"*Who do you think you are?*" Perceptions of professional identity in adult nursing using Constructivist Grounded Theory'

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European Doctoral Conference in Nursing Science,

Bern, Switzerland, 16-17th September 2016.

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Research aim & objectives

- To understand the professional identity of undergraduate adult nursing students and how this is constructed and sustained through the practice of nursing

  - To explore the construct of professional identity in adult nursing

  - To discover whether professional identity remains a constant

  - To understand how subjective reality informs identity formation

  - To offer interpretation of the data for the purpose of curriculum design and policy development in the field of nursing

Nursing recruitment

- Driven by political, economic and sociological factors (HEE, 2013)

  - Under-recruitment and high attrition in nurse education

  - Current nursing workforce leaving NHS (HEE, 2014)

  - Failures in care

- Workforce planning and attrition reduction; select of 'right skills, values and behaviour' (HEE, 2013, pg.14)

  - Idealised expectation (Traynor, 2013)

  - Gift of nursing (Goldman, 2016)

  - Disconnect of role diversity in modern society (Ten Hoeve *et al*, 2013)

Professional identity

- Construction based upon attributes, beliefs, values, motives and experiences (Ibarra, 1999; Schein, 1978)

  - Shifting boundaries, both personal and professional, driven by social norms, roles, grouping and structure

  - Identity and identification increasingly being used as synonym causing confusion (Miscenko and Day, 2015)

…in adult nursing

- Complex concept lacking clear definition

  - Perceived as harmonising the personal and professional self (Ohlen and Segesten, 1998)

  - Embraces collective nursing characteristics including professionalism, image, value and value-based

  - Or, linked to generic responsibilities of role

Methodological approach

- Constructivist Grounded Theory

  – 'aims towards interpretive understanding of subjects meanings' (Charmaz, 2000, pg. 513)

  – sensitises concepts through close collaboration with participants in theory development and is discipline specific (Charmaz, 2006)

- Methods used

  – Purposive recruitment of 10 female undergraduate students undertaking pre-registration in adult nursing

  – Ethics approval from the University of Northampton, UK

  – Data collection over 1 year on 3 occasions with each participant

  – Semi structured interviews and photo elicitation

    - Image selection informed by participants

Research study

- Participant 1:

  - Female, mature student

  - Stage of nurse education

  - First participant

    – Pilot across all processes

- Early career Researcher

  - Initial coding of textual and visual analysis

 (Charmaz, 2014; Konecki, 2009; Saldana 2016; Clarke, 2005)

"I sort of didn't just flick off the internet and get a few off. I picked on pictures that were in my mind, head, I wanted, about how I saw a nurse..." (P1:Int1)

Preliminary findings

- Image 1

"…I sort of feel he's, he is, a good nurse because he has that care but he has that discipline and he also has that kind of f-, um, been there, did it, got the T-shirt…" (P1:Int1)

*"…role model in the best possible sense, without somehow saying, you know, cos, when we say that in our family – we do all take a snigger moment, to take the mickey out of one another; we are the closest friends, but you know, you have those moments and think, yeah, **he's a role model, and he does, has done it and look at him, look at where he's got to.** So, I'm quite proud of him – my brother."* (P1:Int1)
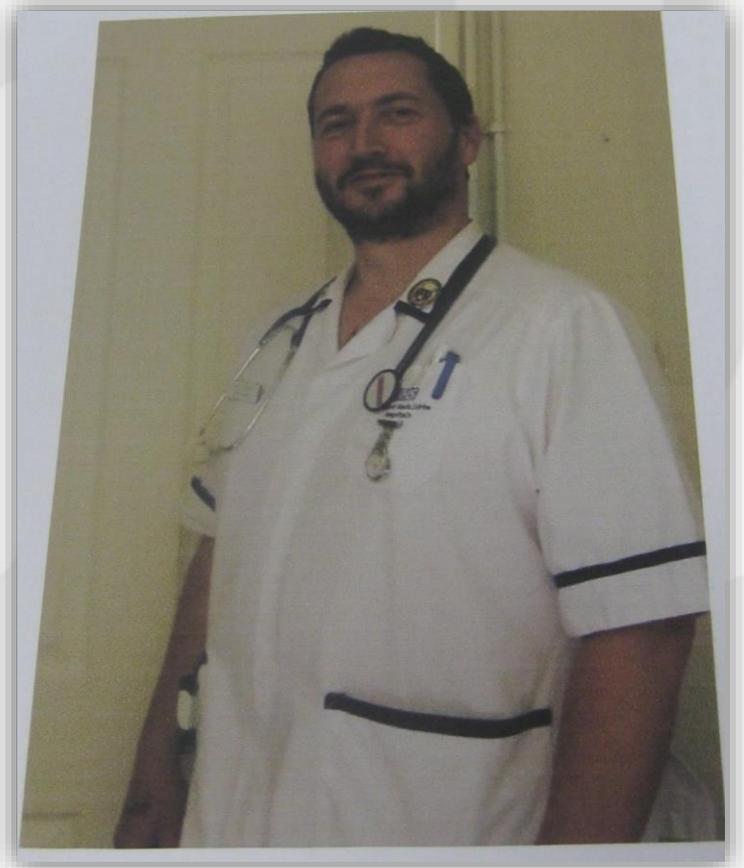
Mapping the discourse

