



MEN IN NURSING: A STUDY OF GENDER IDENTITY AND MOTIVES FOR CHOOSING A NURSING STUDY PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

Background: Nurses were still identified with the female profession because women had instincts and a gentle nature. The low number of nurses and male students in nursing was attributed to the public's view of the profession, which was still based on a person's gender. The purpose of this study was to prove the phenomenon of inappropriate community stereotypes towards nursing by examining the relationship between gender identity and the motive for choosing a nursing program in male students in Jember. **Methods:** This research used a correlational method and cross-sectional approach, with data collection utilizing the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) questionnaire and a questionnaire on the motive for choosing a nursing program. The sample consisted of 122 students from the Faculty of Nursing at Universitas Jember, including those pursuing diploma degrees, bachelor's degrees, and professional degrees. **Results:** The results showed that the gender identity of male students in the nursing program was 52.5% androgynous, while the rest were 18.0% masculine, 17.2% undifferentiated, and 12.3% feminine. For the motives for choosing a nursing program, the average score was 54.68. The results of the Kendall's Tau C test showed a sign of 0.04 ($\alpha = 0.05$), this result indicates a relationship although the relationship is not strong. **Conclusions:** Based on the test results, it was concluded that there was a significant relationship between gender identity and the motive for choosing a nursing program among male students in Jember. Lecturers needed to reiterate to male students that they should maintain their masculine nature, even though it was possible to develop feminine traits due to the demands of the profession.

Keywords: gender identity, motives, male students, nursing students

Introduction

Nurses are a profession that focuses on handling and caring for patients. Nurses are described as meek and humble because nurses are required to be able to serve patients well, respect, and care for patients. Nurses have a function in providing nursing

care and health education to patients, both in good health and sick conditions with the aim of improving welfare optimally (Simamora et al., 2019). Nurses until now nurses are still very synonymous with the female profession because women have instincts and gentle nature, nursing in its history is also interpreted as mother instinct



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(Fadhila & Asriyadi, 2020), therefore women are considered more likely to have caring for patients compared to men. Actually, if you look at the role of male nurses in health services, especially in hospitals, it is very much needed, as conveyed Rahim & Irwansyah (2021) that men are synonymous with strong and mighty, therefore they are given roles that require more energy than women, such as lifting and transferring patients.

According to Kominfo East Java Open Data, in 2023 the number of nurses at one of the program hospitals in East Java, namely Dr. Saiful Anwar Hospital Malang, amounted to 1,121 nurses, consisting of 431 male nurses or 38.5%, and 690 female nurses or 61.5%. In addition to the number of nurses, the results of the study also show that the number of female students enrolled in the nursing study program is more than the number of male students, the results of a preliminary study conducted obtained data at the Faculty of Nursing, University of Jember were recorded in 2023 the number of students of the 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 batches with a total number of 828 students consisting of male students which only amounted to 136 students or 16.5% while the number of students Female students amounted to 692 students or 83.5% of the total. Judging from the available data, we can conclude that the number of male nurses and male students in the nursing study program is very low compared to the number of nurses and female students in the nursing study program. Today's society still views a profession based on a person's gender, for example, nurses who are considered more suitable for women's feminine traits and less suitable for men. This is evidenced by research conducted by Rahim & Irwansyah (2021) showing that there are still stereotypes or perceptions in society that think that men with their

masculine traits are less suitable and seem rigid in performing their roles as nurses.

The current problem is the influence of societal stereotypes that nurses are still identified with women who are predominantly feminine and are not compatible with men who are predominantly intellectual. This is one of the factors causing the low number of male students compared to female students in the nursing department. Therefore, researchers want to prove the phenomenon of inappropriate social stereotypes towards nursing by examining the relationship between gender identity and motives for choosing a nursing program using the BEM theory which states that gender identity is divided into 4 including feminine, masculine, androgynous, and undifferentiated. This research will be conducted on male students who choose a nursing program in Jember.

