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Exploring the Characteristics and Behaviours of Nurses Who Have Attained Microcelebrity Status on Instagram

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ABSTRACT

Instagram is a social media platform that enables users to share images and videos worldwide. Some nurses have utilized Instagram to document their experiences as a nurse and have subsequently gained microcelebrity status. In this qualitative content analysis, publicly accessible Instagram posts were analyzed to identify the characteristics and behaviours of nurses who have active microcelebrity status on Instagram.

Data analysis revealed five themes of Instagram posts: (a) *engaging Instagram users;* (b) *educational opportunities and insights;* (c) *nursing related humour;* (d) *emotions experienced by nurses;* and, (e) *media and narratives including patient details or work context.* Messages were primarily positive in nature, however, multiple potential privacy, ethical, and professional issues exist in regard to posted content. This study calls for additional research of nurses' attainment of microcelebrity status on social media, as well as further policy development to adequately prepare nurses to navigate social media.

Keywords: nursing, microcelebrity, Instagram, social media, professionalism, nursing policy

CO-AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

Hanna Kerr completed the following dissertation under the supervision of Dr. Richard Booth and advisement of Dr. Kim Jackson, who will be the co-authors on the publication resulting from the manuscript.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTON

Introduction

Every month, more than one billion people utilize the photo and video sharing

social media platform, Instagram (Constine, 2018). As a mobile photo-sharing platform,

Instagram was founded in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Kreiger and continues to

grow exponentially, as the number of monthly active users increased by 200 million

between September 2017 and June 2018 (Constine, 2018). The application is freely

available for download on various mobile devices, including Apple iOS, Android, and

Windows operating systems, for individuals over the age of 13 (Instagram, 2018). To use

Instagram, users can post photos and videos that are shared with other Instagram users,

and further organized through the use of hashtags. A hashtag is a type of metadata tag

that allows users on a social network, such as Instagram, to self-organize media as per

specific content or themes (Wikipedia, 2018). Further, Instagram users are provided with

the ability to customize posts through a range of image processes (i.e., filters) and textual

captioning up to 2200 characters in length (Jackson, 2017). Users can also add a

geographic location to their post, enabling others to see where the photo or video was

captured. Finally, Instagram users can interact with others on the Instagram network by

following fellow users. The number of followers an Instagram user has is publicly

displayed on users' account page, regardless of the user's privacy settings (Instagram,

2018).

When an Instagram user *follows* another Instagram account, the initial Instagram

user is able to see the other users' posts on their home feed. If an Instagram account is

open to the public, anyone is able to see content and *follow* the user. Instagram users are able to *follow* people they may not know personally, such as celebrities. Through the process of *following*, Instagram users' followers see content on their home feed as it is posted in real time (Instagram, 2018). Users are able to further interact by *liking* or *commenting* on posts. These features enable Instagram users to interact with others on the Instagram network through a dynamic process of *liking* and *commenting* on the posted media.

Due to the interactive nature of Instagram and the ability to easily identify the number of followers a specific user has on the platform, the phenomena demonstrated by some social media users of purposefully seeking to amass substantial online followings has become a recognized behaviour (Marwick, 2015). If a social media user gains both substantial attention and a distinct followership within their group of followers, they are said to have attained a *microcelebrity* status (Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2016; Khamis, Ang, & Welling, 2017; Marwick, 2011 & 2015). Marwick (2011, 2015) states that achieving microcelebrity status is not based on attaining a set number of followers on social media; rather, microcelebrity is a continuum consisting of a set of practices that enable social media users to attract and maintain an audience. In addition to a varying audience size, microcelebrities have emerged on multiple social media platforms, including YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Khamis et al., 2017; Maguire, 2015). As the microcelebrity concept continues to evolve, many individuals, including some nurses, have begun to purposefully leverage the connective powers of Instagram to generate microcelebrity nursing persona through their online presence. Therefore, because some

nurses seek to generate and sustain microcelebrity status on Instagram, a deeper exploration of the phenomena from a nursing perspective is required.

Nurses' Social Media Use

One aspect of the Instagram platform is the ability of its users to personalize the content of their posts to particular personal or professional interests, themes, and activities. For example, there are numerous Instagram accounts which exclusively feature content related to the nursing profession (e.g., @ashleyadkinsrn, @nurseabnormalities, @nurseclara). Currently, multiple nursing-related Instagram accounts have amassed sizeable followings of greater than 10,000 users, arguably pushing them toward microcelebrity status on Instagram (Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2016; Khamis et al., 2017; Marwick, 2015). As suggested by Khamis et al. (2017), Instagram users pursuing microcelebrity status may utilize the characteristics that make them unique to create a distinct personalized brand. Some nurses seeking microcelebrity status may attempt to engage an audience based on the depiction of their lives in relation to the nursing profession. However, given the potentially sensitive nature of the nursing role and related patient care, the use of Instagram by some users to exclusively feature content related to the nursing profession is an area in need of deeper exploration. For instance, sharing of elements related to client care details and personal health information with the public raises potential concerns about the professional, ethical, and legal ramifications of such accounts and their related users.

In recent years, there have been multiple instances of nurses facing discipline, job loss, and criminal charges after posting inappropriate content on various social media platforms. For instance, in 2014 a nurse in the United States was fired from her job after

reposting an image to Instagram of an empty trauma room showing the remnants of a resuscitation (e.g., blood stains, used medical equipment, etc.), with the caption "Man Vs. 6 Train… The After*"* (Ramisetti, 2014). While no patients, staff, or overt personal health information was shown in the image, the nurse who had featured the image on her Instagram account had her employment terminated (Ramisetti, 2014). In 2016, a Registered Nurse from Saskatchewan was charged with professional misconduct and fined $26,000 by the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association after creating a Facebook post that described her experiences with staff of a palliative care unit where her grandfather was admitted (CBC News, 2018; Dinh, 2016). Lastly, in two separate events in 2016 and 2017, healthcare providers in both Prince Edward Island (Campbell, 2016) and Ontario (Cohen, 2017) were fired for inappropriate images shared to Snapchat, including posting the image of a deceased patient.

In order to proactively ensure the safety and privacy of patients in the coming years, it is necessary to examine the current characteristics and behaviours of nurses who use Instagram to showcase various elements of the nursing profession – especially those with significant online followings. Given the subtle and encompassing nature of social media platforms to provide users with a false sense of security and privacy, the risk for health care providers to unintentionally cross professional boundaries online is a contemporary reality for all nurses (Green, 2017; Jones & Hayter, 2013). Therefore, in order to maintain the safety of patients, and ensure nurses uphold professional standards, it is of utmost importance to identify the types and complexions of messages that are being shared by nurses who have amassed substantial followings on social media platforms like Instagram. In turn, the development of specific policies and guidelines to

assist nurses in the appropriate use of social media can be further developed for both practice and education.

Professional Nursing Recommendations for Social Media Use

In 2015, Elizabeth Denham, British Columbia's Information and Privacy Commissioner, called for the development of specific guidelines regarding health care workers' use of social media in response to several incidents of patients' privacy being compromised. In British Columbia between 2013 and 2015 there were multiple reported incidents of breaches of privacy and professionalism related to the usage of social media, including: (a) health care staff posting images of patients to Instagram and Facebook; (b) nurses and physicians using their personal cellular devices to take pictures of patients; and, (c) a nurse making a public comment on Facebook about the health status of a patient (Denham, 2015). In Ontario, The College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) (International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016), Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) (2015), and Ontario Nurses Association (ONA) (n.d.) have created position statements regarding nurses' usage of social media. These position statements promote similar messages, urging nurses to utilize social media platforms in a manner that protects patient information and confidentiality. Maintaining patient privacy and confidentiality is discussed in all position statements, and it is advised that nurses recognize how to properly utilize and leverage social media technologies in a way that ensures patients' rights are upheld. For instance, it is recommended in the position statements that nurses should exercise both tact and sensitivity in the content and messaging of all social media posts, further advising that if doubt exists regarding the appropriateness of the post, to refrain from posting (International Nurse Regulator

Collaborative, 2016, Ontario Nurses Association, n.d., & Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, 2015). While generic position statements like those provided by the CNO (International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016), RNAO (2015), and ONA (n.d.) provide high-level guidelines and recommendations for nurses related to social media use, a deeper and more contemporary exploration of how nurses use social media platforms like Instagram to broadcast nursing-centric content is required.

Due to the emergent evolution of social media and how users utilize these types of platforms (i.e., nurses who develop and groom a microcelebrity status using their nursing background), it is challenging to apply current policies regarding nurses' use of social media to those in the profession who have sought or attained microcelebrity status online. For instance, the existing position statements have been largely developed for individuals to help guide their behaviours and actions online, as related to discussions related to personal health information, privacy of patients, and other aspects of professionalism (International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016). The current social media position statements do not comment or provide insights for nurses who actively self-advertise themselves as nurses, while contemporaneously using their nursing background as the catalyst to draw attention and followers to their media and interpretations of the nursing profession. With the emergence of nurses actively seeking and attaining microcelebrity status on social media, the nursing profession must review the characteristics and behaviours of these types of nurses in order to generate more contemporary interpretations of how nurses use these kinds of social media platforms to convey and shape messaging related to the profession.

Statement of Study Purpose

Due to the increasing use and rapid evolution of social media, it is crucial for nurses to gain deeper clarity related to the contemporary use of platforms like Instagram, especially as related to users who post content exclusively tailored to, or involving, some element of the nursing profession. As defined by the World Health Organization, nursing, "encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages... includ[ing] the promotion of health, the prevention of illness, and the care of ill, disabled and dying people" (2019). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify the characteristics and behaviours of nurses who have attained microcelebrity status on Instagram and use their nursing profile to gain attention and presence online. To do this, an interpretive, qualitative content analysis (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004) of media and text generated by a purposeful sample of nurses who use Instagram and sustain an online microcelebrity status was used. The interpretivist paradigm recognizes that a single phenomenon is comprised of multiple meanings, and that understanding a phenomenon is subject to people's personal interpretations. By completing this study in the interpretivist paradigm, researchers sought to explore the lived experiences of participants, while recognizing that researchers' interpretations were subject to personal values and beliefs (Levers, 2013; Schwant, 1998). Findings of this study will assist to expand current knowledge related to the use of social media platforms like Instagram, especially as related to the emergence of nurses who use this form of technology to achieve or maintain a microcelebrity status.

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CHAPTER II

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction

The term *microcelebrity* is defined as "the concerted and strategic cultivation of an audience through social media with a view to attaining celebrity status" (Khamis et al., 2016, p. 6). A person is said to have attained microcelebrity status when they have become well-known and developed a notable following within a niche of followers on social media (Khamis et al., 2017; Marwick, 2015).

The concept of a microcelebrity emerged from social, political, and economic movements of the 1990s. During this time, the mantra of developing a *personal brand* as a mechanism to gain competitive advantage over fellow job-seekers became popularized (Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2016). At the same time, the growing mainstream popularity of reality television began offering depictions of average people rapidly achieved celebrity-like status within the media (Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2016; Khamis et al., 2017). In an effort to perpetuate this newly found fame, many early microcelebrities began a process of *self-branding* to create a unique, idealized version of themselves in hopes of standing and maintaining popularity levels (Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2016; Khamis et al., 2017). The phenomenon of seeking microcelebrity status has continued into contemporary times, although the approaches and mechanisms used by people to attain microcelebrity status has evolved with the growing ubiquity of social media technologies (Marwick, 2015).

With the rapid development of social media platforms from 2000-2010, the ability of individuals to seek microcelebrity status by leveraging the connective powers of the Internet became a recognized phenomenon (Marwick, 2015). For instance, users could

post visually appealing photos of themselves to present or showcase elements of their life to develop a public identity from those characteristics (Khamis et al., 2017). By successfully engaging in self-branding, a social media user could become well-known within their niche of followers on social media, thereby attaining microcelebrity status (Khamis et al., 2017; Marwick, 2015).

