



Final year students' perception of role models within diagnostic radiography based on clinical experience

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What is a 'role model'?

- 'Somebody I look up to' (Weaver, Treviño & Agle, 2005)
 - An individual whom we choose to model our behaviour from (Green, 1988)
 - “**Cognitive construction** based on the attributes of people in social roles an individual perceives to be similar to him or herself to some extent and desires to increase perceived similarity by **emulating** those attributes” (Gibson, 2004)
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Introduction

- Generally thought of in the positive sense for their beneficial influences
- Positive and negative role models exist
- Negative role models possess perceived negative attributes - decision not to emulate or reproduce the actions of that individual (Gibson 2004)





Introduction

- Background literature
 - 👤 Nursing undergraduate students (Coates & Gormley 1997; Donaldson & Carter 2005; Lockwood-Rayermann 2003; Ohrling & Hallberg 2000)
 - 👤 Medicine and medical training (Paice, Heard and Moss 2002; Rose, Rukstalis and Schuckit 2005)
 - 😊 Medical radiation sciences (Adams and Kilburn-Watt 2000; Fenton 2005; Lewis and Robinson, 2003; Steves 2005)
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Introduction

- Nursing and Medicine professions have identified the benefits of role models within the clinical setting
 - At present little is known about the influence of role models upon students in radiography
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Aims of the Study

- To investigate third year Diagnostic Radiography (DR) students' perception of role models based on their clinical experience
 - Determine the impact of clinical facilitation in determining modelling expectations, role model identification and attributes
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Methodology

- Ethics approval granted on first attempt by the University of Sydney HREC
- Recruitment presentation held where all third year students were to be present
- Participant recruitment letter distributed and later collected for future email contact with students





Methodology

- Interview times arranged through e-mail based upon students preferences
 - Digitally recorded interviews, held in M025 lasting approximately one hour
 - 11 students recruited initially
 - 2 students recruited at a later date through follow up recruitment presentation
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Methodology

- Interview format using open ended questions and encompassing 2 topic areas:
 1. Ideal traits of role models within the workplace
 2. Student's clinical experiences





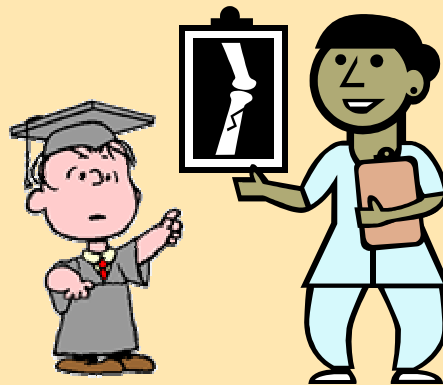
Methodology

- Slight modification of questions throughout interviews as per grounded theory approach to reflect new emerging themes
 - Interviews were transcribed verbatim by researcher
 - Interviews coded under ST1, ST2 etc
 - Thematic analysis performed deriving a number of concepts and key concepts from the data
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Results

- **Key concepts** – relate to the students' interaction and experience with the radiographer (role model)
- **Concepts** – attributes that were determining factors in the students' selection of a role model





Results



**Key Concepts
(Experiences)**

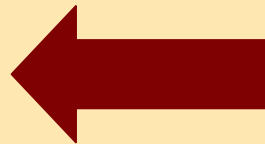
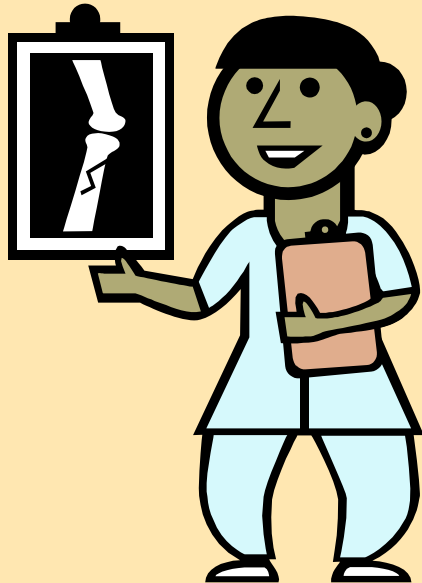
Student focused

Sharing experiences

**Impression of clinical
setting**



Results



Concepts (Attributes)
Approachability
Communication
Knowledge
Caring for patients
Negative work ethic



Key Concept – Student Focused

- Assisting students in an encouraging manner
- Explaining the theory behind the radiographic projections
- Making themselves open to any questioning regarding students concerns with radiography and,
- Overall making the student feel welcome within the department.