Methods

This study is a quantitative research using the correlational method and using a cross-sectional approach. The independent variable in this study is gender identity and the dependent variable is the student's motive for choosing the nursing program. This research will be conducted at the Faculty of Nursing, University of Jember with the population to be studied is students of the Faculty of Nursing, which includes students of the undergraduate nursing study program, D3 nursing and nursing professional students. The sample was taken using a purposive sampling technique with a total sample obtained of 122 students. The data collection process uses a questionnaire in the form of a google form which is distributed through the whatsapp group. The data obtained was then analyzed using the Kendall's Tau c test with the help of the SPSS application. The research has



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received an ethical feasibility certificate issued by the KEPK Faculty of Nursing, University of Jember with certificate number 306 / UN25.1.14 / KEPK / 2024.

categorized as low if the motif value is $< \text{mean}$, categorized as high if the motif value is $> \text{mean}$.

Results

Based on table 1, it is known that the characteristics based on the age of male students in the Faculty of Nursing have an average age of 20.57 years, with a standard deviation of 1,460. The youngest male student age is 18 years old and the oldest male student age is 25 years old.

Based on table 2, it is known that the education level of male students of the Faculty of Nursing is more than 50 percent, namely the Bachelor of Nursing education level (54.1%), the rest with the education level of D3 Nursing Lumajang Campus (17.2%), D3 Nursing Pasuruan City Campus (15.6%), and Nurse Profession (13.1%). The male student cohort of the Faculty of Nursing is more than 50 percent of the 2023 batch, the rest are the 2022 batch (32.8%), and the 2021 batch (17.2%). It is known that the gender identity of male students programing in nursing at the Faculty of Nursing is more than 50 percent in the androgynous gender identity category (52.5%), the rest are masculine (18.0%), undifferentiated (17.2%), and feminine gender identity (12.3%). It is known that the motives of male students in the Faculty of Nursing who choose the nursing program have an average motive value of 54.68, with a standard deviation of 12.767. The highest motive score is 90 and the lowest is 27. The highest motive score was 90 and the lowest was 27. The average results were divided into internal factors of 29.53 and external factors of 25.15. Based on the table, it was found that the motive for male students to choose the nursing program was dominated by the low category with a percentage of 51.6%. The categorization of high or low motifs is based on the mean value,

Based on table 3, it is known that the most common gender identity is androgynous gender identity with the motive for choosing a nursing major in the highest category, namely 62.7% low motive, then followed by androgynous gender identity with the motive for choosing a nursing major in the low motive category, namely 42.9%. Based on the results of the Kendall's Tau test analysis, it shows a significant value of 0.04 ($\alpha=0.05$) so that H_0 is rejected. Based on the test results, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between gender identity and the motives for choosing a nursing program among male students in Jember.

Discussion

1. Gender identity of male students of the department of nursing, University of Jember

Gender identity identification of male students programing in nursing, Faculty of Nursing, University of Jember, D3 Nursing study program, Lumajang Campus, D3 Nursing, Pasuruan City Campus, Bachelor of Nursing, Nurse Profession was carried out using the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) questionnaire with measurement results categorized as masculine (masculine score $>$ median split score), feminine (feminine score $>$ median score split), undifferentiated (masculine and feminine score $<$ median score split), and androgyny (masculine and feminine scores $>$ median split scores) (Bem in Cunningham, 2019). The results of gender identity identification



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of male students programing in nursing consisted of androgynous gender identity categories as many as (52.5%), the rest were masculine (18.0%), undifferentiated (17.2%), and feminine gender identity (12.3%).

The results of this study show that more than 50% of male students programing in nursing have androgynous gender identity. Androgini is a man or woman who has both high masculine and feminine traits (Jacqueline, 2019). According to Maluki & Purwoko (2016), even though a person is classified as androgynous who has the same high masculine and feminine traits, but in terms of romance and romance they are still in the right corridor, namely loving the opposite sex. This androgynous identity is indeed rarely found and encountered because someone who has this gender identity does not seem to show it directly.

