the observed sample mean  $\bar{x}$  and the true value of the population mean  $\mu$ :

$Z_{\alpha/2}$  is known as the critical value, the positive  $z$  value that is at the

vertical boundary for the area of  $\alpha/2$  in the right tail of the standard normal distribution.

$\sigma$  is the population standard deviation.

$n$  is the sample size.

#### **Tool of data collection:**

**Questionnaire sheet:** It is developed by the researchers based on recent literatures (**Bernard group, 2004, Ozdemir, Akansel & Tunk, 2008 & Bartfay et al., 2010**) to assess staff nurse and female patients' perceptions of male nursing at Tanta University Hospital. It consisted of four parts:

- **Part one:** was intended to get information about demographic data such as department name, age, residence, marital status, number of children, level of education, and years of experience.
- **Part two:** included questions about perceptions of both staff nurses and female patients about position of males in nursing career. It included three multiple choice questions.
- **Part three:** included questions about perceptions of both staff nurses and female patients regarding effects of males in nursing career. It included three multiple choice questions.
- **Part four:** contained questions about attitude toward men in nursing: to assess perception of staff nurses and female patients perceptions of male nursing which

included 55 questions divided into four categories namely; Nursing image (15 questions), Rewards of a nursing career (15 questions), Men from female (nurses, patients) perspectives (7 questions), and Barriers to men in nursing (18 questions).

#### **Scoring system:**

The subject's responses in this part were scored in five point Likert scale (5-1) ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). The total score ranged from 55 to 275. Less than 137 indicated low perception. 137-206 indicated medium perception. More than 206 high indicated perception.

#### **Validity and Reliability:**

The tool of the study was translated into Arabic and validation of the tool was assessed by presenting it to five experts from different fields (Nursing Administration, Nursing Community, and Faculty of Art). Necessary modifications were done. The experts were asked to evaluate tools individual items in relation to its relevance and appropriateness on a 4-point scale as follows:

1= not relevant                      2=little relevant  
3=relevant                              4=very relevant

**Content validity index (CVI)** for the tool = % of total items rated by experts as either 3 or 4. A CVI score of 0.80 or better is generally considered to have good content validity.

Reliability of the tool was tested using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient test, its value was ( $\alpha = 87$ ).

#### **Pilot study:**

Pilot study was conducted on 10% from staff nurses and female patients selected randomly from the different department (who were excluded from the study population), to identify the

obstacles and problems that may be encountered in data collection.

**Field work:**

Questionnaire was collected through semi structured interview; the researchers explain the sheet to the subjects and then, ask them to complete it. Responding times to all questions in the tool consumes (30) minute. The questionnaires were distributed to staff nurses (n=350) and female patients (n=300). Before the questionnaire was administered, the subjects were thoroughly briefed about the purpose of the study and the data collection process. The data was collected for a period of 3 months started in the beginning of Mars and extended to the last of May 2010.

**Administration and ethical considerations:**

An official permission to carry out the study was obtained from responsible authorities of Tanta University Hospital. All the staff nurses and female patients received an explanation about the study before introduction of the questionnaire and only those who agreed to participate included the purpose of the study was explained and made clear to the general supervisor of study setting to get their co-operation and acceptance. Informed consent was obtained from each studied subjects included in the study. The anonymity and confidentiality of responses, voluntary participation and right to refuse to participate in the study were emphasized.

**Statistical analysis:**

Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Software Package Version 18.0 (SPSS, Chicago, IL, USA). Data was collected, coded and organized into tables, and then analyzed using number and percent. Chi-square test was used

to determine differences between variables. Findings were accepted as statistically significant at a P value < 0.05.

**Results:**

**Table (1):** Represents demographic characteristics of staff nurses and female patients including age, marital status, number of children, years of experience, level of education, department and residence It was observed that 62% of staff nurses were in the age group from 30-<40 years while more than half of study female patients (56.18%) were in the age group 45≤68 years and minority 12% of staff nurses were in the age group from 40-<55 years while, minority of female patients 12.32% were in age group 21-<30. However more than three fourth of staff nurses (78%) and the majority of female patients (91.80%) were married, and more than half of staff nurse and female patients (61%& 64.40%) respectively, had 3-4 children. In relation to years of staff nurse experience, the table shows, that (55%) of staff nurses had 10≤20 years of experience, 23.0% had 0<10 years of experience and 22% had 20≤31 years of experience. Regarding level of education, it was observed that 78%, of staff nurses had diploma in nursing, while, 79.45% of female patients had no education. However all staff nurses included served in five departments, urology 27%, orthopedic 11%, cardiology 25%, tropical 21% and pediatric 16%, while, the distribution of female patients to the department, as the table shows that, 36.90%, 34.34%&28.76% of them were from tropical, urology and cardiology respectively. As regard to residence the table illustrated that the majority of staff nurses and female patients (87.0%) lived in Tanta city.