Key Concept – Student Focused

“Being on clinical the best role models are the ones that again lead by example. They are not just out in the work area telling you what to do. They’ll ask you to come in and watch examinations, and as they are teaching you they will explain lots of things and narrate what they are doing” (ST4)



Key Concept – Sharing Experiences

- Engaged students in conversation
- Able to convey and share their experiences as a radiographer
- Share knowledge of and about the profession





Key Concept – Sharing Experiences

“Some wanted to teach you things and you would gravitate towards them and some were very good at that they would tell you everything that they were doing” (ST8)



Key Concept – Impression of Clinical Setting

- Clinical placement within private radiology practices or public hospitals
- Experiences were often different between types
- Private settings provide more interaction with senior staff - identified as a good teaching environment





Key Concept – Impression of Clinical Setting

*“I think hospital departments are more focused on patient care than private practices and private practices are more focused on technically good images than hospitals are”
(ST3)*



Key Concept – Impression of Clinical Setting

- Selection of role models often dependant on where students envisaged themselves working once qualified
- Lockwood, Jordan & Kunda (2002) suggest the selection of role models is related to the specific goals of the individual





Key Concept – Impression of Clinical Setting

*“In terms of role models you begin to behave more like the public sector radiographers because that is what you see yourself being”
(ST5)*



Concept - Approachability

- Approachability ranked as the most important attribute role models possessed
- Students more at ease when performing a radiographic examination

“If they are stand offish you don’t really regard them as a role model. They need to be approachable more than friendly and seem willing to help and communicate” (ST9)



Concept - Communication

- Role models allow communication at each individual's (student and patients) level of understanding
- Role models demonstrate patient care and positioning with higher order communication skills

“Be able to communicate with people at their own knowledge level and below” (ST6)



Concept - Knowledge

- 2 types: general medical and radiography specific
- Role models have the ability to adapt techniques to reflect different patient presentations

“Someone who is highly skilled in radiographic techniques and in patient care...Someone who has good ethical sense when he goes about his work”

(ST3)



Concept - Knowledge

- Changing nature of students perception of role model (Browne 1980)
- Initially students sought out radiographers who were friendly and approachable
- With clinical experience, technical prowess was valued higher than previously

“In first year it was more about who was really friendly, so PDY’s were a good role model. Whereas in third year, you are considering technical aspects as well because you know more” (ST12)



Concept – Caring for Patients

- Ensure the patient is treated with the utmost care and compassion
- Role models exhibit excellent communication skills
- Show empathy in their patient-practitioner relationship

“The ones [radiographers] that stood out were not really the technically adept radiographers, it was more the radiographers with good patient skills and good patient communication skills” (ST4)



Concept – Negative work ethic

- Students identified actions of radiographers as behaviour they did not wish to emulate
- Negative role model behaviour included attitude, poor communication, disregard for patient care and unsafe or unethical work practices

“I think there have been people [radiographers] along the way that can’t really communicate. I find they can’t communicate with students or patients. It made me take a step back and think ‘I don’t want to work with that radiographer again’” (ST8)



Concept – Negative work ethic

- As clinical experience increases students become discerning between positive and negative work practices

“Yeah I think I wasn’t very aware of good and bad radiography practices at the very start of my degree. As I have developed my own sense of work ethics I am more able to determine which radiographer is a good role model and which is not” (ST3)



Limitations

- E-mails unanswered by one participant
- Students from NESB difficulties with terminology - alteration of questions
- Revision of concepts - initially appeared strong but altered upon further revision

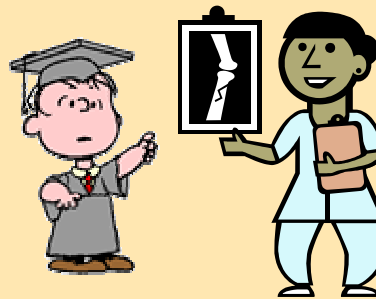




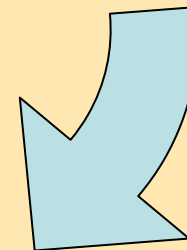
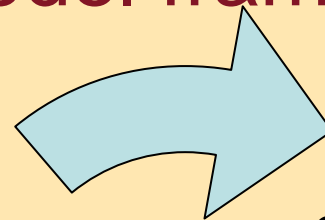
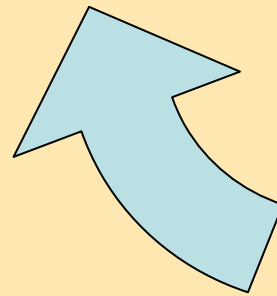
Conclusion – Student/Radiographer Role model framework

Student focused

Sharing experiences



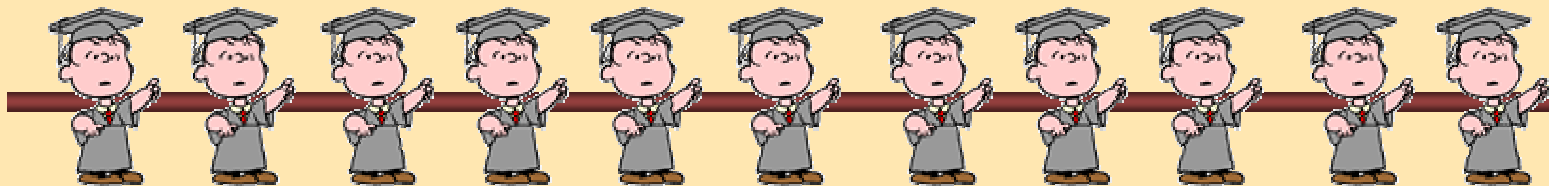
**Impression of
clinical
setting**





Future Recommendations

1. Interview students in another allied field (such as physio) to determine the uniqueness/commonality of role model traits in radiography
2. Extend DR student study to clarify the influence of private versus public role model availability and type





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