To understand why social media users may seek microcelebrity status on Instagram, it is crucial to identify the reasons for Instagram use. While examination of microcelebrities on Instagram is an emerging body of literature, previous research examining the motivations of Instagram users and their use of the social media platform have found aspects related to: (a) attention seeking, (b) social support, (c) belonging, (d) social interaction, (e) documentation, (f) learning about other users' lives, and (g) self-expression, as being important to users (Lee, Lee, Moon, & Sung, 2015; McCain et al., 2016; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016; Sung et al., 2016). Within the nursing literature, several reasons have been explored regarding why nurses use social media platforms like Instagram. Multiple researchers have suggested that the use of social media by nurses may assist in providing benefits for both nurses and patients, in part due to the ability to rapidly share information (Cleary, Ferguson, Jackson, & Watson, 2013; Ferguson, 2013; Green, 2017; Lupton & Michael, 2017). It has also been suggested that the use of social media in the nursing profession may potentially assist users who are geographically isolated and have limited access to information and resources (Lupton & Michael, 2017; Sandlin & Hinmon, 2016). Furthermore, patients may be able to seek health-related information on social media and interact with health care professionals in planning their care (Alexander, 2013). Social media has also been posited to provide a useful

mechanism for nurses to enhance their professional portfolios and as a tool to network with other healthcare professionals (Lupton & Michael, 2017; Sandlin & Hinmon, 2017). Although social media has several potential benefits for nurses, challenges have also been identified with social media use in the profession. For instance, due to the instantaneous nature of social media, posts can be disseminated to vast audiences immediately, which can have unintended results, especially if posts are lacking in sensitivity or breach personal health information (Cleary et al., 2013; Lupton & Michael, 2017). It has also been argued that if a nurse interacts with a patient using a personal social media account that professional boundaries may become blurred and a risk of the nurse losing objectivity in providing care may occur (Green, 2017). Consequently, it has been recommended that nurses refrain from interaction with patients over social media (International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016; Green, 2017; Ontario Nurses Association, n.d., & Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, 2015).

While the current body of literature examining social media usage by nurses contains insights toward both positives and negatives of social media usage, there is an absence of research exploring the growing presence of microcelebrities in the profession who use platforms like Instagram to showcase their interpretation of the profession. Given this gap in the literature, the purpose of this study sought to identify the characteristics and behaviours of nurses who have attained microcelebrity status on Instagram.

Literature Review

A narrative literature review was conducted to explore the concepts relevant to the study purpose of identifying the characteristics and behaviours of nurses who have

attained microcelebrity status on Instagram. Further, narrative reviews are useful in amalgamating different information sources and perspectives into a readable format, which is necessary for this study due to the nascent state of the literature in this domain, especially as related to nursing (Green, Johnson, & Adams, 2006). Since minimal research has been conducted on the use of Instagram by nurses and microcelebrity status, aspects of the larger research purpose were examined independently to generate deeper insights into the current state of knowledge regarding of the following concepts: (a) microcelebrity status on Instagram; (b) motivation for using Instagram; and, (c) social media professionalism in nursing.

The literature review was completed using the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health, Scopus, PubMed, and ProQuest databases. The search terms utilized to complete the literature search included: *nursing, nurse(s), microcelebrity, microcelebrity status, Instagram, Instagram famous, reasons for Instagram use, motivation, social media, professionalism.* The terms were searched independently and in combination. In addition to keyword searches, the ancestry method and citation index searching method were utilized to identify additional literature (Conn et al., 2003). To be included in the literature review, studies must have been: (a) written in the English language; (b) published in a peer-reviewed journal; (c) published after the year 2000; and, (d) focus on at least one of the three search topics. Overall, 28 studies were identified and included in the literature review.

Self-Branding

Over the past 10 years, everyday use of social media platforms has increased rapidly in all areas of society (Brems, Temmerman, Graham, & Broersma, 2017). With

the development and evolution of various social media platforms, some users have begun to engage in a strategic process of *self-branding*. In self-branding, individuals attract attention on social media by presenting themselves in a manner chosen specifically by the individual (Brems et al., 2017). Khamis, Ang, and Welling (2017) state that self-branding "involves individuals developing a distinctive public image for commercial gain and/or cultural capital" (p. 1). Often, images posted by self-branding Instagram users are not wholly representative of the user's reality, as the posted content may romanticize certain aspects of their life and omit undesirable parts (Khamis et al., 2017). Instagram is an optimal platform for individuals to engage in self-branding because the platform is image-based and promotes interaction between users (Brems et al., 2017; Khamis et al., 2017; Marwick, 2015).

The objective of self-branding is to create a distinct persona that is well-known within a niche online community and can be utilized to the user's advantage (Khamis et al., 2017; Marwick, 2015). As stated by Khamis et al. (2017), "individuals benefit from having a unique selling point, or a public identity that is singularly charismatic and responsive to the needs and interests of target audiences" (p. 191). By posting distinct content to their social media account, Instagram users mold and amplify a specialized version of themselves that is seen as desirable to other users. Through this purposeful process, Instagram users engage with their audience to potentially attract substantial attention on social media platforms and become well known within their niche of followers (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2018; Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2016). If an Instagram user successfully engages in self-branding and gains recognition on social media, they may achieve *microcelebrity* status (Marwick, 2015).

History of microcelebrity

Microcelebrity is defined as, "a mindset and a collection of self-presentation practices endemic in social media, in which users strategically formulate a profile, reach out to followers, and reveal personal information to increase attention and thus improve their online status" (Marwick, 2015, p. 138). The concept of microcelebrities emerged during the 1990s with the creation of unique self-help literature and the introduction of reality television (Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2016; Khamis et al., 2017). In the late 1990s, self-help books promoted readers to develop a personal brand to become advantageous in the workforce. Readers were advised to create a distinct personal brand to display themselves to their desired job market, and to utilize their brand as a competitive advantage over others. Hearn and Schoenhoff (2016) suggest that these recommendations resulted in some people adopting the belief that a person's success was based primarily on their personal brand, rather than their skill, experience, or knowledge. In addition to emerging literature on the importance of self-branding, popular media also likely contributed to the development of microcelebrity culture. Popular reality television shows, such as Survivor (1992-present) and American Idol (2002-2016) were introduced in the 1990s and early 2000s, based on the premise that normal people were capable of extraordinary achievements. Although participants involved with these types of reality shows were presented to audiences as randomly selected, Khamis et al. (2017) suggested that these participants were specifically selected to fit the television program's marketing goals. In essence, participants in reality television shows were purposefully selected based on their personal brand potential, and whether this brand aligned well with the marketing goals of the television program (Khamis et al., 2017). While the ability to

personally generate a microcelebrity status in the 1990s and early 2000s was difficult, the emergence of social media in the late 2000s provided individuals a greater opportunity to pursue microcelebrity status in specific niches and topic domains (Khamis et al., 2017).

Instagram microcelebrity characteristics

As described by Khamis et al. (2017), one of the most important aspects of toward achieving microcelebrity status via contemporary social media technology is to maximize the amount of attention and visibility a user is able to generate and curate around themselves (Khamis et al., 2017). Subsequently, successful achievement of microcelebrity status on Instagram has been commonly marked by the number of followers, likes, and comments an Instagram user possesses (Khamis et al., 2017). To explore this phenomenon, Djafarova and Trofimenko (2018) interviewed 38 female active Instagram users from Russia to investigate if microcelebrities influenced the consumer purchase decisions of other Instagram users and to identify characteristics associated with microcelebrities. The researchers found that while microcelebrities did not overtly influence consumer purchase decisions of the participants in the study, microcelebrity posts that used engaging textual captions and visual content were important for growing Instagram followership (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2018). Furthermore, when Instagram users were asked to describe qualities that a microcelebrity should embody, participants stated that microcelebrities should be attractive, sexy, humourous, and unique (Djafarova &Trofimenko, 2018). Lastly, it was found that microcelebrities who were attractive, elegant, experienced, skilled, reliable, and honest were viewed as being more credible (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2018).

Motivations for using Instagram

With the rapid development of photo-based social media platforms, such as Instagram, the act of taking and sharing selfies has become a prevalent form of self-presentation (Kim & Chock, 2017; Sorokowski et al., 2015; Sung, Lee, Kim, & Choi, 2016; Weiser, 2015). The term *selfie* refers to a common type of self-portrait image taken by social media users, particularly by those using Instagram (The Oxford Dictionary, 2018). Selfies are frequently posted to social media platforms, as it is reported that 1000 selfies are posted to Instagram every 10 seconds (Rawhide, 2015). To date, multiple studies suggest that users who post selfies may do so to attract attention from fellow social media users (Kim & Chock, 2017; Sung et al., 2016; Weiser, 2015). Posting selfies enables users to gain attention by displaying an idealized version of oneself, as users are able to create posts reflecting their personal brand (Sung et al., 2016; Sorokowski et al., 2015). However, Sung et al. (2016) argue that some social media users may create a supportive social network through posting selfies, in the form of liking and commenting on each other's posts. In addition to a social media user's reasons for posting selfies, seeking social approval may also be related to the user's fundamental motivations for using Instagram (Lee et al., 2015; McCain et al., 2016; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

Several studies that have investigated users' motivations for using Instagram (Lee et al., 2015; McCain et al., 2016; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016; Sung et al., 2016). A reported recurring motivation for Instagram use is various aspects related to social support and belonging that this platform can generate for users (Lee et al., 2015; McCain et al., 2016; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). For instance, Lee et al. (2015) found that the most prevalent motivation reported by 212 Instagram users related to their use of Instagram was the social interaction between users the platform offered. Instagram users in Lee et al. (2015)

sought to gain social support from other users, as well as establish social connections with users who appeared to have similar interests. This finding was also complemented by Sung et al. (2016), who found that Instagram users in their study marketed themselves in a way that they considered to be desirable, to gain approval and popularity from other users. Shelden and Bryant (2016) suggest that to gain social support on Instagram, users may seek to obtain as many *likes* and *followers* as possible, as these metrics are often equated with one's popularity status. Sheldon and Bryant (2016) found that when Instagram users' posts were liked, Instagram users felt admired and validated by peers (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

Documentation of an Instagram user's daily activities is another primary motive for Instagram use (Lee et al., 2015; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016; Sung et al., 2016). Photos arising from day to day life and special occasions can be posted to Instagram for the user, as well as others, to remember (Lee et al., 2016; Sung et al, 2016). Sheldon and Bryant (2016) believe that because of the ease of posting both a photo and a caption, Instagram can act as a personal photo album for users. Since Instagram was designed for photos to be taken and uploaded in real time, Sung et al. (2016) commented that the platform provides a convenient digital location to archive both textual and image content of past events and situations.

Gaining knowledge about other people's lives is also a prominent motive for Instagram use (Lee et al., 2015; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). Sheldon and Bryant (2016) found that obtaining knowledge about the lives of other Instagram users was the most significant motivator for Instagram use. Lee et al. (2015) documented similar findings, noting one of the five motives for Instagram use they uncovered was "peeking" (p. 555)

into other users' lives. Furthermore, Instagram users are able to take a glimpse into people's lives whom they have never met, such as celebrities (Lee et al., 2015).

A final notable motivation for Instagram use is self-expression and self-branding (Lee et al., 2015, McCain et al., 2016; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016; Sung et al., 2016). Instagram users can display many aspects of themselves through pictures, providing a credible means for expressing oneself and creating a personalized brand (Lee et al., 2015; Marwick, 2015). Lee et al. (2015) suggest that Instagram users are able to share various aspects of their lives through the images they post, providing an outlet for self-expression. Similarly, users in Sheldon and Bryant's (2016) study used Instagram as a creative outlet by demonstrating their photography abilities as well as interacting with other users who shared similar interests.

Social Media Professionalism in Nursing

The coexistence of nursing and social media

The advent of social media platforms has revolutionized communication, and its presence must be acknowledged by health care professionals (Cleary, Ferguson, Jackson & Watson, 2013). Unfortunately, determining professional guidelines related to *what is* and *what is not* professionally acceptable on social media currently remains unclear (Cleary et al., 2013). According to Cleary et al. (2013), professionalism is contextually constructed and culturally dependent; therefore, what may be considered acceptable behaviour in one context or environment may be understood differently in another. Due to the fluid nature of professionalism, the fundamental principles of the nursing profession and social media currently contrast one another, such that their co-existence may appear problematic in nature (Sandlin & Hinmon, 2016). For example, the nursing

profession emphasizes the importance of privacy, confidentiality, and regulation. Conversely, social media platforms value openness, transparency, and relationship building with minimal regulation (Sandlin & Hinmon, 2016). On social media, the ease of communication between users and the information sharing nature of social media platforms provides an environment where the boundaries between personal and professional roles may become unclear (Green, 2017; Sandlin & Hinmon, 2017). For these reasons, the nursing profession as a whole has been delayed in its uptake of social media technologies (Ferguson, 2013).