**Table (2):** represents distribution of staff nurses and female patients

about where should males be in nursing. The table shows, that less than half (43%&32%) of staff nurses prefer that male nursing working in emergency departments and hospital ward respectively, and more than half (57.53%) of female patients prefer that male nursing working in emergency departments. While, 30%, 29% & 28% consequently of staff nurses consider intensive care units (ICU), operating rooms and emergency departments, clinics other than maternity care and pediatrics and every clinic with no exception as proper places for men to work. Moreover, (36.98%&31.53%) consequently of female patients consider intensive care units (ICU), operating rooms and emergency departments and every clinic with no exception as proper place for men to work. It was observed that, more than half (68%) of staff nurses consider male nursing as staff nurse, while, fifty (50.78%) of female patients seen male nursing as an administrator and only 32.87% of female patients seen male nursing as staff nurse. Statistically differences were found between staff nurses and female patients about position of males in nursing career ( $p>0.05$ ).

**Table (3):** represents distribution of staff nurses and female patients about effects of males on image and status of nursing. As evident in the table, as regard to how males will be affect on image of nursing 74% & 63.03% respectively of staff nurses and female patients perceived males will be improve the image of nursing. In relation to effect male nursing on the status of nursing. As shown the table, high percentage (78%) of staff nurses and more than half (65.76%) of female patients perceived males will improve the status of nursing. On the other hand, the majority (93%) of staff nurses and high percentage (72.61%) of female patients are disagree about

nursing should be a female profession. Statistically differences were found between staff nurses and female patients about effects of recruiting males to nursing career ( $p>0.05$ ).

**Table (4):** Shows distribution of staff nurses and female patients according to their perception of men nursing. The table indicated that, slightly more than half (51%) from staff nurses perceived men nursing as totally low. While, 60.3% percent from female patients' perceived men nursing as medium. Specifically, 85%& 59.2% of staff nurses and female patients respectively, perceived men nursing as low in nursing image. It was observed that no one of staff nurses and female patients perceived men nursing as high in nursing image. Moreover, 40.8% of female patients perceived men nursing as medium in nursing image. As regards to rewards of a nursing career 65% of staff nurses perceived men nursing as low compared to 69.4% of female patients perceived men nursing as medium in rewards of a nursing career

As regards to perception of men from female nurses' perspectives, it was noticed that nearly equal percent (63% & 67%) from staff nurses and female patients perceived men nursing as medium (**Table, 4**). As regards to barriers to men in nursing, it was found that 67% of staff nurses perceived men nursing as high while, 65.8% of female patients perceived men nursing as medium. Moreover the difference between staff nurses and female patients in nursing image, rewards of a nursing career, perception of men from female nurses perspectives and barriers to men in nursing respectively as well as total perception was significant  $P<0.05$

#### **Discussion:**

The demand for registered nurses is growing substantially disproportionately with the predicted

supply over the next 2 decades. Job dissatisfaction, increases in technological advances, high levels of nursing vacancy rates, and massive healthcare reform all help to increase the need for the numbers of nurses. The average age of registered nurses and nursing school faculty has been on the rise. Combined with a significant shortage of nursing school faculty these contributing factors only act to worsen the problem (Towns, 2002). Increasing the supply of registered nurses requires thinking 'outside of the box' and looking for nontraditional candidates (Abrams, 2001). Males currently represent approximately 49 percent of the total population (AACN Bulletin, 2001) and only 5.4 percent of the total nursing population (Spratley et al., 2000) So this study was aimed at assessing female patients' and staff nurses' perceptions of male nursing role in Tanta University Hospital.