"he's a role model, and he does, has done it and look at him, look at where he's got to." (P1:Int1)

First impressions: "Are you for real?"
Context: Younger brother of P1. Number of images taken for inclusion. Presented as 'most' appropriate. Home environment. In uniform. Ex-armed forces, now emergency nurse.
Interpretation: Jokey, bearded man, self assured and confident in stance. Questioning of purpose, but proud to be asked. Registered nurse signified by uniform. Home environment. Personal request.
Photo Caption: "Role modelling for entertainment"
(synopsis of visual analysis method adapted from Saldana, 2016)
Reflexivity: Synergy between participant and brother; I see her in him, identity stolen, misappropriated or shared?

Image 2

"*Hattie Jakes, epitome of matron, at her absolute comic best, sense of humour very important to me, and I feel that she was the humour side, **she was always in control, you know as that picture of the matron**"* (P1: Int1)

"*Sense of humour aside, when I see Hattie Jakes, in Carry On Nurse, I think 'yes'; we all sit there and say, "oh, matron!", and its lovely, and its funny, but at the same time she is the control, the centre, she is who everyone answers too, and I think that's quite good. That's why she's my, she's one of my pictures."* (P1: Int1)

(http://cdn.images.express.co.uk/img/dynamic/10/285x214/222792_1.jpg)

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Mapping the discourse

"she was always in control, you know as that picture of the matron" (P1: Int1)

First impressions: "So, *what* do we have here?"
Context: 1950s portrayal of nursing, fictional characterisation 'Carry on Nursing'. Image of two actors in nursing uniform appearing to be undertaking a ward round. Patient unknown.
Interpretation: reinforces historical context, memory captured for prosperity? Expectations captured in matron role. Position and hierarchy.
Photo Caption: "Assess and review; Matronly command"
**Reflexivity:** Dislike imagery due to its unreal portrayal; conditional regard for self and others.

Image 3

"*my 'helping nurses', nurses that are really doing their job, their best*, making sure that they're heard, and listened too, so being very efficient and dealing with issues and problems of someone who is very sick and I see that when I look at these picture." (P1:Int1)

"…but then she goes, "it is vital we get those 20 minutes first and make sure we get the relatives in". And I remember her saying that, thinking, yes, she's caught the whole sort of how she would feel." (P1:Int1)