Advantages of social media use by nurses

Several advantages have been identified regarding nurses' use of social media (Alexander, 2016; Cleary et al., 2013; Ferguson, 2013; Jones & Hayter, 2013; Lupton & Michael, 2017; Sandlin & Hinmon, 2017; Wilson, Ranse, Cashin, & McNamara, 2014). Social media, "provides a continuous and endless stream of global information between people and groups" (Jones & Hayter, 2013, p. 1495). Providing users have internet connection, social media enables users to communicate in real time, regardless of their location (Cleary et al., 2013). For instance, Alexander (2016), an associate professor in nursing at the University of Alabama, encourages nurses to build an online professional presence by creating personal accounts on multiple social media platforms to increase visibility. Alexander (2016) recommends that nurses should highlight their skills and experiences on social media platforms to build a profile that will be appealing to potential employers and patients. By developing a well-rounded online presence, nurses can project both professionalism and knowledge to other social media users (Alexander, 2016). It has also been suggested that with a robust online presence, nurses may possess a

higher potential of being identified for professional opportunities by potential employers (Alexander, 2016; Wilson et al., 2014).

Due to the ease of communication social media enables, these platforms can also enable health professionals to actively participate in decisions being made regarding the healthcare system. As communication via social media is instantaneous, there is the potential for health care professionals to interact with larger groups of community members and work collaboratively in the various policy, governmental and health system decision-making processes (Ferguson, 2013; Lupton & Michael, 2017). Health care professionals may utilize social media platforms to extend healthcare advice and support community members in making health care decisions (Sandlin & Hinmon, 2017). Furthermore, social media platforms may have a valuable role in supporting health care for those who do not actively seek it, or those who have barriers to access (Lupton & Michael, 2017; Sandlin & Hinmon, 2017).

Challenges associated with nurses' use of social media

Multiple challenges associated with nurses' use of social media have been identified in then nursing literature (Alexander, 2016; Cleary et al., 2013; Ferguson, 2013; Green, 2017; Jones & Hayter, 2013; Lupton & Michael, 2017; Kouri et al., 2017). The ability to instantly share messages with a large audience is both an advantage and disadvantage of social media (Cleary et al., 2013). It is extremely easy for a health care professional's reputation and professionalism to be harmed if they make an impulsive statement on social media (Cleary et al., 2013). Because communication is instant and posted content cannot be completely erased, comments or posts made impulsively can

pose a threat to nurses' reputation as well as their ability to practice (Alexander, 2016;

Green, 2017). As stated by Jones and Hayter (2013):

> The problems associated with e-professionalism appear to be closely related to the
>
> concept of health professionals always being 'on duty'… Practitioners can always
>
> be at risk of compromising patients, employers or the broader profession at any
>
> time… Professional and private lives can become blurred in ways that result in
>
> individuals becoming too comfortable and relaxed in their dialogue, disclosing
>
> personal and confidential information about the daily challenges of working in
>
> clinical settings. (p. 1495)

Green (2017) reports that social media users can sometimes possess a false assumption of

privacy associated with their social media accounts, permitting users to believe that their

posts are inherently private in nature. This false sense of privacy provides a medium

where the distinction between personal and professional is not always clear, permitting

users to post information that may breach professional standards. Posting information that

blurs the lines between professional and personal not only reflects poorly on the health

care professional, but may also place a patient at risk of safety or confidentiality related

issues (Green, 2017; Jones & Hayter, 2013; Lupton & Michael, 2017).

Subsequently, it has been advised by various researchers and regulatory bodies

that nurses should not interact with patients via social media platforms, especially in

personal contexts, as the act of befriending patients crosses professional boundaries

(Green, 2017; International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016; Ontario Nurses

Association, n.d., Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, 2015). If a nurse and patient

develop a relationship on social media (i.e., friending each other), there is risk that the

nurse may lose objectivity while providing care. Further, the patient's expectations of the nurse's role may become skewed, potentially creating ethically challenging situations for the nurse (Green, 2017). Due to the risks associated with nurses' social media use, it is evident that there is an emergent need for more comprehensive guidelines to ensure that nurses utilize social media in a manner that does not potentially compromise patient care or result in professional disciplinary action.

Recommendations for nurses' social media use

The rapid growth and widespread usage of social media has made it unrealistic to suggest nurses refrain from utilizing social media (Sandlin & Hinmon, 2016). Instead, over the last decade, practical recommendations and policies developed by both researchers and regulatory bodies have begun to emerge in an effort to help mitigate social media-related risks by expressing the expectations of nurses and reinforcing best practice guidelines (Cleary et al., 2013; Sandlin & Hinmon, 2017). For instance, The College of Nurses of Ontario, Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, and Ontario Nurses Association have each developed a position statement for Registered Nurses regarding the use of social media (International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016; Ontario Nurses Association, n.d.; & Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, 2015). The College of Nurses of Ontario refers nurses to a position statement written by the International Nurse Regulator Collaborative (2015) regarding social media use. The position statement describes the *6 P's of Social Media Use*, including: (a) *professional;* (b) *positive*; (c) *patient/person free*; (d) *protect yourself*; (e) *privacy*; and, (f) *pause before you post* (International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016). The Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (2015) developed 10 guidelines for nurses' social media use. The

guidelines are as follows: (a) *Build your brand*; (b) *transparency*; (c) *honesty*; (d) *respectfulness*; (e) *add value*; (f) *be diligent*; (g) *stay engaged*; (h) *protect your privacy*; (i) *when in doubt, don't post*; and, (j) *get off the internet* (Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, 2015). Lastly, the Ontario Nurses Association (n.d.) developed guidelines for social media use, including do's and don'ts, such as: "use social media to research and discover current trends, ideas and best practices" (p. 3); "follow topics and organizations that interest you" (p. 3); and "be respectful and tactful with your posts" (p. 3). The document describes the potential applications of Facebook and Twitter, as well as recommendations for their use. Overall, the three documents promote similar messaging related to maintaining professionalism on social media, protecting the privacy of patients, and demonstrating caution when creating social media posts.

In addition to policies and guidelines developed by professional organizations, employers may institute training to actively facilitate social media use. However, training and policy implementation must be relevant to emerging technology to ensure staff are able to effectively utilize social media platforms (Sandlin & Hinmon, 2017). Although guidelines, policies, and workplace trainings have been implemented to minimize the risk associated with social media use, nurses continue to face issues related to professionalism (Jones & Hayter, 2013). Jones and Hayter (2013) suggest that guidelines and policies alone are not sufficient in preparing nursing staff for managing complex situations related to social media use. Further training related to real-life application of guidelines should be developed in the future to better prepare nurses for effective social media navigation (Jones & Hayter, 2013).

Summary of Literature Review

This literature review has examined several studies related to microcelebrity status, nurses' use of Instagram, and nurses' professionalism on social media. Some Instagram users engage in a process of self-branding by strategically posting idealistic images to attract attention and gain attention from other users. If an Instagram user achieves substantial notoriety within their niche of followers, they have obtained microcelebrity status (Khamis et al., 2017). Within nursing, social media platforms, such as Instagram can offer several potential beneficial applications for nurses. To date, professional organizations have developed policies, guidelines, and training programs to help guide nurses use of social media (Cleary et al., 2013; International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016; Ontario Nurses Association, n.d.; Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, 2015; Sandlin & Hinmon, 2017). While these policies and guidelines provide nurses with suggestions on how to utilize social media in a manner that upholds professionalism, the emergence of social media microcelebrities within the nursing profession requires re-examination of these policies for contemporary relevance.

Research Question

The research question for this study is: what are the characteristics and behaviours of Registered Nurses who possess an active microcelebrity status via Instagram?

Methodology

Qualitative Content Analysis

Content analysis is a process in which data are systematically coded and analyzed to identify emergent messages and themes (Kondracki, Wellman, & Amundson, 2002). Through content analysis, researchers are able to develop a rich understanding of the information by analyzing manifest and latent data (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004).

Kondracki et al. (2002) describe manifest content as data that are directly visible within the text, whereas latent data refers to the underlying meaning of content, which may provide deepened insights in data analysis (Kondracki et al., 2002). In the study, both the manifest and latent content of Instagram posts were analyzed. The underlying meaning of posts was examined to gain an understanding of the types of messages being projected by microcelebrity Instagram users (MIUs).

Implementation of Graneheim and Lundman's Framework

The guiding content analysis methodology used in this study was provided by Graneheim and Lundman (2004). In this study, data collection and analysis were performed concurrently, as recommended by Graneheim and Lundman (2004). An initial step in content analysis is the identification of unit of analysis. Graneheim and Lundman (2004) state that a study's unit of analysis varies depending on the contextual basis of the study. For example, a study's unit of analysis may be a person, community, interview, or an entire transcript (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Graneheim and Lundman (2004) suggest that the most appropriate unit of analysis is content that is substantial enough to be examined as a whole, but small enough to retain meaning through data analysis. In this study, written descriptions of Instagram posts were conceptualized as the unit of analysis. The unit of analysis was developed by creating a word document consisting of a written textual description of each Instagram post's image or video, and the post's accompanying textual caption. Once the unit of analysis was created, the researcher read through the text to gain a sense of the unit of analysis as a whole, as recommended by Graneheim and Lundman (2004). Then, the unit of analysis was divided to form meaning units. The meaning units for this study were written descriptions of each individual Instagram post

and the exact accompanying caption. The meaning units were then condensed to summarize the manifest content of each Instagram post. After manifest content emerged, abstraction took place, in which the summarized meaning units were further analyzed for their latent content and labelled with a code. Codes were assessed for similarities and differences, then grouped into sub-categories and broader categories (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). The categories were then reviewed, discussed amongst researchers, and revised. Through this revision process, emergent themes were identified (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004).

Study Design

The study took place as an exploratory, non-participatory content analysis of publicly available data found on Instagram, guided by the qualitative content analysis framework developed by Graneheim and Lundman (2004). Researchers collected data from Instagram accounts that were fully accessible to the public. Data for the study consisted of the 10 most recent publicly available Instagram posts of each of the 10 Instagram accounts included the study sample. The content of each post, including images, videos, and captions, was included as data for the study.

A priori, it was estimated that analysis of 10-15 microcelebrity Instagram accounts would result in data saturation. The amount of data to be collected from 10-15 microcelebrities (with 10 posts per individual) was deemed to sufficient and comparable to other studies that used purposeful samples of social media data (Booth, 2015; Kostick et al., 2013; Snelson, 2015).

Study Sample

The sample for this study was obtained through the purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling enables insight through the description of a specific phenomenon, by selecting cases that provide the most useful information in answering the research questions (Palinkas et al., 2016; Patton, 1990). In this study, the researcher sought to obtain a sample that was representative of multiple perspectives, so that the research question could be examined through multiple realities (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Instagram accounts were selected based on their ability to contribute to the study's objectives of determining the characteristics and behaviours of nurses with active microcelebrity status on Instagram.

Purposeful sampling has been utilized in previous content analysis research of social media and online platforms (Arseniev-Koehler, Lee, McCormick, & Moreno, 2016; Booth, 2015; Kostick, Blumenthal-Barby, Wilhelms, Delgado, & Bruce, 2013; Orizio et al., 2010; Snelson, 2015). Although minimal research has been conducted on nursing-related Instagram accounts, the success of the purposeful case sampling strategy in similar social media content analyses offered justification to the appropriateness of this sampling technique used in this study.

Previous research studies have also utilized search engines in conducting purposeful sampling (Booth, 2015; Kostick et al., 2013). For instance, in a content analysis of Twitter messages posted by nursing students, Booth (2015) utilized the search engine, Socialmention.com, to purposefully sample. To obtain the study's sample, Booth (2015) conducted searches using strategically selected terms to locate relevant posts. Kostick et al. (2013) conducted a content analysis of social media websites related to Left Ventricular Assist Devices. To obtain the sample, Kostick et al. (2013) searched Google

using variations and abbreviations of key words related to the research topic. The first four pages of search results were analyzed against the study's inclusion and exclusion criteria to determine if the web site was appropriate for the study (Kostick et al., 2013).