The study revealed that less than half (43%) of staff nurses and more than half (57.53%) of female patients prefer that male nursing working in emergency departments, (Table 2). These places in hospitals as ICU and ER which are identified with technical skills and autonomy. It is hard for the male nurse to be in a role that was traditionally perceived as a female role which brings up a role tension. Therefore, male nurses in these places like emergency departments, intensive care units and psychiatry can feel more accepted by other health care workers (Yavuz, Dramali, 1997). These findings are supported by Chung (2000) Savaser et al. (1999), Evans (1997), Yavuz & Dramali (1997) Karadakovan (1993). In a study done by Karadakovan (1993) with Nursing College students, 3.25 % of the nursing students reported that men will work in areas that need physical power and they will help females earn the rights they deserve.

It was observed that, more than half (68%) of staff nurses consider male nursing as staff nurse, while, fifty (50.78%) of female patients seen male nursing as an administrator and only 32.87% of female patients seen male nursing as staff nurse (Table, 2). This may be due to the staff nursing perception of nursing shortage and its consequences on the work load, while the female patients seen male nurses as an administrators because the effect of gender differentiation.

Men are typically seen as better leaders than women (Williams, 1995 and Ryan & Porter, 1993) Characteristics like dependency, nurturing always thought to be perfectly fit roles for women on the other hand characteristics like aggressiveness, dominant and ambitious look like a fit for men (Evans, 1997 & Evans, 2002). In study of Harloyd Bond and Chan (2002) nursing students in China expressed that an ideal nurse posed moderately high levels of extraversion and assertiveness, traits which are stereotypic of males in China. Whilst there are difficulties for men working in female dominated professions, men who enter the nursing profession tend to have a faster and more straightforward career progression than is the case for women (Boyd & Hewlett, 2001).

It is well known that men are over-represented in senior nursing positions (Cotton, 1998, Williams, 1995 & Villeneuve, 1994). In fact nursing is unique in this regard, in that men are over-represented compared to women in management when compared to other women dominated occupations (Williams, 1995) According to Evans (1997) although men and women enter nursing for similar reasons, the societal and cultural expectations placed on men mean that men's career path takes on

the traditional masculine role that seeks power and influence. This leads to men seeking and obtaining managerial positions (Evans, 1997 & Matthews, 2001). According to Evans (1997) it is the existence of a patriarchal society that places value on masculine traits that gives men this advantage.

The traditional view once held that men were more suited to management positions in any area because "women generally tend to react to problems and situations in an emotional rather than a rational manner" (Miers, 2000). Thus, in nursing, men were seen as more appropriate for management positions. Roberts (1983) argues that because nursing has been an oppressed group, nurses perceive themselves in terms of the oppressor's view of reality and hence may perceive themselves as having inferior management ability. Women in nursing may just accept that the traditional masculine view of management might exclude themselves, but not their male colleagues. This analysis however, may be over-simplifying the motivations of individual nurses who may either include themselves in traditional models of management, or embrace other forms of less masculine forms of management. (Miers, 2000) sees a non-oppressed, feminist view of managerial skills as enhancing the nurses' awareness of the managerial importance of their own nurturing and supportive skills. This paradoxically, Miers goes on to say, might facilitate men in nursing, who receive support from women colleagues in enhancing their career to develop their own facilitative managerial skills, expertise that might not feature strongly in the masculine management imagery.

The study results showed that 74% & 63.03% respectively of staff nurses and female patients perceived

males that will be improve the image of nursing (Table, 3). This finding was congruent with (Abdel El-Halem et al., 2011) who found that more than half of study subjects' perceptions had positive image of nursing as a profession and showed that "nursing as an appreciated profession in the society" was perceived by about one-fourth of the study subjects. On the other hand, this finding is dissimilar to (Brodi et al., 2004) who concluded that nursing as an appreciated profession was perceived by a few nursing students.

In relation to effect male nursing on the status of nursing, as shown in the table presented that high percentage (78%) of staff nurses and more than half (65.76%) of female patients perceived males that will improve the stats of nursing (Table, 3). It has always been thought that, males in nursing profession will gather a power and they will make a difference and improve the status of nursing professions (Eksen et al., 1997, Karadakovan 1993 & Savaser 1993). This study result was supported by Karadakovan (1993) in a study done with Nursing College students, 64.63 % of the students reported that men would help to improve the status of nursing, while some of the students (19.9 %) thought men would have no effect on status of nursing.

