

Feminism and feminist pedagogy in two helping professions

by

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B.S., Oregon State University, 2006

M.S., Kansas State University, 2017

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

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Department of Special Education, Counseling, and Student Affairs
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Abstract

In the past century there has been a significant amount of literature regarding the waves of feminism and the advancement of womxn in higher education. In addition to the waves of feminism and womxn's influence on higher education, there has also been a thorough recounting of the history of academic advising. However, despite all three of these areas being studied in great detail, the connections between all three has not yet been explored in the literature. This dissertation explored feminism and feminist pedagogy in two helping professions through (a) an examination of the use of feminist pedagogy existing literature in nursing, and (b) the lived experience of female primary-role academic advisors. These findings then shaped a model of feminist academic advising grounded by feminist pedagogy. This dissertation was guided by the following research questions: How do scholars discuss feminist pedagogy in nursing, an exemplary helping profession? How do female primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and feminists express feminist identity in the academic advising workplace? This dissertation consists of three related papers.

Paper #1, a structured literature review, explored the available literature of the use of feminist pedagogy in an exemplary helping profession, nursing. Articles from were pulled from Nursing Allied Health and Google Scholar under the designators of including "feminist pedagog*" in nursing and written in English to include articles that used the term feminist pedagogy and feminist pedagogies. After a 5-phase protocol, 12 articles were accepted into the final sample. Three themes emerged: classroom climate, curriculum design, and care versus cure. The implications for the field were: the need of feminist pedagogy in the education of nurses due to the hierarchical nature of medical fields, the need for nurses to be prepared to fight against the

policies in healthcare that oppress certain populations, and the importance of feminist pedagogy in nursing for the education of all gender identities.

Paper #2, a phenomenology, explored how primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and feminists describe the role feminism plays in their advising practice. This study explored the use of feminism in the practice of 22 participants. Data was collected through three semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. Three themes emerged: mindfulness of physical space as a cornerstone for comfort, power of communication in forging meaningful connection and relationships, and empowering students to make their own decisions. There were three implications for this research: the focus on the experience of the academic advisor themselves, the impact personal identity has on advising practice, and how feminism can impact academic advising as a field.

In Paper # 3, I introduce a new approach to academic advising incorporating feminist pedagogy with seven tenets: the positionality of the advisor, relationship-centered approach, mindful of power dynamics, intentionality of physical space, social justice and advocacy, a holistic understanding, and resilience and community building. The adoption of a feminist model in academic advising promises a transformative shift within the educational landscape, poised to redefine interactions between advisors and students, the institutional approach to student support, and the broader scholarly understanding of advising practices.

Collectively, the papers from this dissertation suggest four important overarching themes: an emphasis on inclusive and welcoming environments, challenging traditional power dynamics, integrating personal experiences and social justice, and a holistic approach to education and advising. These findings have important implications for the profession of academic advising in the available research that advisors and institutions can use as a basis for new advising

approaches. Additionally, this dissertation will introduce new ways to increase social justice, advocacy, and inclusion, and use other helping professions as examples of how to incorporate new and potentially innovative ideas into advising practice.

Keywords: feminism, feminist pedagogy, academic advising, advising practice, phenomenology, structured literature review

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Dedication

To Arlie and Tate, my two favorite people and my reason for always pushing. I love you both millions. And to Cliff, my continual source of love and affection.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

This collected papers dissertation explores how feminism and feminist pedagogy intersect with the academic advising profession. The background to the problem, problem statement, overarching purpose, conceptual framework, proposed collected papers, potential implications, and structure of the collected papers dissertation is presented in this chapter.

Background to the Problem

There are three historical streams of literature related to the background of this dissertation: waves of feminism, history of womxn in higher education, and the history of academic advising in the United States.

Waves of Feminism

The first wave of feminism began in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (1840-1920's). The first wave was focused on suffrage (political equality) as well as equal access to education and jobs and the right to own property (Hewitt, 2012). In 1920, the suffragette movement was able to achieve the right for womxn ("womxn" is used chiefly in feminist writing as an alternative spelling to avoid the suggestion of sexism perceived in the sequences *m-a-n* and *m-e-n*; Kunz, 2019) to vote. At this time, the movement seemed to stall, with smaller groups continuing to work on specific goals (reproductive rights, Black womxn voting rights, increased access to education for women) but the larger wave seemed to wane. Although radical in nature, the first wave largely excluded women of color and focused more so on white, educated, and highly privileged womxn.

