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Aligning Religious and Culturally Relevant Clinical Practice with Policy

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Purpose

- To evaluate cultural considerations in clinical and educational policies when working with female Muslim nursing students who wear hijab
- To suggest changes to dress code policies within academic and clinical agency settings

Strength of Evidence

- Review of literature and policies
 - Keywords: discrimination, clinical experiences, Muslim student perceptions, hijab, and spirituality in clinical experiences
 - Databases: Mega Search contains multiple databases (e.g., CINAHL Plus, ERIC, Medline, PubMed)
 - Twenty-three articles, published from 1998-2015
 - Levels of evidence ranging from IV to VII, using the Evidence Hierarchy of Designs for Cause Probing Questions
 - No systematic reviews or randomized controlled trials
 - Student handbook reviewed to determine current dress code policies
 - Policies obtained from clinical practice partners

Implemented Practice Change

- Examined dress code policies within the School of Nursing Student Handbook and five clinical agency partners', including operating room dress policies
 - Identified policy discrepancies in theory versus practice for clinical dress and allowances for modesty with long sleeves and head coverings, such as hijab in the operating room
 - New, more inclusive language in the School of Nursing Student Handbook was written and shared with clinical practice partners

Implementation Strategies and Stakeholders

- Student handbook was updated to incorporate inclusive language regarding dress code
- Compared disparities between dress code policies and research evidence
- Suggested language for policy change provided to clinical partners

Evaluation Methods

- Contacted clinical agencies at start of semester to determine if any agencies made recommended changes

Results

- No reported changes in agencies' dress policies occurred after recommendations made by the School of Nursing
- Agency partners' clinical dress policies were lacking in cultural sensitivity for students who wear hijab
- Nursing faculty continue to collaborate with clinical partners to create policy change that reflects sensitivity to the needs of diverse populations employed in nursing