It was observed that, the majority (93%) of staff nurses and high percentage (72.61%) of female patients are disagree about nursing should be a female profession (Table, 3). Nursing is primarily a female dominant profession which practiced by women and males who are practicing nursing are very few. Especially in Egypt, having two different names for the same position cause some problems both in public and among nurses in terms of professional identity. This may be the reason for seeing nursing as



a female profession. **Cakmakci (2003)** reported that 82 % of the male high school students did not prefer nursing as a career and they believed that nursing should only be a female profession. **Hansen (2002)** reported that females tended to disagree that males are better suited to nursing than women. While, Malaysian male students in a study about Upper Secondary Male Students' Perception of Nursing as a Career Choice did not perceive nursing as a female profession. **Law and Arthur (2003)** concluded that males have equally positive attitudes towards nursing. Also, **Mkhize and Nzimande (2007)** found that there was an increased interest among males to pursue nursing. Whereas, other studies found gender barriers to be the prevalent influential elements in career decision-making choices (**Muldoon & Reilly, 2003**, **O'Lynn, 2004**, **Ozdemir, Akansel & Tunk, 2008**).

Despite the great advances in the nursing profession, nurses still face considerable challenges related to its image that impact on status, power and the ability to affect changes in health care. Where, a negative image of nursing has a number of negative consequences, it has impacts on the quality and quantity of persons who choose nursing as a profession. This is especially relevant to the recruitment of men in the field where media portrayals have focused primarily on women while the image of a male nurse is often negative (**Kalisch, Begeny & Neumann, 2006**).

The present study revealed that 85% and 59.2% of staff nurses and female patients, respectively perceived men nursing as low in nursing image (**Table 4**). In the fact nursing is still suffering from negative public image in the Arab world. The media is one of the most important factors that has influenced, is still influencing, and will

most probably continue to influence the public's image of nursing. It always pictures nursing as a low social status, subordinate, unrespected, and female dominant profession, not to mention nurses, being presented as low social status, careless females who perform housekeeping activities and accept tips from other (**Shukri, 2005**).

In this respect, **Gray (2004)** surveyed "registered nurses in California for their perception of how the public view nursing". The study revealed that 23% of nurses perceived that the public portrayed them as handmaidens to physicians. According to (**Summers, 2004**) and (**Gamel, 2006**) such image not only influences how consumers view nurses, but also has an impact on the nurse's self image. When nurses are constantly portrayed in negative ways, these images delimit the scope of their work; affect their lives and their aspirations, the quality and quantity of persons choosing nursing as a profession, how nurses see themselves, and unfortunately

The present study revealed that 67% of staff nurses perceived men nursing as high in barriers to men in nursing. And 65.8% from female patients perceived men nursing as medium in barriers to men in nursing (**Table, 4**). This could be attributed to uncomfortable working environment, exposure to hazards whether physical or emotional. Moreover, lack of facilities and resources, and the gap between theories taught and the actual practices in governmental hospitals also helped in formulating nursing barriers

Nursing is not perceived to fulfill most of the top-ranking expectations of an ideal career. However, the root of this expectation-gap is, once again, misconceptions or lack of information about the benefits of nursing. **Al-Kandari & Ajao (1998)** found that

lack of information is one of the main barriers to recruitment. **Foskett and Hemsley-Brown (1997)** found that by late primary school, most students have rejected most jobs on the basis of perceptions. It is true that this gap between ideal and nursing career would be less if students had a realistic understanding of nursing. Similarly, **Kohler and Edwards (1990)** found that certain beliefs held by high school students are not congruent with the realities of professional nursing today.

Despite the fact that men have been working in the profession for a number of years, stereotypes continue to be a barrier in the clinical setting. The present study results were supported by **Stott, 2004, Furlong, 2005** who mentioned that men in nursing face many barriers and obstacles not only from the general public but also from their patients and colleagues.

The study results showed that, more than half 65% of staff nurses perceived nursing as low in rewards of a nursing career. 69.4% from female patients perceived nursing as medium in rewards of a nursing career. This may be due to the common misconception is that nursing is stressful and nurses have to work long and inflexible hours. Nursing can be stressful. However, every job comes with its own element of stress. **Mkhize and Nzimande (2007)** showed that difficult work and emotional challenges detracted people from choosing nursing as a career. More interesting is the perception that nurses work long, inflexible hours. The fact is that most people living work 8 – 10 hours every day, while nurses only work shorter 7–hour shifts.