Another method that has been used in purposeful sampling includes conducting searches on social media platforms directly. Snelson (2015) examined YouTube video blogs (vlogs) to investigate students' vlogging habits. Snelson (2015) obtained a purposeful sample by searching YouTube with specific two-word search phrases to identify relevant YouTube vlogs. Similarly, Stellefson et al. (2014) examined YouTube videos for COPD educational content. A purposeful sample was obtained by searching YouTube using keywords: *Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, COPD, COPD management,* and *COPD self-management.* If the video met the study's inclusion and exclusion criteria, the video was included in the study. Lastly, Arseniev-Koehler, et al. (2016) utilized purposeful sampling in their study that examined pro-eating disorder Twitter profiles. Arseniev-Koehler et al. (2016) searched Twitter using the hashtag #proana to identify relevant posts. To obtain the sample of Twitter profiles, the Twitter accounts that created the posts were examined for study eligibility. As demonstrated by the aforementioned studies, purposeful sampling has been successfully utilized in previous in content analyses. As such, purposeful sampling was selected as the sampling strategy for this study.

To obtain the sample for the study, the researcher searched the social media platform Instagram using search terms: *#nurse(s), #registerednurse, #rn,* as well as *nurse(s), registerednurse,* and *rn.* These terms were selected to aid identification of relevant Instagram accounts, as they are commonly utilized hashtags on the Instagram

network. For example, the hashtag, *#rn,* has been tagged in over 2.6 million Instagram posts to date (Instagram, 2018). Variations of the term *Registered Nurse* were utilized in the search to maximize the opportunity to identify as many Instagram accounts as possible.

When a hashtag is searched on Instagram, results consist of publicly available Instagram posts that have been tagged with the hashtag. Posts are displayed as *Top Posts* and *Most Recent* posts. *Top posts* populate for hashtags that are trending, displaying nine of the most liked posts containing that hashtag (Instagram, 2018). *Most recent* posts display publicly available posts that have been tagged with the hashtag, in reverse chronological order. In this study, every hashtag search resulted in a *Top Posts* result. Sampling was limited to the *Top Posts* search results as the study aimed to identify Instagram users with active microcelebrity status. The researcher selected each of the nine top posts for every hashtag search and identified the Instagram user who created the post. Each identified Instagram user's account name was recorded on a secured word document. Then, the researcher assessed each Instagram account for study eligibility.

Following the hashtag search process, an Instagram keyword search was conducted to identify additional Instagram users. When conducting an Instagram search, users can select to search for other users as opposed to hashtags. Results for a user search are influenced by the searcher's Instagram activity, including the accounts they follow and posts they have liked (Instagram, 2018). To minimize interference with search results, the researcher did not like, follow, or comment on any Instagram posts throughout the duration of the study. When an Instagram keyword search is conducted, results populate as a list of Instagram accounts that have relevance to the keyword

searched. In this study, Instagram keyword searches were conducted, and the first ten results, including various Instagram accounts, were documented on a secured word document and assessed for study eligibility.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To determine if an Instagram account was suitable for inclusion in the study, pragmatic guidelines were developed. As an initial, exploratory study, these guidelines were created to aid in the identification of appropriate microcelebrity Instagram users. A primary factor for study inclusion was that the Instagram account had to be publicly available, as determined by the Instagram user. As well, the Instagram user must have self-identified as a Registered Nurse in their Instagram account description. To ensure that Instagram users in the study had achieved active microcelebrity status, Instagram accounts had to have equal to or greater than 10,000 followers, and their 10 most recent posts must have been created in 2017 or 2018. All account descriptions and captions must have been written in the English language; and, all video posts spoken in the English language. Lastly, the majority of the Instagram account content had to be focused on the nursing profession. Therefore, at least five of the ten most recent posts had to be related to nursing. In order for a post to be considered nursing-related, the image/video or the caption had to directly address some aspect of the nursing profession. To ensure that the sample consisted of Instagram users depicting their personal perceptions of the nursing profession, Instagram accounts were excluded from the study if greater than five of the ten most recent posts consist primarily of memes, advertising, or non-nursing related content.

A final inclusion vetting technique conducted by the researcher included examining the 10 most recent Instagram posts of each Instagram account that was identified through the previously described search processes. The content of each Instagram post was examined in relation to the aforementioned inclusion criteria to determine if the post met the study's requirements. If all inclusion guidelines were met, the Instagram account was included in the study. In total, 10 Instagram accounts were identified that met the inclusion criteria and were selected as the sample for the study.

Data Collection

The data collection and analysis framework for the study was developed from Graneheim and Lundman's (2004) framework for qualitative content analysis. It was a priori estimated that the data for the study would consist of the 10 most recent Instagram posts of the 10 Instagram accounts in the sample. The content of each post, including images, videos, and captions, were included as data. To collect data, the researcher examined each Instagram user's posts individually. On a secured word document, each Instagram user was identified, and their 10 most recent posts were labelled in reverse chronological order, 1-10. For each Instagram post, the researcher copied and pasted the entire caption to the secured word document. Then, the researcher described the manifest content of the post's photo or video in written text. Although the process of describing each Instagram post is subject to differences in personal interpretation, the researcher attempted to describe only the manifest content of each Instagram post in order to generate a credible interpretation of the post. The data collection process was completed for the 10 most recent posts of each of the 10 Instagram users, totalling 100 Instagram posts for analysis.

Data Analysis

In this study, the unit of analysis was the combined textual descriptions of the MIUs' Instagram posts. From the unit of analysis, meaning units were created by dividing the text based on the Instagram users, and further subdividing to individual Instagram posts. Thus, the meaning units for this study were comprised of the written description of each Instagram post. The meaning units were then condensed to summarize the manifest content of each Instagram post (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Through this process, the researcher abridged the direct meaning of both the photo/video and caption into a shortened textual description. The summarized version of each post was recorded on a secured word document.

Following summarization, the word document containing the summarized meaning units was exported to the qualitative analysis software, NVivo 12 (Version 12, 2018), for further analysis. Once in NVivo 12 (Version 12, 2018), the process of abstraction took place, in which the summarized meaning units were analyzed for their latent meaning and labelled with a code. During abstraction, the researcher analyzed data for the underlying meaning of content and labelled posts through coding. The researcher created codes that related to the manifest and latent content of the posts. The coding process was completed using NVivo 12 (Version 12, 2018) software and repeated for every Instagram post. Once each post was coded, the codes were analyzed for similarities and differences and grouped into sub-categories. Then, the subcategories were analyzed for similarities and grouped into broader categories (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). The categories were then reviewed, discussed, and revised. As the researcher developed new insights through the analysis process, the researcher re-examined previously analyzed

posts with the same perspective. This strategy improved the dependability of the study (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Once the revision process was complete, emergent themes were identified (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004).

Declaration of Self

I am a novice researcher with three years nursing experience. I became interested in studying the characteristics and behaviours of nurses with microcelebrity status on Instagram after writing a research paper for a graduate class on social media. I recognized that a gap exists in regard to literature on nurses' use of social media in the context of seeking microcelebrity status. Prior to beginning this project, I was unaware that the concept of seeking microcelebrity status on Instagram is a recognized and extensively researched phenomenon. Upon reflection, my personal perceptions of social media users consisted of beliefs that users primarily sought attention through posting on social media. In completing this research project, I acknowledged the existence of my personal values and beliefs.

Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research: Application of criteria

Credibility

To achieve credibility, the researcher utilized purposeful sampling to obtain a sample that was representative of multiple contexts related to the research question. Participants varied in sex, nursing experience, and type of content posted. Credibility would have increased if wider age and/or ethnic ranges were captured to include nurses with many types of nursing experiences. To further enhance credibility, meaning units were selected to ensure that all relevant data was included, and all irrelevant data excluded (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Finally, throughout the research process,

regular meetings with the researcher's thesis supervisor were held to discuss the analysis process and interpretation of findings in an effort to generate a credible and qualitatively rigorous interpretation of nurse Instagram users examined in this thesis.

Dependability

Dependability was achieved by applying the same analysis process to all data. The researcher developed insights over the course of the study, and because the data was publicly available, the researcher was able to re-examine previous data with the new insights. This meant that a consistent analysis process was applied to all data.

Transferability

The researcher achieved transferability by providing a succinct description of the study design elements, including: background information, sampling, data collection, and data analysis strategies. By providing readers with a clear description of study design elements, readers are able to determine if the findings are applicable to alternate contexts (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Krefting, 1991).

Ethical considerations

Instagram allows users full control over the privacy settings of their account, enabling users to set limitations on who can view account content. As such, this study relied on publicly available information, in which Instagram users have enabled the public to access their account content (Instagram Help Center: Privacy Settings & Information, 2018). Researchers remained non-intrusive, non-interactive, and had no direct communication with participants. A Health Sciences Research Ethics Board protocol was submitted for this study, in an effort to ensure ethical consideration was provided related to the methodology and data collected in this study (Appendix A). The

Western University Health Sciences Research Ethics Board deemed this study did not require ethical clearance for completion.

Privacy

Participants of this study were online users who have posted publicly available content on the social media platform, Instagram. Upon creating an Instagram account, all users must read and agree with Instagram's Terms of Use (Instagram help centre: Terms of use, 2018). Instagram's current terms of use (2018) state, "any information or content that you voluntarily disclose …becomes available to the public, as controlled by any applicable privacy settings that you set… Once you have shared User Content or made it public, that User Content may be re-shared by others." Participants in the study have selected their privacy settings to allow the public to view the content posted on their profile. As Instagram's privacy settings are controlled by users, this study only included information from users who have intentionally made their account accessible to the public. Through creating a public Instagram account and posting material, consent is implied for sharing information in the public sphere.

The Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans 2 (TCPS2) (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2014), states: "privacy is respected if an individual has an opportunity to exercise control over personal information by consenting to, or withholding consent for, the collection, use and/or disclosure of information" (http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/chapter5-chapitre5/). As Instagram privacy settings are user-controlled, Instagram users are able to

determine if their information is available to the public, thus respecting their right to privacy.

In this study, researchers collected publicly available data in which Instagram users have made accessible to the public and agreed to Instagram's Terms of Use (2018), which state that there is no expectation of privacy pertaining to content posted publicly.

Findings

Data for this study were comprised of 100 Instagram posts created by nurses who have attained microcelebrity status on Instagram. Seven of the microcelebrity Instagram users (MIUs) appeared to be female and three MIUs appeared to be male. The ages and geographic locations of the MIUs is unknown as this information was not publicly available on Instagram. Three of the MIUs stated that they live in the United States of America, while the geographic locations of the remaining MIUs is unknown (MIU 01, 03, & 07). To protect the privacy of the Instagram Users, each account was randomly assigned a participant code number between 01 and 10. Data analysis was guided by Graneheim and Lundman's (2004) framework for qualitative content analysis and recorded using the computer software, NVivo 12 (QSR International, 2018).

Each Instagram post was analyzed to create meaning units, which were subsequently condensed, abstracted, and coded. Thirty-five codes were identified through data analysis. Through iterative review, reflection, and comparison, codes were grouped on similarities and differences into subcategories, categories, and themes (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). From this process emerged: 20 sub-categories, 14 categories, and five themes. The themes include: (a) *engaging Instagram users;* (b) *educational opportunities*

and insights; (c) *nursing related humour;* (d) *emotions experienced by nurses;* and, (e)
media and narratives including patient details or work context.

Engaging Instagram Users

All 10 MIUs made at least one attempt at engaging with Instagram followers.
MIUs engaged with Instagram users through a range of activities, including: Engaging in
self-branding, advertising personalized merchandise, and facilitating discussion activities
(i.e., questions, contests, or learning opportunities).

Self-Branding

Self-branding was consistent through Instagram posts. MIU 04 repeatedly
engaged in self-branding by highlighting the personal characteristics that made them
unique. MIU 04 stated:

> When people say, "What's a nurse?" they think of Florence Nightingale, a female
> wearing a little hat, white dress with a stethoscope. They don't automatically
> think of someone who's a Bilingual/Hispanic Male or a different culture ethnicity
> all Tatted covered with Ink thats a MAN of GOD. (Post 7)

MIU 04 displayed pride in himself and the characteristics that make him a unique
individual. MIU 04 has engaged in self-branding to build a distinct persona on Instagram,
created upon their unique personal characteristics. MIU 04 created a unique name for this
brand, which was consistently promoted on MIU 04's Instagram page. For example, eight
of ten captions prompted Instagram users to follow the brand's Instagram account (Posts
1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, & 10). MIUs also engaged in self-branding by asking Instagram users to
follow them on other social media platforms (MIU 04, Posts 3, 5, 6, 7, & 10; MIU 09,
Posts 1, 5, & 7). For example, in multiple captions, MIU 09 listed their social media

account information for their: Website, blog, books, podcast, Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Pinterest, and iTunes (Posts 1, 5, & 7). By encouraging users to follow their accounts on several social media platforms, MIUs may have been attempting to draw attention to their other social media accounts, potentially contributing to the development of a personalized brand.