According to researchers, the high number of androgynous gender identity in male students programing in nursing is natural, because the majority of nursing program consist of female students which can influence the growth of feminine traits in male students but without eliminating their masculine traits. However, according to researchers, this phenomenon must be studied further to provide information and new perspectives to the public so as not to cause negative perceptions in society.

2. Motives for choosing a nursing program for male students in Jember

In this study, the motives of male students choosing the nursing program are divided into 2, namely internal and external factors. Internal factors consist of personal decisions, ideals, interest and talents. External factors consist of parental encouragement, peer influence, mass media influence and public perception. From the

results of the research conducted on 122 male students programing in nursing, the average motive for choosing the nursing program was 54.68, with a minimum score of 27 and a maximum score of 90. The motive category for choosing a nursing program is divided into 2, namely high and low. From the results we get that the motive for male students to choose a nursing program is still low with the percentage in the low category, namely 51.6%. From the average results show that male students programing in nursing choosing this program are still classified as occupying a moderate score, because if the score obtained is smaller, the lower the motivation of students to choose the program and vice versa. This result is in line with the research of Tirta et al. (2021) which stated the low interest and motivation of male students in choosing to continue their education in the health major compared to women's interests and motives.

The researcher concluded that the low number of male student program ing in nursing is the cause of low student motivation in choosing a nursing program, which may be influenced by many factors. To increase this motive, it is necessary to have social support, especially from the family as conveyed by Widyastuti (2013) high family social support will be able to increase the stability of students in making career decisions.

3. The relationship between gender identity and motives for choosing a nursing program in male students in Jember

Research conducted on male students programing in nursing, Faculty of Nursing, University of Jember with a total of 122 respondents consisting of D3 Nursing students, Bachelor of Nursing, and Nurse Profession students with batches consisting of 2021, 2022, and 2023 to find out the



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relationship between gender identity and the motive for choosing a nursing program in male students in Jember obtained results based on table 4.5, namely the analysis of the Kendall's Tau c test showed that the significant value was 0.04 ($\alpha=0.05$) until H_0 is rejected. Based on the test results, it was concluded that there was a significant relationship between gender identity and the motive for choosing a nursing program among male students in Jember. This result is in line with the results of research conducted by Maluki & Purwoko (2016) on female students at the Faculty of Sports Sciences UNESA where the faculty is dominated by male students, which shows that the average number of female students is less than that of male students, and female students have androgynous gender identity that arises due to the influence of several factors such as the environment, The field of sports, life experiences and others that do not rule out the possibility of forming androgynous gender identity.

Gender identity is a person's description of themselves as a man or woman (Santrock, 2011). Indonesian society today may only be familiar with 2 gender identities, namely masculine and feminine, but gender identity is not only composed of masculine and feminine but there are other gender identities, namely undifferentiated and androgynous. As explained by Bem in Cunningham (2019), gender identity is divided into 4 categories, namely masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated. The results of this study show that there is a relationship between gender identity and the motive for choosing a nursing program in male students who are dominated by androgynous gender identity. Androgini here is interpreted as a man or woman who has the same high masculine and feminine qualities. A person with androgynous gender identity is generally more flexible,

as stated (Hartono & Widyawati, 2011) androgynous individuals are described as more flexible and mentally healthier than individuals who are only masculine and feminine. The presence of individuals who have androgynous gender identities has now begun to grow on social media, for example, the celebrity "Jovi Adhiguna Hunter", and also "Hudson" one of the top Indonesian Got Talent (Sinambela & Novendra, 2023). The diversity of gender identities that exist today must be studied further in order to provide education to the public regarding this matter. As stated by Wijayakusuma (2020), the lack of public knowledge about the androgynous concept causes androgyny to be considered a deviation, even most consider androgyny to be a transgender.