Indeed, nurses were seen as valuable members of the healthcare team, providing a valuable service. It is damaging to learn that potential entrants are unaware of some of the

benefits of nursing (even in this time of economic recession), such as, stability, career advancement opportunities, travel opportunities, and good salary. The reality is that nursing is a very stable career with a wide range of specialties. Nursing also provides ample opportunities to travel due to the ever-increasing demand for nurses worldwide. **Mkhize and Nzimande (2007)** and **Mooney, Glacken & O'Brien (2008)** found travel opportunities to be a positive aspect. Furthermore, recently salaries for nurses have been increased though students may not be aware of the changes. Studies by **Law and Arthur (2003)** identified good salary as an attractive attribute. Perhaps if more students understood these benefits they would feel a greater respect for the profession.

The results indicated that, More than half 63% and 67.2% of staff nurses and female patients, respectively perceived men nursing as medium in perception of men from female perspectives (**Table, 4**). This could be because most TV shows portray nurses as females just walking around with a folder, looking busy and following the doctor's orders. Also, movies actively deter men from pursuing nursing by reinforcing gender stereotypes. The present study results were supported by **Law and Arthur (2003)** who concluded that males have equally positive attitudes towards nursing. Also, **Mkhize and Nzimande (2007)** found that there was an increased interest among males to pursue nursing. Whereas, other studies found gender barriers to be the prevalent influential elements in career decision-making choices (**Muldoon & Reilly, 2003, O'Lynn, 2004, Ozdemir, Akansel & Tunk, 2008**).

We also found statistically significant results between staff nurses and female patients' perceptions about

effects of males on image and status of nursing (**Table 3**). Although majority of the subjects had expectations that males will increase image and status of nursing, some of them had the opinion that males either will not change anything in nursing image and status or they will affect negatively. The reason for this could be even men who choose nursing as a career have some questions about gender. Cultural values, lack of understanding what nurses really do at work and the way the nurses portrayed in media highly affect nursing image in the public. In a study done in Turkey, **Emiroglu (2000)** found that both doctors and public have negative image for nursing as a profession. Doctors see nurses as their handmaiden and therefore, negative image of nursing continues to be a problem. Also it is apparent that fictional portrayals of nurses as being doctors' handmaidens are reinforcing the traditional images of nurses (**Greenwood, 1999**).

Moreover the difference between staff nurses and female patients in nursing image, rewards of a nursing career, perception of men from female nurses perspectives and barriers to men in nursing respectively as well as total perception was significant  $P < 0.05$  (**Table 4**). The results of this study indicated significance not only because professional occupations possess qualities that are associated with one gender over another but because nursing was identified as being feminine. Despite the fact that men have been working in the profession for a number of years, stereotypes continue to be a barrier in the clinical setting. This finding was congruent with **Twomey & Meadus (2008)** who concluded that the focus on the occupation of nursing as a male career needs greater development with an emphasis on the characteristics of gender neutrality by professional

associations, university schools of nursing, and school and career counselors.

#### **Conclusion:**

It can be concluded that high percent of the staff nurses and female patients prefer that male nursing working in emergency departments, and they will be improve the image and status of nursing and they are disagree about nursing should be a female profession. It recommended that developing and/or supporting recruitment efforts designed to attract men and women equally, portraying both men and women as representatives of the nursing profession

#### **Recommendations:**

In the light of the findings, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Develop and/or support recruitment efforts designed to attract men and women equally, portraying both men and women as representatives of the nursing profession.
- Develop and/or support strategies for increasing the quantity and quality of available recruitment information that depicts both masculine and feminine qualities.
- Develop and/or support media campaigns that promote nursing as a well-rounded profession, having both men and women as nurses.
- Encourage the ongoing monitoring of all nurse media campaigns and advertisements, and encourage proactive steps to improving those that depict nursing as a mostly female profession.
- Develop and/ or support strategies for increasing better educational opportunities for nontraditional nursing students, including men.
- Develop and/ or support strategies for improving the professional and

androgynous image of nurse practice environments.

- Develop and/ or support sources of funding for education of nontraditional nursing students, including men.
- Develop and/ or support the use of male recruitment and mentorship programs in nursing schools and nurse practice environments.