MIUs also engaged in self- branding by taking selfies. However, only nine Instagram posts were individual selfies taken by the MIU and two additional posts were group selfies. Interestingly, 18 posts consist of a photograph of the MIU individually, although it appeared as though another person captured the image.

An alternate way that MIUs engaged in self-branding was by advertising for individualized products that they developed as a part of their personal brand (MIU 02, MIU 03, MIU 04, MIU 05, MIU 06). Personalized merchandise, such as trauma shears, apparel, and books were promoted by MIUs and available for online purchase (MIU 02, MIU 03, MIU 04, MIU 05). Advertising by MIUs was not limited to personalized merchandise, however, as several MIUs also promoted for external companies.

External Merchandise Branding

Advertising for external merchandise brands was prominent on Instagram posts. Eight of the MIUs promoted a minimum of one merchandise brand that was not their own (MIUs 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 07, 09, 10). Multiple Instagram users promoted companies selling nursing related uniforms, equipment, or services (MIUs 01, 03, 04, 05, 07, 09, 10). Several MIUs featured the use of specific brands of stethoscopes and trauma shears (MIU 03, Post 9; MIU 04, Post 5; & MIU 05, Post 6). Similarly, MIUs posted images of themselves dressed in specific uniform brands, thanking the companies in the caption

(MIU 01, Post 2; & MIU 04, Post 2). In these posts, the advertised merchandise was most often displayed in the photo, and information on the brand was provided in the post's caption. MIU 01's second post suggested that the uniform company was sponsoring the user, which stated "Also thankful for these @cherokeeuniforms #sponsoredLuxe Sport Scrubs lol #ShamelessPlug" (MIU 01, Post 2). In all other posts, reasons for the MIUs endorsing the products were not disclosed. It is reasonable to understand why a nursing MIU would promote nursing related products, however, it was also found that MIUs promoted products that did not appear to be directly related to the nursing profession.

MIUs endorsed services that were not nursing related, such as loan repayment services and restaurants (MIU 07, Posts 4, & 6; & MIU 10, Post 5). In another example, MIU 05 demonstrated the use of the brand @onepeloton's indoor spin bicycle (Posts 5 & 8). Video clips showed MIU 05 exercising on the bicycle while singing and dancing. The bicycle brand's Instagram account was linked in the caption. In all of these examples, it was unclear if the MIUs were endorsed in any way to create the posts (MIU 05, Posts 5 & 8; MIU 07, Posts 4, & 6; & MIU 10, Post 5).

A unique form of external company branding was posted by MIU 10, who partnered with *Johnson & Johnson* to share the stories of two families who were impacted by nursing innovation. In each video clip, a family described how a nurse positively contributed to the care of their family member. To conclude the videos, the nurse surprised the family by walking onto the video set. The videos were emotional in nature, and concluded with the message, "When nurses find new ways to change lives, they change the world. And that changes everything" (MIU 10, Posts 9 & 10). The captions of the posts stated that for every Instagram user tagged in the comments,

Johnson & Johnson would donate $1 to the Northeastern University School of Nursing (MIU 10, Posts 9, 10). As a result, the monetary donation offered by *Johnson & Johnson* may have drawn attention to the MIU as well as the company as Instagram users had to tag friends in the comment field in order for the donation to be given.

In a similar manner to the *Johnson & Johnson* example, MIUs engaged with users by creating contests in which followers enter to win a prize (MIU 04, MIU 05, MIU 07). To qualify for contest entry, Instagram users were required to follow the MIU and tag at least two other Instagram users in the comment field of the post (MIU 04, Post 1, MIU 05, Post 6, & MIU 07, Post 9). In two of the giveaways, Instagram users were also required to follow the company that was providing the prize (MIU 04, Post 1, & MIU 07, Post 9). In contests such as these, MIUs interacted with their followers whilst engaging in company branding. In addition to advertising, there were several other ways in which MIUs attempted to interact with Instagram followers.

Interacting with Instagram Followers

In addition to self-branding and advertising, multiple MIUs attempted to personally interact with Instagram followers. MIUs generated discussion amongst followers by posing questions and encouraging responses in the post's comment field. MIUs created these posts by superimposing words onto a background and posting the image on Instagram. For example, MIU 09 asked, "What practical tips do you have for anyone dealing with a bully or a negative culture?" (Post 5). Discussion questions related to a variety of nursing-related topics, including: "What tip[s] do you have for a new nurse on finding a job?" (MIU 09, Post 7) and, "What shift do you guys work and which shift do you prefer?" (MIU 08, Post 8). In these posts, followers responded to the questions by

commenting on the post. In some posts, the MIU further engaged with followers by responding to comments (MIU 08, Post 8).

Another way that MIUs interacted with users was by creating skill testing questions and asking followers to solve the question and post the answer in the comment section. MIU 05 created multiple problem-solving posts that encouraged users to test their nursing-related knowledge (MIU 05, Posts 2 & 10). For example, MIU 05 posted an image of an Amiodarone infusion bag as well as information regarding medication use and dosing. Following the background information, a dosage calculation question was presented. The caption read, "Dosage Calculation Time! #nacolemedmath #dosagecalculations (Note: This is for dosage calculation practice, not an actual protocol or order. It's for learning purposes only). Answer will be posted in 24 hours" (MIU 05, Post 2). Instagram users were encouraged to post and discuss answers in the comment section. In these posts, MIUs shared their interpretations of information relevant to nursing practice and encouraged users to test their skills.

Educational Opportunities and Insights

Generation of Education Opportunities for Followers

Nursing related educational opportunities was a prominent theme of Instagram posts. Multiple MIUs promoted the attendance of nursing conferences by posting photos of themselves at nursing conferences, both as speakers and attendees (MIU 01, Post 5; MIU 03, Post 4; MIU 09, Posts 4, 6, & 8; & MIU 10, Post 1). MIUs also encouraged followers to attend nursing related educational courses, such as a trauma course and an Intensive Care Unit skills conference (MIU 03, Post 4; MIU 09, Post 4). MIU 10 promoted education in a different manner, by encouraging nurse followers to provide

education to others within their community. To demonstrate, MIU 10 posted a photo of them self speaking to high school students about nursing and positively influencing one's community (Post 1).

MIU 06 created a unique learning opportunity for novice nurses, in the form of a six-week video-based online course. Five of MIU 06 's posts described topics covered in the online course and encouraged users to enroll. Included in the course are video sessions on: time management, learning to prioritize, and improving communication skills (MIU 06, Posts 3, 5, 6, 7, & 8). MIU 06 posted brief video excerpts of the online classes, in which MIU 06 spoke directly to the video camera delivering course content (Posts 3, 6, & 7). However, the details of course delivery, including the course enrollment fee, were not provided on the Instagram posts.

Posting Nursing-Related Questions to Generate Discussion

Multiple MIUs provided their insights related to clinical nursing skills. For example, MIU 05 posted medication dosage questions, along with relevant information about the medication, and encouraged users to complete the problem and comment the solution (Posts 2 & 10). The answer to the problem was later posted by MIU 05. In an alternate format, MIU 09 posted clinical insights that may be useful for nurses in practice. For example, a caption stated, "In a Code Stroke, did you know you should get Blood sugar and vitals first – hypoglycemia can mimic a stroke?" (MIU 09, Post 1). Similarly, MIU 08 posted an image of a gloved hand holding a vial of Lorazepam. The caption described the uses for the medication and ways that it can be beneficial for patients experiencing distress (MIU 08, Post 9). These types of posts displayed the MIUs' insights that nurses may find useful in their practice.

In addition to skill related insights, MIUs provided their opinions on various roles that nurses have. MIU 04 posted three video clips in which Operating Room nurses discuss their responsibilities. In the videos, Operating Rooms are shown that appear to be in use, including patients on Operating Tables (MIU 04, Post 3). It is unclear if the videos are real or performed, however, the videos appear realistic. Similarly, MIU 04 posted three video clips that depicted a war scene in which the actors were speaking German and appeared to be planning an attack. The actors were attempting to strategize and determine the best course of action. English subtitles played, describing the story line as though the actors were attempting to organize movement of patients from an Emergency Department to other areas of the hospital. These video clips demonstrated potential organizational challenges associated with nursing (MIU 04, Post 4). The caption described responsibilities of Emergency Department Nurses as well as Intensive Care Unit Nurses, explaining differences between the roles. To conclude, MIU 04 stated that although roles may vary, nurses work as a team in providing patient care (Post 4). These posts demonstrated MIU 04's perspective of the various roles and responsibilities of nursing specialties.

Obtaining Undergraduate or Graduate Nursing Education

Aspects related to obtaining formal nursing education was discussed by MIU 08, who was enrolled in a Graduate Nurse Practitioner program at the time the post was created. MIU 08 stated, "Working on… the sludge of assignments for this masters health informatics course and picking up a lot in the ED as usual… Sometimes true balance □ just doesn't exist in your life… If I've learned one thing through this journey, it's that if there is a will-there is a way" (Post 3). MIU 08's education related content conveyed the

struggle of managing a heavy workload, while demonstrating optimism and pride in completing their goals. Overall, there was minimal content regarding Undergraduate Nursing programs, with the only reference being made by MIU 04 in an image with the embedded words, "Keep calm and make it through nursing school" (Post 10). The caption was motivational in nature, encouraging nursing students to continue working hard in school because the benefits of a nursing career (MIU 04, Post 10).

Nursing Related Humour

Humour is defined as, "[t]he presence of amusing effects, such as laughter or well-being sensations" (Reyes Perez, Rosso, & Buscaldi, 2012, p. 3). Humour is a complex concept that has been examined through multiple perspectives, which have suggested different reasons for why humans recognize humour. Factors influencing humour recognition include personality traits, linguistic patterns, and individual knowledge and cultural components. The recognition of humour is a multi-factorial process, involving cognitive, cultural, and contextual factors (Reyes Perez et al., 2012). Zeigler-Hill, McCabe, and Vrabel (2016) describe four distinct types of humour: affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating. Affiliative humour refers to humour that is used to strengthen relationships, such as engaging in banter with others. Self-enhancing humour is used in stressful situations as a means of dealing with potentially negative emotions. Aggressive humour involves insulting or teasing others. Lastly, self-injurious humour is used when a person mocks their own abilities in an effort to flatter others (Zeigler-Hill et al., 2016).

In this study, the use of humour was evident in several Instagram posts. Occasionally, affirmative humour was used in a manner that may only be understood by

those with medical knowledge, such as, "Remember don't over resuscitate your self with turkey and beer or you might end up with Abdominal Compartment Syndrome!" (MIU 03, Post 3). Similarly, MIU 04 stated, "My Moms ☐facial expression was priceless as she was hyperventilating leading to Respiratory Alkalosis & almost had to put her on a high flow simple mask set on 15 liters" (MIU 4, Post 8). To understand this witty humour, readers must possess a requisite knowledge of both medical processes and terminology.

Other uses of humour by MIUs related to experiences that nurses may encounter at the workplace. To understand these uses of humour, readers required a contextual understanding of the nursing profession. For example, MIU 01 posted an image of a white background with overlaying text, "'What were his respirations?' First of all, I haven't counted respirations since nursing school" (Post 8). The caption reads, "Too slow, too fast, normal, prepare to intubate. Those are the rates" (MIU 01, Post 8). Although readers do not need to understand any special terminology to understand the humour, it may be better recognized by someone who has worked as a health care provider.

MIUs also utilized humour in a manner that was relatable to a vaster audience, as the use of medical terminology was omitted. In an example of affirmative humour, MIU 10 posted a collage of 3 images of them self with the heading, "What nurses do on their days off...." (Post 7). The images depict the user: Walking into a department store, sitting on a couch with a glass of wine, ice cream and a pizza box, and sleeping (MIU 10, Post 7). In another post, MIU 10 created two videos with the heading, "Things nurses say" (Post 6). In the videos, MIU 10 is seen wearing a nursing uniform, standing against a white background. MIU 10 made various statements related to working as a nurse,

speaking exuberantly. Some of the statements included: "'Has anyone seen my pen? It's my favourite pen.' 'Do you remember if I clocked in? Yeah, no, I'm going to go clock in.' 'I hope there's some overtime shifts available because I need the money.' 'I still haven't finished charting.' 'Is it seven yet?'" (MIU 10, Post 6). In these videos, MIU 10 displayed lighthearted and playful mannerisms.