"I would like to be that efficient, I would like to be like that, I would like to be like that in my job, the way they knew their job; to be very caring about every aspect, and sort of like do everything that they needed," (P1:Int1)
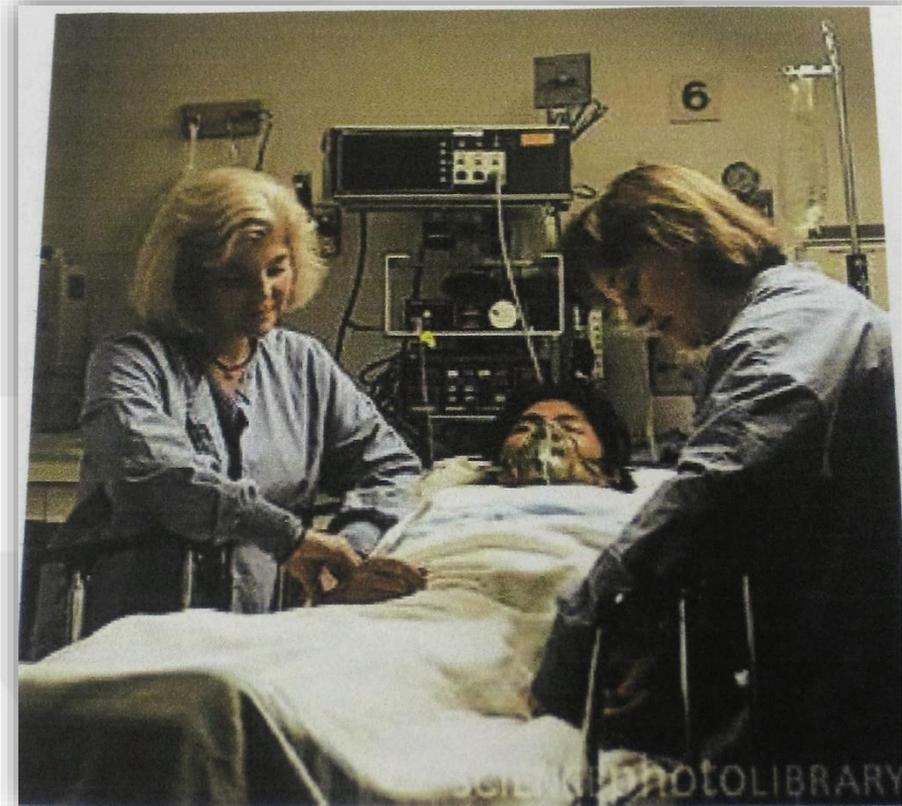
Mapping the discourse

"my 'helping nurses', nurses that are really doing their job, their best" (P1:Int1)

First impressions: "70's ITU = active serenity"

Context: Hospital environment, technology and staff surrounding patient indicate clinical practice. Patient on trolley appears unconscious, oxygen mask in place. Two white female nurses administering care.

Interpretation: Sense of calm, staff engaged with, but not to patient. Think this is theatre recovery, scrubs, machinery off, bed space numbered, no windows, disconnected, temporary stay. Silence, purposeful and kindly; Posed?

Photo Caption: "Calmly recovered"

Reflexivity: starting to 'read' imagery for its content, like P1, saw this initially as ITU until analysed closely.

Image 4

"Chat, interaction, holding hands, bond obviously, a care and compassion that this nurse is showing this patient, and I felt this was, it gave another side from this, these two are together, in my head these two are together," (P1:Int1)

"You know you can be efficient, and be able to deal with all the other stuff that, you know, but at the same time you have to be, this person as well." (P1:Int1)

*"So they were sort of my, I see them both together, **in my mind I see them both together, but obviously you can't be what people want (laughs)."** (P1:Int1)
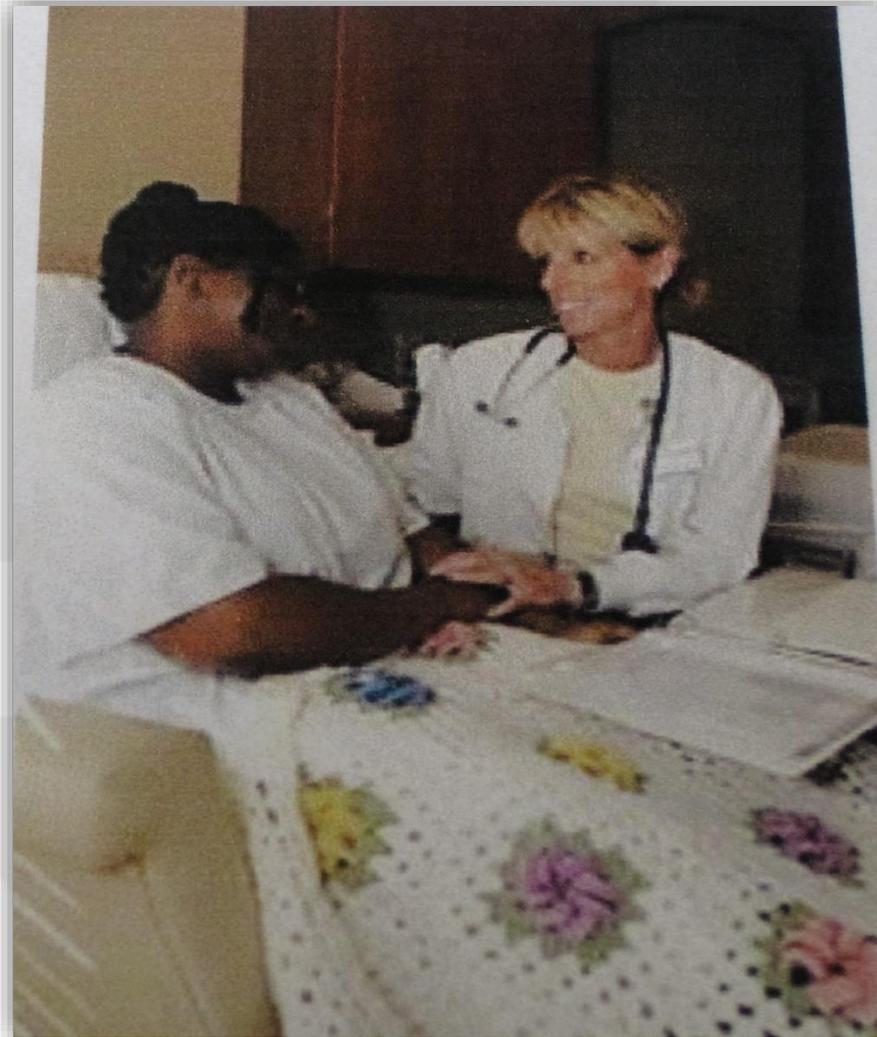
Mapping discourse