The second wave of feminism (1960-1970) focused on equal access to education and reproductive rights (Krolokke & Sorensen, 2006). This wave was far more vocal than the first and used the collective voice to create disruption in the political and social realms (Thompson,

2002). High profile marches and protests were a common occurrence with the intention to call attention to instances in society that were harmful to womxn. Feminism as a construct—which focused on access for womxn in academics and the academy—was introduced at the end of the second wave of feminism (David, 2004). In fact, “the term ‘feminist’ was not in the lexicon of academe until the 1970s, when such women became involved as academics” (David, 2004, p. 103). The second wave was also more inclusive than the previous wave. The voices of Black womxn and other womxn of color were included in the movement as an essential element. This movement was able to achieve significant accomplishments: the Equal Pay Act, Title IX, and Roe vs. Wade. Each of these accomplishments increased the equity of womxn as members of society.

The third wave of feminism began in the early 1990’s to the 2010’s and revolved around equity in the workplace for womxn and body acceptance for womxn. More specifically, this wave tackled sexual harassment in the workplace, pay equity, and hiring equity (Grady, 2018). Additionally, there was a focus on body positivity and femininity being used as an asset rather than for others consumption. Womxn during this time were dressing in ways that celebrated their bodies and allowed for freedom of expression through outward appearance.

Black Feminist Movement

While the waves of feminism have been outlined many times in scholarly articles as well as in popular culture, Black feminists vocalize the neglect in recognition of Black feminist movements that began well before the first wave of feminism (1840-1920). Abolitionist movements spurred by Black womxn were what led to and were “instrumental to the evolution of the first wave” (Springer, 2002, p. 1061). Black womxn were historically battling both racism and sexism, which complicated the relationship with the larger scale feminist movement. While

white womxn were able to focus solely on gaining specific rights or access, Black womxn were focused on the same, in addition to trying to survive blatant racism, hatred and further roadblocks simply because they were Black (Brieines, 2002). The dichotomy between the white feminist movement and waves and the Black feminist movements continued into the second and third waves of feminism, with Black womxn being integrated more into each wave, but fighting very different battles than white womxn (Brieines, 2002). Historically, Black womxn have embraced key concepts related to feminism such as “daycare, equal pay, equal work, and equality in relationships” (Baxandall, 2001, p. 230) for far longer than white womxn. Despite this, feminist movements are often attributed to white womxn. An additional element to Black feminism is the social relationship Black womxn have to privilege and where they were often placed in ranking of importance in society (Springer, 2002). Black feminists were not only fighting for equal rights and common feminist rights, they were experiencing sexism and racial discrimination at a level that was far more extreme than any other group of people (Baxandall, 2001).

Chicana Feminist Movement

The Chicana feminist movement ascended its height in the 1960’s and 1970’s (Ortega, 2015). One of the first Chicana feminist movements was a student group, the Hijas de Cuauhtémoc, which occurred at California State University in 1968 (Blackwell, 2015). This spurred additional Chicana feminist student groups, which led to larger Chicana feminist groups in the outlying community. In 1971, the first regional Chicana conference was held at Cal State Los Angeles, bringing together 250 Chicanas who worked together to form a delegation that would attend the national conference held later that year in Texas (Blackwell, 2011). Despite the

historical significance of the Chicana movement, it is often excluded from the larger waves of feminism and erased from historical records (Pérez, 2015).

The definition of feminism in Latina culture is very different than that in white culture. The feminism that had been defined by white culture had focused on the separation of womxn and men and this was counter to the cultural beliefs in the Chicana culture. In fact, Chicana feminism embraces the power of the womxn as a mother and nurturer, rather than an individualistic viewpoint (Adam, 1994). Similar to the white feminist movement, Chicana feminists were involved in political movements starting in the 1930's in which they fought to gain workers' rights in the canneries. The continued political impact of the Chicana feminist movement transcended just the freedoms for womxn within the Latinx communities, but rather, Chicana feminists were fighting for the freedoms of entire communities (Adam, 1994).