Self-enhancing humour was seen in multiple Instagram posts, as MIUs utilized humour to manage potentially stressful situations (MIU 01, Post 8; MIU 02, Post 4; MIU 4, Post 2; MIU 08, Posts 1 & 5; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2016). For example, MIU 02 stated, "I'm sitting in the parking lot, drinking some coffee, & reminding myself that it's okay to work the weekend sometimes because then I never have to make plans" (Post 4). Self-enhancing humour was utilized by MIU 08, who posted a series of the same image, each with a different heading. The image depicted a professional basketball player holding his arms out, his mouth open, appearing shocked and disgruntled during a game. The headings read, "When ICU refuses to take report because the patient is 'too unstable;'" (MIU 08, Post 5) and, "When your A&Ox4 patient decides they're too tired so they just pee in the stretcher" (MIU 08, Post 5). The caption further read, "I wish I could say all of the above scenarios are made up-but no no, they're all real life" (MIU 08, Post 5). A similar form of humour was used by MIU 04, as he stated, "For my 3.2 million @nursepiration Nurses who chose to put on their nursing badge… to save lives as the frontline of defense as you administer Ativan, Haldol & Seroquel" (MIU 4, Post 2). Evidently, humour was prevalent in the MIUs' Instagram posts. However, MIUs also displayed several other emotions in relation to their experiences as nurses.

Emotions Experienced by Nurses

In this study, many of the Instagram posts by MIUs focused on the various emotions experienced by nurses. Categories of gratitude, pride, and joy emerged as users expressed these emotions in regard to aspects of the nursing profession. Several posts were motivational in nature, as MIUs created positive and optimistic captions.

In this study, gratitude was often expressed on Instagram posts created by MIUs, whether it be towards co-workers, friends, family, or mentors. MIU 02 posted:

> There are many forms of family… For me, my work family is as much a part of my life as my real one…. There's something about the few quiet moments on a morning like this before the chaos starts when you're reminded to give thanks for countless reasons. (Post 9)

Similarly, MIU 06 dedicated a post to her mentor in the nursing profession, stating: "Thank you for your patience. Thank you for your gentle criticism. Thank you for laughing and smiling with me. Reassuring me every step along the way that I was doing a great job" (Post 10). These posts recognized the impact that coworkers have on nurses' lives. In this post, the image is of the MIU in a hospital room with no overt identifiable patient information displayed. The reason why the MIU decided to post this image with the associated caption is unknown.

In addition to gratitude, MIUs demonstrated pride in themselves in multiple Instagram posts. For instance, MIU 04 outlined:

> When people say, "What's a nurse?" they think of Florence Nightingale, a female wearing a little hat, white dress with a steth[o]scope. They don't automatically think of someone who's a Bilingual/Hispanic Male or a different culture ethnicity

all Tatted covered with Ink thats a MAN of GOD. Guess what? "I'm Proud &

Love the @cardiacstrong Diversity I bring as I save someone's life." (Post 7)

In this caption, MIU 04 showed pride in who he is. MIU 01 encouraged others to do the

same: "Be comfortable with yourself, your journey, your timeline, your failures, your

goals, your body, and your choices… That's what makes us each unique. Be the best

version of YOU that you can be" (Post 10). In this post, the associated image is a photo

of MIU 01 standing against a white background, hands on hips, not looking at the camera

(Post 10). The image does not appear to be directly associated with the caption.

Pride in the nursing profession was also displayed in this study. MIU 10

collaborated with *Johnson & Johnson* to share stories of families that were positively

impacted by nurses who cared for them. The video heading stated, "When nurses find

new ways to change lives, they change the world. And that changes everything" (Posts 9

& 10). The video clips evoked emotion from the audience and displayed how impactful

the nurses may be in patients' and families' lives. Furthermore, the videos demonstrated

pride in the nursing profession, whilst portraying nurses as heroic figures.

In addition to the video clips posted by MIU 10, other MIUs portrayed nurses as

heroic figures (Instagram Users 3, 4, & 10). Five of MIU 03's posts depicted nurses as

heroes, both directly and indirectly. MIU 03 stated, "Not all superheroes wear

capes..........they wear awesome USA scrub cap[s]" (Post 2). In multiple posts, MIU 03

was pictured as a cartoon comic book character, calling them self the "Trauma ninja"

(Posts 1 & 2). The nature of these posts portrayed trauma nursing as a heroic profession

because, "This specialty is pure life and death...... you played such a vital part of that

survival" (MIU 10, Post 6). MIU 03 repeatedly depicted trauma nurses as an integral

component in the care of a patient who has experienced a traumatic injury and described the tremendous emotional rewards he receives by working as a trauma nurse.

Lastly, many of the MIU's Instagram posts depicted MIUs experiencing joy. Several posts showed MIUs engaging in social activities outside of the workplace (MIU 01, Post 3; MIU 02, Post 6, MIU 03, Posts 4, 5, & 8; MIU 04, Post 8; MIU 06, Post 1 & 9; MIU 07, Post 1 &10; MIU 08, Post 8; MIU 09, Post 2; MIU 10, Post 3 & 8). These posts displayed MIU's lives outside of nursing, allowing users a glimpse into other aspects of their lives. Interestingly, multiple MIUs also posted images of themselves expressing joy while dressed in work attire. However, in these images, MIUs did not appear to be in a work setting (MIU 02, Post 1; MIU 03, Post 9; MIU 07, Post 3, 4, 7, & 9; MIU 08, Post 7).

Challenges and Rewards of Nursing

Although some MIUs depicted nursing as a heroic profession, other users described the challenges they have experiences while working as a nurse. MIU 02 expressed disappointment after working shifts in which the MIU struggled to keep up with demands and was unable to develop the therapeutic patient care relationships that they aspired to (Posts 3 & 8). Similarly, MIU 05 stated, "My job is 80% getting yelled at for doing my job and 20% getting hugged for doing my job. The 20% is what I focus on and remember" (Post 7). MIUs described mental and physical exhaustion that they have experienced while nursing (MIU 01, Post 7; MIU 02, Post 8; MIU 04, Post 4; MIU 08, Posts 1 & 3). Additional challenges described by some MIUs include working shift work, as well as working over weekends and holidays (MIU 02, Posts 4, 5, 6, 9, & 10; MIU 01, Post 2; MIU 08, Post 8). Furthermore, multiple MIUs identified practical challenges of

nursing, such as learning how to prioritize tasks, manage time, and deal with workplace

bullying. Some MIUs encouraged users to visit their websites to access resources for

managing these challenges (MIU 06, Posts 6, 7 & 8; MIU 09, Posts 5 & 7).

Interestingly, every Instagram post that discussed a challenge associated with

nursing concluded with a positive message. For example, MIU 05 disclosed that they

have felt intimidated and frustrated when they do not understand a clinical process.

However, they proceeded to encourage nurses to embrace learning opportunities by

asking questions and learning from peers (Post 3). MIU 02 conveyed a similar pattern, by

identifying a challenge they have experienced and concluding with optimism:

> Today was, legitimately, a "Top 3 Worst Shifts I've Ever Had as an ICU Nurse"
>
> kind of day. Nothing went right… & things just got worse by the hour… I'm
>
> exhausted… But no matter how bad the day gets --& trust me, in our world, it
>
> can get ugly -- only your work family knows how to make you crack a smile… I
>
> genuinely believe that the long, ugly days & crazy hours impact how you see the
>
> world. Smile because you have love. Smile because you have life. Smile because
>
> life is precious, & every moment with loved ones matters… Give thanks, even
>
> after a long & torrid day. (Post 8)

Although MIU 02 began the post describing a challenging shift, MIU 02 concluded by

exhibiting feelings of gratitude and appreciation. MIU 01 shared a similar message:

> It's not easy to maintain a positive attitude when things get difficult… If
>
> something upsetting happens, don't push it under the rug or feel ashamed. Deal
>
> with it how you need to, reach out to your loved ones, and remember that
>
> tomorrow is a new day. Healthcare is a profession that can bring out every

emotion on the human spectrum in one shift. This is why it takes a special person

to work in healthcare, and especially, to work in Nursing. (Post 7)

Instagram users in this study consistently demonstrated positivity by posting captions of

an inspiring and optimistic nature. Interestingly, the associated images of these posts

were photos of the MIUs, which did not appear to be directly related to the captions

(MIU 01, Posts 2 & 7; MIU 02, Post 8; MIU 05, Posts 3 & 7). For example, in MIU 02's

Post 8, the photo was of the MIU standing in a home, dressed in slippers and work attire,

smiling at the camera. The reason for posting these photos of the MIUs with the captions

is unclear.

Inspiration, Motivation, and Encouragement

The most prominent emotions shared by Instagram users were messages of

inspiration, motivation, and encouragement. Every MIU shared at least one post

demonstrating these emotions. MIU 06 made several encouraging comments directed

towards nurses who recently graduated, such as, "Be patient with me. My petals are still

unfolding. I am blossoming into an amazing nurse, at my own pace" (Post 8).

Similarly, MIU 10 shared two video clips created by *Johnson & Johnson*,

depicting the families' experiences with nurses. In post 9, a mother described how her

daughter was born with omphalocele, requiring multiple surgeries. The mother recalled

how a pediatric wound care nurse, Roxana, created an innovative wound dressing that

was utilized on the newborn. The mother decided to postpone the impending surgery so

that the dressing technique could improve the infant's wound status between surgeries.

The mother became emotional while telling the story, and nurse Roxana surprised the

mother by greeting her while the video is being filmed. The mother and Roxana embrace,

both becoming emotional. The child who received the treatment then emerged, embracing Roxana (MIU 10, Post 9). This video may evoke feelings of inspiration for nurses, as it demonstrated the positive impact that nurses may have on patient outcomes.

Multiple inspirational messages were shared that were not directly related to nursing practice (MIU 01, Posts 1 & 10; MIU 06, Post 1; MIU 08, Post 6). Meaningful captions included, "Be comfortable with yourself, your journey, your timeline, your failures, your goals … We all have our own timeline and our own story, and that's what makes us each unique. Be the best version of YOU that you can be" (MIU 1, Post 10). Although this message was not directly related to nursing practice, it was inspirational in nature and may be utilized by nursing professionals to improve their mindset.

MIUs demonstrated some ways in which they maintain a positive outlook, including the use of prayer and reflection. MIU 04 shared a biblical verse and an image of the MIU praying at sunset (Post 2). MIU 04 stated, "Always Give Thanks, Stay Humble, Show Gratitude and Have Faith in the BIG MAN upstairs. I promise you will be RICH, filled with abundance of LOVE for your mind, body & spirit" (Post 2). In regard to spirituality, MIU 04 openly stated or posted content regarding religious beliefs.

In addition to prayer, MIUs demonstrated that they engage in self-care in other ways. MIU 06 wrote:

> "It's soo important to me to learn how to love myself in the purest sense. Undo all the negative impressions. Be comfortable in my skin. Lately i've been doing the spiritual work… starting over has felt like such a big part of it for me." (Post 5)

The importance of self-love and reflection was emphasized by MIU 06. Similarly, MIU 07 wrote, "Nursing energy on point" (Post 8), with an image of a journal, plants, and

crystals sitting on a table. Although not directly stated, the post suggests that MIU 07 may utilize these items to relieve stress.

In this study, several emotions were portrayed through Instagram posts, including gratitude, pride, and inspiration. Challenges of the nursing profession were also identified; however, these posts maintained a positive outlook and encouraged nurses to work through the challenges they experience. Describing the MIU's interpretations of the benefits and challenges of working as a nurse may provide Instagram followers with an understanding of nurses' daily experiences.

Media and Narratives Including Patient Details or Work Context

Multiple Instagram posts created by MIUs depicted scenarios in which the photo or video appeared to have taken place in a work place setting, or potentially include patient details. For instance, multiple Instagram posts appear to depict patients in the hospital, although the sources of the images are not cited (MIU 03, Posts 3, 4; MIU 04, Post 3). MIU 03 posted an image of a patient's abdomen undergoing a surgical procedure, providing education on abdominal compartment syndrome in the caption (Post 3). It is unclear if the patient consented to have this photo taken or if consent was obtained to post the image on Instagram. In another post, MIU 03 posted an image of a patient sitting in a stretcher, covered in dried blood, smiling and surrounded by hospital staff members. The caption was unrelated to the image, asking for volunteers for a trauma course (Post 4). Additionally, MIU 04 posted a series of video clips showing multiple patients on operating tables while receiving pre-procedure treatments (Post 3). These posts appeared to show real patients; however, it is unknown if these posts were created with actors or not.