"in my mind I see them both together, but obviously you can't be what people want (laughs)" (P1:Int1)

First impressions: "Friendship (professional)"
Context: Two women, seated, holding hands and looking at each other. One is wearing doctor's white coat, stethoscope and name badge, the other is in a clinical gown, covered in a flowered, crocheted rug. The furniture appears to be that of an independent hospital or hospice environment. Clinical notes rest between them on their knees.
Interpretation: close interaction, reinforced by the colours used. Clinician looks alive, reflected in outfit and rug on patient's legs. Patient appears reverential, head positioning; reassurance being offered in hand holding, positioning and clinical notes.
Photo Caption: "Clinical togetherness: hoped for help"
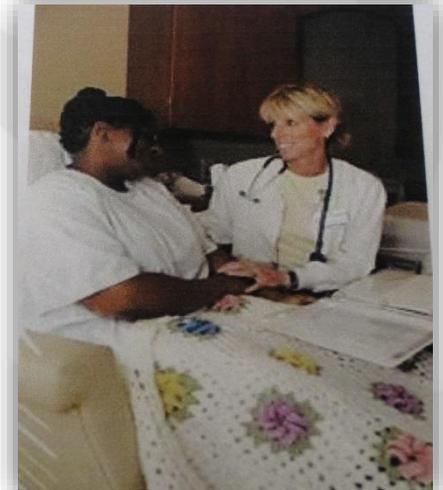**Reflexivity:** separate togetherness, therapeutic care noted.

Image 5

"This is my group photo. I feel part of a team. **I'm a nurse, I'm part of this bigger thing,** *I'm part of this big family of being a nurse."* (P1:Int1)

"I feel very passionate about being one of them, and being a member of that team, of that team that cares like these people, and that team that can be efficient, in control, and that team can inspire." (P1:Int1)

"I still can't believe that I'm one of that shift, team member, an important member of the team, that helps those people, and deals with all that goes on in that ward, and I feel so, sort of like, you know, "yeah!" (P1:Int1)

Mapping the discourse.

"I'm a nurse, I'm part of this bigger thing" (P1:Int1)

First impressions: "Canteen culture"

Context: Mixed group of nurses in an environment resembling a canteen. Fridges in backdrop. Group gathered by tills, closely aligned to each other in a variety of clinical uniforms.

Interpretation: Historical or foreign image, white uniforms and shoes indicative of US nurses. Rare to gather this number of nurses together, let alone time for food, possibly nightshift. Posed photograph, behaviour tame. Not everyone pleased to be present.

Photo Caption: "Group(ed) performance"

Reflexivity: reminds me of a distant memory of meeting fellow nurses in the canteen at night for a bit of debrief, light relief, or break time escapism.

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Final thoughts

Who do you think you are?

- Professional identity in adult nursing fostered, assumed or created?
  - Participant 1
    - Dissonance and contradictions
    - Creativity
    - Aspiration remains true
  - Practical/academic implications
    - Insight
    - Authenticity

Research process

- Methodological approach
  - Interpretation and analysis
  - Reflexivity
  - Researcher bias
  - Rigour
  - Further data collection for confirmability (Chiovitti and Piran, 2003)

Acknowledgment & Gratitude

- For listening and your contributions

- Participants involved in the study

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