According to the researcher, the relationship between gender identity and the motive for choosing this nursing program is caused by the demands of the profession felt by male students programing in nursing. Because we know that nurses are synonymous with the feminine nature possessed by women, and if we look at the history of nursing is interpreted as mother insthink. Therefore, feminine traits emerge in male students programing in nursing, but without eliminating their masculine nature. In addition, according to researchers, the public assumes that nurses are synonymous with women because they are dominant and are not suitable for men because they are dominant in masculine nature, this is also a factor that causes the growth of feminine traits in male students. Because society also plays an important role in the formation of a person's gender identity, as conveyed by Agustang et al. (2015) that the formation of a person's gender identity is inseparable from community intervention.

Conclusion



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Based on the results of the study, it was found that the average age of male students programing in nursing at the Faculty of Jember was 20.57 years old with a vulnerable age of 18 to 25 years. The highest level of education is Bachelor of Nursing with a percentage of 54.1%, followed by D3 Nursing Lumajang Campus 17.2%, D3 Nursing Pasuruan City Campus 15.6%, and Nurse Profession 13.1%. The highest number of batches is the class of 2023 with a percentage of 50.0%, followed by the class of 2022 with a percentage of 32.8%, and the class of 2021 with a percentage of 17.2%. More than 50 percent of male students programing in nursing have androgynous gender identity (52.5%), followed by masculine (18.0%), *undifferentiated* (17.2%), and feminine gender identity (12.3%).

The average score of the motive for choosing a nursing program in male students was 54.68 with the highest score of 90 and the lowest score of 27, and it was found that the motive for male students to choose the nursing program was dominated by the low category with a percentage of 51.6%. The results of the study obtained a significant value of 0.04 ($\alpha=0.05$), therefore H_0 was rejected, which means that there is a significant relationship between gender identity and the motive for choosing a nursing program in male students in Jember.

The researcher suggested that educators should be able to emphasize and make male nursing students aware to maintain their masculine gender identity even though there is a possibility of the growth of feminine traits in them which may be caused by the demands of the profession that require them to apply feminine traits. It is recommended for the public not to think that the nursing profession and education are not suitable

for men because they have a dominant masculine nature and are only suitable for women who have feminine characteristics, because basically in the provision of nursing care, male nurses are also very much needed. Researchers are further advised to conduct further research related to gender identity and the motives of male students choosing the nursing program, in order to provide more information to the public regarding the development of the current gender identity category, as well as to provide progress in the field of education, especially nursing education. The limitations of this study are that it does not include female students, students from other faculties or universities, or other factors outside of gender identity that may influence the decision to choose a nursing major.

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Table 1 Average Characteristics of Respondents Based on the Age of Male Students at the Faculty of Nursing, University of Jember in July 2024 (n=122)

Variabel	Mean	Min	Max	Std. Deviation
Age	20.57	18	25	1.460

Source: July 2024 Primary Data

Table 2 Distribution of Frequency of Respondent Characteristics Based on Education Level and Year of Male Students at the Faculty of Nursing, University of Jember in July 2024 (n=122)

Level of Education	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Diploma III Nursing Lumajang Campus	21	17.2
Diploma III Nursing Pasuruan City Campus	19	15.6
Bachelor of Nursing	66	54.1
Ners Professionals	16	13.1
Total	122	100
Force	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
2021	21	17.2
2022	40	32.8
2023	61	50.0
Total	122	100
Gender Identity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Masculine	22	18.0
Feminim	15	12.3
Undifferentiated	21	17.2



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Androgyni	64	52.5
Total	122	100
Motives of Male Students Choosing a Nursing Program	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Low	63	51.6
High	59	48.4
Total	122	100

Source: July 2024 Primary Data

Table 3 Crosstabulation between gender identity and motives for choosing a nursing major among male students in Jember Students in Jember in July 2024 (n=122)

Gender Identity	Motive of Choosing a Nursing Program in Male Students				Total	p-value
	High Motive		Low Motive			
	Frequency	Percentage	Frenquency	Percentage		
	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)		
Masculine	13	20.6	9	15.25	22	0.04
Feminim	10	15.9	5	8.5	15	
Undifferentiated	13	20.6	8	13.55	21	
Androginy	27	42.9	37	62.7	64	
Total	63	100	59	100	122	

Source: July 2024 Primary Data