In a unique series, MIU 03 met a patient that he had cared for three years prior (Posts 6 & 7). The posts consisted of recordings of a television news program that were narrated by a news anchor. It appeared as though a local news station created a segment on the meet up that occurred between MIU 03 and the patient. The videos showed MIU 03 socializing with their previous patient at a restaurant, as the patient expressed appreciation for the care he received. In the caption, MIU 03 stated, "A prior patient promised me a beer if he survived.......3 years later it happened" (Post 6). Furthermore, MIU 03 stated, "When I'm given the opportunity to celebrate life I take full advantage of it! I recommend you do the same! It's such a special feeling meeting survivors....... especially when you played such a vital part of that survival" (Post 7). It is unknown if the patient provided consent for the video to be posted on Instagram.

In addition to posts that depicted potential patients, several of the MIU's Instagram posts consisted of images that appear to have been taken in workplaces with no patients shown. Multiple posts depicted MIUs dressed in work attire while in a hospital setting (MIU 01, Posts 2 & 7; MIU 02, Post 6; MIU 06, Post 5; MIU 07, Post 6; MIU 09, Post 1). Other posts showed a patient care area with no patients visualized (MIU 06, Post 10; MIU 09, Post 4). In these posts, hospital and professional organizational policies regarding taking pictures in a workplace setting and posting them on social media are unknown.

Summary of Key Findings

In the study, the manifest and latent content of MIU's Instagram posts was analyzed. Themes identified include: (a) *engaging Instagram users;* (b) *educational opportunities and insights;* (c) *nursing related humour;* (d) *emotions experienced by*

nurses; and, (e) *media and narratives including patient details or work context.* MIUs engaged with users in various ways, including developing personal brands, facilitating discussion, and organizing merchandise giveaways. Nursing related humour was utilized to connect with followers, although to appreciate the humour, readers often had to understand medical terminology. The MIU's Instagram posts shared messages of positivity, encouragement and inspiration, as MIUs largely demonstrated positive attitudes towards the nursing profession. MIU's opinions on the challenges experienced in the nursing profession were identified but presented with optimism and encouragement to conquer problems that are faced. Through Instagram posts, Instagram users were able to take a glimpse into MIUs' lives and develop an understanding of MIU's insights towards the nursing profession.

Some of the Instagram posts in this study appeared to depict patients receiving care, although it is unclear if the images and videos were real or created with actors. As well, several images depicted MIUs in a workplace setting while dressed in work attire with no obvious patient information shown. In these posts, organizational policies regarding images being posted to social media is unknown. Overall, this analysis provides insight to the characteristics and behaviours of MIUs posting on Instagram.

Discussion

This observational, non-participatory study examined Instagram posts created by Registered Nurses who have attained microcelebrity status. The purpose of this study was to identify the posting characteristics and behaviours of Registered Nurses who have attained some level of microcelebrity status on Instagram. Guided by a constructivist paradigm, Graneheim and Lundman's (2004) framework for qualitative content analysis

provided the theoretical framework for this study. Findings of this study offer several emergent insights related to the use of Instagram by Registered Nurses who have attained elements of microcelebrity status. The five themes that emerged from the study were: (a) *engaging Instagram users;* (b) *educational opportunities and insights;* (c) *nursing related humour;* (d) *emotions experienced by nurses;* and, (e) *media and narratives including patient details or work context.*

Engaging Instagram Users

All 10 MIUs attempted to engage with followers, which supports previous research suggesting that a primary motive for Instagram use is social interaction (Lee et al., 2015). Further, MIUs consistently engaged with followers, which may have been in an attempt to gain social support and encourage feelings of belonging, as this has been found to be a primary motivation for Instagram use (Lee et al., 2015; McCain et al., 2016; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). In another method of engaging with followers, seven MIUs directly participated in self-branding or merchandise branding. In particular, MIU 04 consistently promoted their personal brand, attempting to generate a distinct persona through reinforcement of this brand to their followers. As described by Khamis et al. (2017) and Marwick (2015), it appears MIU 04 may have been attempting to use his/her charismatic nature to help foster a sizable following online by capitalizing on their personal brand as a "unique selling point" (Khamis et al., 2017, p. 191).

Previous research has highlighted the act of taking and posting selfies to Instagram, describing it as a, "global phenomenon" (Sung et al., 2016, p. 263), with 1000 selfies being posted on Instagram every 10 seconds (Kim & Chock, 2017; Rawhide, 2015; Sorokowski et al., 2015; Sung et al., 2016; Weiser, 2015). Interestingly, the total

number of selfies posted to Instagram in this study was minimal. In total, there were only nine individual selfies and two group selfies posted to Instagram. The act of posting selfies to gain validation and popularity has been identified as a motive for Instagram use (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016; Sung et al., 2016). However, in this study, the proportion of selfies posted by MIUs was minimal. While the presence of selfies did not emerge as an overly common phenomena with MIUs sampled in this study, the usage of selfies appears to be just one of a variety of engagement variants (e.g., promoting a personalized brand, facilitating discussion, and creating contests) used MIUs to interact with their followers.

Educational Opportunities and Insights

An interesting finding of this study was the MIUs' use of Instagram to share learning opportunities and describe their understanding of nursing related clinical information (MIU 01, Post 5; MIU 03, Post 4; MIU 05, Posts 2 & 10; MIU 06, Posts 3, 5, 6, 7, & 8; MIU 08, Post 9; MIU 09, Posts 1, 4, 6, & 8; & MIU 10, Post 1). Sharing insights about nursing related learning has not previously been identified as a primary reason for Instagram use. The findings from this study suggest that MIUs may utilize Instagram to promote educational opportunities such as courses and conferences. The reasons why MIUs promoted these learning opportunities is unknown.

MIUs also shared their insights and generated discussion related to nursing-related clinical information. MIUs shared advice that they feel may be relevant in nursing practice, such as information on medication usage and dosage calculations (MIU 05, Posts 2 &10; MIU 08, Post 8; MIU 09, Post 1). Additionally, insights related to the type of work that nurses do, particularly in nursing specialities, was described in posts collected in this study (MIU 04, Post 3 & 4). The findings of this study differ from

previously identified ways in which social media is utilized within the nursing education realm. Nursing education literature focuses primarily on the use of social media in formal education settings, which is not how MIUs have leveraged their interpretation of nursing education to their followers. In this study, only two posts related to obtaining formal nursing education at an Undergraduate or Master's level, both of which shared a general motivation message about persevering through the challenges associated with nursing school (MIU 04, Post 10; MIU 08, Post 3).

Nursing Related Humour

In this study, different forms of humour were evident in Instagram posts. Affirmative humour was sometimes utilized in a manner that required the reader to understand the context of a health care setting as well as recognize medical terminology (MIU 03, Post 3; MIU 4, Post 8; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2016). For example, MIU 03 stated, "Remember don't over resuscitate your self with turkey and beer or you might end up with Abdominal Compartment Syndrome" (Post 3). In order to appreciate the humour, readers must understand what Abdominal Compartment Syndrome is, which is a medical condition that lay people may not be familiar with. Although the form of the joke is structurally simple, as a one-line phrase, recognition of this humour relies on complex contextual knowledge (Reyes Perez et al., 2012).

Self-enhancing humour appeared to be utilized as a way to manage potentially stressful situations (MIU 01, Post 8; MIU 02, Post 4; MIU 4, Post 2; MIU 08, Posts 1 & 5; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2016). MIU 08 expressed feelings of tension, frustration, and conflicting emotions when experiencing situations described through a series of memes (Le Moignan et al., 2017; MIU 08, Post 5; Reyes Perez et al., 2012). However, a reader

may also consider this an example of aggressive humour. Depending on the reader's

contextual understanding, the combination of the image and the heading may be

interpreted as a form of mocking the patient for not doing what the health care provider

had expected. This example is a complex form of humour, as the reader must have the

contextual knowledge to understand abbreviations used, as well as interpret the meaning

of the caption in combination with the image (MIU 08, Post 5; Reyes Perez et al., 2012).

Overall, MIU's use of humour in Instagram posts is complex in nature, as it is difficult to

ascertain the motives for using humour as a non-participatory observer. Further research

is required to understand MIUs' use of humour on Instagram.

Emotions Experienced by Nurses

MIUs expressed themselves and their emotions through Instagram posts, which

has been previously identified as a motive for Instagram use (Lee et al., 2015; Sheldon &

Bryant, 2016). However, previous literature suggests that self-expression on Instagram is

achieved primarily through the process of creating, editing and posting images (Lee et al.,

2015; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). In this study, self-expression was conveyed through

captions rather than the images themselves. Several of the MIU's posts shared captions

that were heartfelt in nature. However, many of these captions were posted with a

seemingly unrelated image of the MIU, often seen standing alone and smiling (MIU 01,

Posts 2, 7 & 10; MIU 02, Post 8; MIU 05, Posts 3 & 7; MIU 06, Post 10). In these posts,

it appears as though MIUs were primarily using the captions to express themselves, as

opposed to creating unique images as a form of self-expression.

Multiple Instagram posts provided insight to the daily lives of MIU users and

their associated emotions, which has been identified as a primary motivation for

Instagram use (Lee et al., 2015; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). Posts depicting MIUs lives as nurses supports previous research findings that suggest that Instagram users may follow others to be able to take a glimpse at their life (Lee et al., 2015; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). Sheldon and Bryant (2016) found that the most significant motivator for Instagram use was to obtain knowledge about the lives of other users. The results of this study support this finding, as many Instagram posts described the everyday activities of the MIUs. These findings may suggest that Instagram users desire to learn about the lifestyle of MIU nurses.

Media and narratives including patient details or work context

Five Instagram posts appeared to depict patients, although the sources of the images and videos are unknown (MIU 03, Posts 3, 4 6 & 7; MIU 04, Post 3). As such, it is unclear if the images and videos contained patients or actors. In Ontario (Canada), nursing professional bodies urge nurses to refrain from posting any content on social media that contains patients or patient information (International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016; Ontario Nurses Association, n.d.; Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, 2015). Similarly, previous research advises nurses to refrain from posting any patient information on social media (Alexander, 2016; Cleary et al., 2013; Ferguson, 2013; Green, 2017; Jones & Hayter, 2013). The overwhelming consensus from the literature as well as regulatory bodies is that it is inappropriate for nurses to post patient information. However, a video post by MIU 03 showed an open abdomen during a surgical procedure (Post 3). Similarly, MIU 04 posted a series of videos taking the audience through operating rooms, with what appeared to be patients awaiting surgical procedures (Post 3). Even if these videos are comprised of actors, viewers may interpret

the videos as reality and they may develop the idea that it is appropriate to post this type of content on social media. The ambiguity of the posts may cause confusion for viewers as to the appropriate uses for social media. To ensure clarity for viewers, it is recommended that a disclaimer be included in the Instagram posts stating that the post was created with actors. By ensuring that viewers are aware that the posts do not include real patients, viewers may be better prepared to utilize social media in a professional manner.

Several Instagram posts showed the MIU posing in a workplace setting, dressed in work attire, with no overt patient health information displayed (MIU 01, Posts 2 & 7; MIU 02, Post 6; MIU 06, Post 5; MIU 07, Post 6; MIU 09, Post 1). At present, Ontario guidelines do not specify whether or not it is appropriate to post an image of oneself in a workplace (International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016; Ontario Nurses Association, n.d.; Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, 2015). However, the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (2015) suggests that if there is uncertainty if a post is appropriate, the user should refrain from posting. This is a relevant issue, as a Registered Nurse in New York was fired in 2014 after posting an image to Instagram of an empty trauma room with the caption, "Man Vs. 6 Train… The After*"* (Ramisetti, 2014). The Instagram User was not depicted in the image. Multiple MIUs post workplace-based images, and it is unclear whether this is in violation of professional standards or not.

Although Ontario's major regulatory and professional bodies do not currently have policy pertaining to images being taken in the workplace, individual health care institutions may have rules regarding posting images of their facilities to social media.

This study revealed that multiple MIUs posted images of themselves in what appeared to be health care settings, and it is unknown if these facilities had policies in place regarding such images. Clarity is needed in regard to the professionalism of posting images of oneself in health care facilities on social media.

Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this study have several implications for the nursing profession, as well as nursing leadership, education, and research. For the nursing profession, it is imperative for nursing education, professional regulatory bodies, and employers to develop more robust and dynamic policies and guidelines related to the appropriate use of social media within the profession (Cleary et al., 2013; Sandlin & Hinmon, 2017). Social media use can offer various advantages for Registered Nurses, including the ability to disseminate information and network with others (Cleary et al., 2013; Ferguson, 2013; Lupton & Michael, 2017; Jones & Hayter, 2013; Sandlin & Hinmon, 2017). Furthermore, given the rapid evolution of social media, it is imperative that both education and policy initiatives make efforts to maintain relevancy as related to new usages of these kinds of technology, including nurses who actively use these platforms to seek microcelebrity status online.

The findings of this study also provide preliminary evidence related to the need for deeper exploration of cohorts of the nursing demographic who seek to obtain microcelebrity status through use of social media platforms like Instagram. It is recommended that future primary research should be completed in order to better understand the microcelebrity phenomena as related to nursing and other healthcare professionals (e.g., medicine, nutrition). In regard to nurses, a worthwhile subsequent

analysis building on the preliminary findings of this study include generating denser ideas related to the motivations of microcelebrity nurses and what sorts of impacts (both measurable and non-measurable) their presence has on immediate followers or the image of the profession.

Limitations

Limitations exist for this study. In the literature review, only peer-reviewed studies written in the English language were included. Studies written in other languages or not published in a peer reviewed journal were excluded. Further, there has been limited exploration of the concept of microcelebrity within the nursing literature. Due to this limited nursing-specific research, the elements of the literature review were drawn from works outside the profession.

A second limitation of the study was the non-interaction nature of the research, whereby only secondary analysis of pre-existing Instagram photos and textual content were analyzed. Due to the methodology and ethical requirements of the study, no participants examined in this study were contacted to comment on the findings emerging from the data analysis. Thus, ensuring appropriate representation of data, as opposed to the researcher's interpretation of data, was a challenge of this qualitative content analysis (Graneheim et al., 2017). In future studies, primary data and member checking as related to research interpretation of Instagram data would be helpful.

Finally, this study focused exclusively on Registered Nurses who had achieved a level of microcelebrity status on only the Instagram platform. While Instagram is one of the most popular social media platforms in 2018, different or more nuanced findings may

have emerged if nursing microcelebrities who used other social media platforms (i.e., YouTube, Twitter) were included in the study (Constine, 2018).

Conclusion

In this study, a qualitative content analysis conducted in the constructivist paradigm and guided by Graneheim and Lundman's (2004) framework was conducted. Findings suggest that posting characteristics and behaviours of Registered Nurses who have attained microcelebrity status on Instagram include: (a) *engaging Instagram users;* (b) *educational opportunities and insights;* (c) *nursing related humour;* (d) *emotions experienced by nurses;* and, (e) *media and narratives including patient details or work context.*

Implications exist in multiple realms for nursing professionals, including: nursing leadership, education, policy, and research. As social media platforms continue to thrive and evolve, Registered Nurses must be able to effectively utilize social media while maintaining professionalism. Policies and guidelines must be updated to include recommendations pertinent to nurses with microcelebrity status, to maintain nurses' professionalism and protect patients' safety.

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CHAPTER III

IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Key Findings

The purpose of this study was to identify the characteristics and behaviours of nurses who have attained microcelebrity status on Instagram. Through a constructivist perspective, guided by Graneheim and Lundman's (2004) framework, an exploratory, observational qualitative content analysis was performed (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Schwandt, 1998). Nurses who have attained microcelebrity status on Instagram were identified, and their publicly available Instagram content was analyzed. The characteristics and behaviours of posts created by microcelebrity Instagram users (MIUs) emerged as five themes: (a) *engaging Instagram users;* (b) *educational opportunities and insights;* (c) *nursing related humour;* (d) *emotions experienced by nurses;* and, (e) *media and narratives including patient details or work context.*

MIUs engaged with their audience in a variety of ways, for example, through promoting brands, creating contests, and facilitating discussion. Nursing related educational opportunities were shared by MIUs, as some posted about nursing conferences and encouraged followers to attend. Some MIUs also shared their personal insights related to nursing practice as well as the roles of various nursing specialties. Several MIUs shared personal experiences and the emotions they have felt during their nursing career, including feelings of gratitude, pride, and joy. Multiple forms of humour were utilized by MIUs, particularly in relation to MIUs' experiences during times of stress. Challenges of the nursing profession were shared by MIUs, however, messages

shared in captions remained optimistic and encouraging in nature. Lastly, multiple posts by MIUs included content that appear as though patient information may potentially be disclosed. The sources of these posts were not identified, so the contextual details that contributed to the creation of the post remains unknown.

Overall, the level of professionalism of some posts in this study may be questioned, as a number of posts contained humour that may be considered disrespectful in nature. Additionally, some posts appeared to potentially depict patient information, while other images appeared to have been taken at a workplace setting. For these reasons, further research needs to be completed related to policies and guidelines that exist regarding nurses' social media use, to ensure that nurses are able to navigate social media in a manner that upholds professional standards, while protecting patient privacy and confidentiality. As advocated by Cleary et al. (2013) and Sandlin and Hinmon (2017) it is imperative that relevant policies are in place to assist nurses in navigating social media platforms, to ensure that nurses are able to maintain professional standards and ensure patient privacy is protected.

Implications for Nursing Practice, Education, and Policy Development

Based on the findings of this study, implications for nursing education, practice policy, and research have emerged. These recommendations are described below.

Nursing Education

Instagram has several potential applications in nursing education. In formalized undergraduate settings, Instagram accounts of nurses who have attained microcelebrity status may be examined to stimulate discussion regarding the use of social media within the nursing profession. Nursing educators could utilize Instagram as a facilitation tool in

assessing students' ability to interpret policies and guidelines regarding social media use, in comparison to the types of posts that are being created. In this way, nursing students could learn about appropriate social media use, become familiar with the current policies and guidelines regarding social media use, and identify potential gaps between policy and practice.

Shellenbarger and Robb (2015) recommend that Instagram may be utilized in formal nursing education to develop students' clinical reasoning skills. Instagram can be used for digital storytelling, in which nursing related concepts are illustrated through posts. For example, Shellenbarger and Robb (2015) suggest that nursing educators could create a digital story on Instagram related to a nursing concept, and students would log on to Instagram to view the story and engage in discussion. Students may also participate in creating a digital story by posting images or their own findings (Shellenbarger & Robb, 2015).

Instagram may also be useful as an adjunct to formalized education, as described by Jackson (2017). Jackson (2017), a researcher in England, and a team of nurse educators created a social media program related to a new hospital initiative at a large teaching facility. To reinforce clinical education that nurses had received, images with added text were posted on social media platforms, including Instagram. Jackson (2017) states that the social media campaign supplemented formalized teaching sessions and the campaign was well-received by nursing staff. After the clinical sessions were completed, follow up social media posts were also created to reinforce information taught in clinical education sessions (Jackson, 2017). In this study, MIUs frequently shared their perspectives on nursing related information on Instagram. As such, an Instagram

initiative to enhance clinical education may help prepare nurses for education and reinforce learning once completed (Jackson, 2017).

Lastly, Instagram may be utilized to share information regarding clinical education opportunities for nurses. The findings of this study demonstrated that nurses who have attained microcelebrity status on Instagram frequently post information regarding educational opportunities for nurses, such as courses and seminars. If Instagram continues to be utilized in this manner, nurses may be better able to locate educational opportunities and participate in furthering their education.

Nursing Practice Policy Development

The findings of this study highlight the need for further practice policy development in regard to nurses' Instagram use. Incongruency exists between: recommendations for integrating social media into nursing practice, current guidelines for social media use, and the ways in which nurses are utilizing social media. Although previous research has recommended that social media be integrated with the nursing profession, current policies strongly urge nurses to avoid any and all contact with patients over social media (International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016; National Council of State Boards of Nursing, 2018; Ontario Nurses Association, n.d.; & Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, 2015). In contrast, the findings of this study demonstrated that MIUs are actively engaging and interacting with their social media audience. Additionally, in this study, multiple MIUs posted images or videos that appeared to have depicted patients receiving care. Although the sources of the posts are not specified, the content of these posts directly contrasts existing guidelines for nurses' social media use.

Gagnon and Sabus' (2015) proposed standards of conduct for health professionals' social media use. These guidelines were developed to guide health care professionals in using social media in a productive and thoughtful way, while adhering to professional and institutional policies. The guidelines described by Gagnon and Sabus (2015) include: (a) "define your goals and objectives" (p. 410); (b) "protect patient privacy and confidentiality" (p. 410); (c) "educate yourself on the policies of your employer and adhere to them" (p. 411); (d) "take ownership of your views and responsibility for what you post" (p. 411); (e) "think carefully before practicing *dual citizenship"* (p. 411); (f) "practice digital professionalism" (p. 412); (g) "control information sharing" (p. 412); and, (h) "monitor your online identity" (p. 412). Although these guidelines provide strategies for nurses' use of social media, guidelines remain vague in describing how social media may be integrated with nursing practice. At present, discourse exists between previous research recommendations, guidelines, and practice. This needs to be addressed in order to move forward with integrating social media into the nursing process in an effective manner.

Lastly, a gap exists in policy regarding Instagram use by nurses who have attained microcelebrity status. Existing policies advise nurses on the type of content that is appropriate to post, but no recommendations exist specifically regarding the nurse microcelebrity. The findings of this study suggest that nurses who have achieved microcelebrity status may use Instagram for a variety of purposes, and there needs to be clarity in what is considered appropriate professional behaviour.

Directions for Future Research

The findings of this study evidence the need for further research in several domains related to nurses who have attained microcelebrity status on Instagram. Further research should be completed in both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms, to develop a well-rounded understanding of the concept of nurses seeking microcelebrity status on social media. Future explorations should also be conducted to determine who are following nurse MIU accounts, and their reasons for doing so. By assessing readers' reactions to the posts, a better understanding may be developed of how posts are interpreted by a variety of audiences. Finally, as this study uncovered, several MIUs engage in merchandise branding on Instagram. The examination of merchandise endorsement, as well as the reactions of MIUs' followers to Instagram advertisements is also a worthwhile area for subsequent exploration. It would be useful to determine if companies that sell nursing- related merchandise reimburse nurse MIUs in any way for endorsing their brand. Additionally, future research may assess MIUs for the reasons they choose to promote a merchandise brand.

From a privacy and legal perspective, there is an urgent need for further research on the risks associated with nurses posting images and videos depicting patient care on Instagram. As this study found, some nurse MIUs are posting content that may be considered unprofessional, dependent on the local policies on social media use. In addition to potentially exposing patient information, many posts in this study appear to have been taken in workplace settings. It is unclear if these types of posts may be considered unprofessional, justifying the need for further research and policy development.

Overall, the findings of this study have identified a gap between nursing research, policy, and practice. Previous research has recommended the integration of social media with the nursing profession; however, policies continue to advise nurses to keep their professional lives separate from any social media use (Alexander, 2016; Cleary et al., 2013; Ferguson, 2013; International Nurse Regulator Collaborative, 2016; Jones & Hayter, 2013; National Council of State Boards of Nursing, 2018; Ontario Nurses Association, n.d.; Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, 2015; Sandlin & Hinmon, 2017; Wilson et al., 2014). Further inquiry should be conducted to determine why this gap exists and identify how elements of policy and practice can be integrated in a safe and efficient manner. Furthermore, research is needed to determine the ways in which current policies and guidelines regarding social media use should be adapted to incorporate the behaviours of nurses who have attained microcelebrity status on Instagram.

Conclusion

Overall, this study has provided insight to the characteristics and behaviours of nurses who possess microcelebrity status on Instagram. As an initial, exploratory study, there are multiple implications for nursing education, practice policy development, and future research in this field. This study has identified the need for updated policy regarding the use of Instagram by all nurses, including those who have attained microcelebrity status. Potential ethical, legal, and professional issues stem from nurses attaining microcelebrity status on Instagram. Research should be conducted to identify these issues and implement policy changes to ensure that nurses are utilizing social media in a way that protects patients' safety.

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APPENDIX A

Notice from Office of Research Ethics

Dear ██████████████,

The Western University Research Ethics Board (REB) has withdrawn the above noted application.

The application has been withdrawn for the reasons outlined below:

1. As you will be conducting, a content analysis of publicly available data found on Instagram in which the individuals do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy REB review is not required. Please note there may be instances where the situation may change and REB review may be required, e.g. where there may be a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

███████████, Ethics Officer on behalf of ███████████, HSREB Chair

VITA

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