**Table (1): Demographic characteristics of staff nurses and female patients**

Variables	Staff nurses (n=350)		Female patients (n=300)	
	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Age (years)</b>				
• 21-<30	91	26%	37	12.32%
• 30-<40	217	62%	95	31.50%
• 40-<55	42	12%	168	56.18%
<b>Marital status</b>				
• Single	70	20%	12	4.10%
• Married	273	78%	276	91.80%
• Divorced & widow	7	2%	12	4.10%
<b>Number of children</b>				
• No	70	20%	29	9.58%
• 1-2	67	19%	78	26.02%
• 3-4	213	61%	193	64.40%
<b>Years of nursing experience</b>				
• 0≤10	80	23%		
• 10≤20	193	55%	----	---
• 20≤31	77	22%		
<b>Level of education</b>				
• Not educated	--	--	238	79.45%
• Diploma	273	78%	39	13.10%
• Associate	17	5%	0	0.00%
• bachelor	60	17%	6	2.00%
• Others			17	5.45%
<b>Department</b>				
• Urology	95	27%	103	34.34%
• Orthopedic	38	11%	-	--
• cardiology	87	25%	86	28.76%
• tropical	74	21%	111	36.90%
• pediatric	56	16%	--	--
<b>Residence</b>				
• Tanta	308	87%	263	87.67%
• Alragdia	3	1%	17	5.47%
• Almahela	14	4%	--	--
• Sammnood	14	4%	--	--
• Monivia	3	1%	--	--
• Kettoor	3	1%	8	2.73%
• Alsanta	3	1%	--	--
• kaferalsh	3	1%	12	4.13%

**Table (2): Distribution of staff nurses and female patients about where should males be in nursing**

Items	Staff nurses (N=350)		Female patients (N=300)		X <sup>2</sup> P -Value
	No.	%	No.	%	
<b>Working place preferences</b>					
• Hospital Ward	112	32%	16	5.47%	403.877 0.000*
• Primary Care	60	17%	33	10.95%	
• Emergency	150	43%	173	57.53%	
• Outpatient Clinics	28	8%	58	19.22%	
• Instructor in Nursing Schools	0	0%	20	6.83%	
<b>Clinics are seen suitable for men to work</b>					
• Internal Medicine-Surgery Clinics	46	13%	20	6.84%	211.619 0.000*
• ICU, operating room, emergency	105	30%	111	36.98%	
• Clinics other than maternity care and pediatrics	101	29%	74	24.65%	
• Every clinic with no exception	98	28%	95	31.53%	
<b>Positions are seen fit for males</b>					
• Staff Nurse	238	68%	99	32.87%	287.785 0.000*
• Administrator	7	2%	152	50.78%	
• Instructor	7	2%	41	13.69%	
• In any position available	98	28%	8	2.76%	

\* Significance:  $P < 0.05$ **Table (3): Distribution of staff nurses and female patients' perceptions about effects of males on image and status of nursing**

Items	Staff nurses (N=350)		Female patients (N=300)		X <sup>2</sup> P -Value
	No.	%	No.	%	
<b>How will males affect the image of nursing?</b>					
• Males will not change anything in image of nursing	77	22%	82	27.39%	401.542 0.000*
• Males will improve image of nursing	259	74%	189	63.03%	
• Males will worsen image of nursing	14	4%	29	9.58%	
<b>How males will affect the status of nursing?</b>					
• Males will not change anything in the status of nursing	67	19%	74	24.66%	468.317 0.000*
• Males will improve the status of nursing	273	78%	197	65.76%	
• Males will worsen the status of nursing.	10	3%	29	9.58%	
<b>Should nursing only be a female profession?</b>					
• Yes	25	7%	82	27.39%	292.455 0.000*
• No	325	93%	218	72.61%	

\*Significance:  $P < 0.05$

**Table (4): Distribution of staff nurses and female patients according to their perception of men nursing**

Items	Staff nurses perception of men nursing (N=350)		Female patients perception of men nursing (N=300)		X <sup>2</sup> P -Value	
	No	%	No	%		
• Nursing image	low	298	85%	178	59.2%	140.314 0.000*
	Medium	52	15%	122	40.8%	
	High	0	0%	0	0%	
• Rewards of a nursing career	low	227	65%	19	6.4%	8.625 0.013*
	Medium	11	3%	208	69.4%	
	High	112	32%	73	24.2%	
• Perception of men from female nurses perspectives	low	94	27%	53	17.8%	305.098 0.000*
	Medium	221	63%	202	67.2%	
	High	35	10%	45	15.1%	
• Barriers to Men in Nursing	low	88	25%	74	24.7%	24.022 0.000*
	Medium	28	8%	197	65.8%	
	High	234	67%	29	9.5%	
Total	low	179	51%	82	27.4%	50.828 0.000*
	Medium	77	22%	181	60.3%	
	High	94	27%	37	12.3%	

\*Significance:  $P < 0.05$ **References:**

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