An element of the Chicana movement that brings an additional layer of complexity is the notion of migration. While Chicana feminists were fighting for freedoms, their existence in the U.S. was being erased both politically and practically. The impact and contribution of Chicana and Mexicana migrants to the U.S. structure and growth is often forgotten and erased from historical record, including the impact of the Chicana movement (Chávez-Garcia, 2018, Saavedra & Pérez, 2017). Much of the historical record of the Chicana movement is told through oral histories, which further separates it from the historical records.

Lesbian Feminist Movement

The lesbian feminist movement is often complicated by the notion of radical feminism and the associated stereotypes (Mackay, 2015). Often labelled as man-hating and angry, lesbian feminists became a scapegoat of the larger feminist movement of the 1960's (The New York Public Library, 2009). Despite the larger belief that lesbian feminists did not exist until the

second wave of feminism, the first lesbian feminist organization was formed in the 1950's (Littauer, 2020). Stonewall and the gay liberation in 1969 started a revolution in which the queer community was able to slowly start living more openly than in previous years (Katz, 2017). Prior to 1969, lesbian womxn were closeted and largely unable to participate in any movement under the identity of queer or lesbian. While the second wave of feminism was occurring, feminist lesbians were participating and experiencing a new freedom of publicly identifying as gay and fighting for womxn's rights.

History of Womxn in Higher Education

Womxn were not typically accepted as college students until the late 19th and early 20th century (Graham, 1978). Until that point, college was focused more for white males and only a few institutions allowed womxn to enroll. There were limited academic options for students, with much of the curriculum being very structured and prescribed. When womxn were finally permitted to attend college, the academic options for them were limited. Typically, womxn were allowed to take few academic paths, often into care or administrative professions (Parker, 2015). Much of the curriculum in womxn's available academic programs revolved around light subjects such as homemaking, teaching, and proper etiquette. In contrast, men were encouraged to take courses that prepared them for a career path.

Prior to the 1890, womxn made up almost half of college employees (Hornig, 1980). However, by 1980 womxn made up less than a quarter of all faculty members at colleges (Hornig, 1980). As more womxn were admitted into colleges, deans of women (Parker, 2015) were instituted with an intention of providing guidance and supervision for female students. Womxn's colleges were implemented at this time with specific intention to provide college

educations for womxn. The most commonly known womxn's colleges during this time are referred to as the Seven Sisters and focused on liberal arts educations for womxn (Parker, 2015).

In the early 1960's womxn began demanding equal rights in society beyond political access. Womxn banded together during this time to create social change, and a part of this change was related to access of education for young womxn. Up until this point, much of the available academics for womxn were focused on a very specific set of professions. The second wave of feminism had some groundbreaking changes, including the implementation of Title IX in 1972. The initial intent behind Title IX was not specific to collegiate athletics, but rather to ensure that womxn were not excluded from participation in education programs or activity that were receiving federal funding (Fabrikant, 2018). Title IX delivered significant impacts on female faculty at higher education institutions (Marine, 2011), increasing the available faculty opportunities for womxn. The impact to athletics did not occur until 1979 in which Title IX interpretation was implemented to include athletics in the scope of the regulations (Fabrikant, 2018).

During the second wave female students were admitted at higher numbers than ever before, eventually surpassing the number of male students enrolled in higher education institutions (Loeb, 2006). However, the number of womxn who earned graduate degrees during this time was still quite small, less than one quarter (Loeb, 2006). Socially, womxn were banding together during this time and outward movements were often tied to college campuses where demonstrations and rallies brought groups of womxn together to demand equality. An additional and significant change during this time was the freedom for womxn to control their own reproductive system (Norsigian, 2019). These social and systemic changes influenced how womxn were treated in higher education, both as students and as faculty members.

By the 1980's womxn were enrolled in college at higher numbers than men (Loeb, 2006). The freedom in academic choice meant that more womxn than ever were enrolling in college, and subsequently entering the workforce upon graduation. At this time, womxn's centers were being introduced on college campus, providing spaces for female students to engage with "the very heart of feminist engagement with the academy" (Marine, 2011, p. 16). However, female faculty members did not necessarily see the same level of gender equality and were still outnumbered by male faculty, making up only a quarter of all faculty in the U.S. (Loeb, 2006). Furthermore, very few womxn were in positions of power in universities. The imbalance of power affected the ability for female faculty to move up the ranks, or even gain tenure. Although female students were beginning to thrive, female faculty members were not experiencing the same trajectory.

Towards the turn of the 21st century and the middle of the third wave of feminism, female faculty members began to gain more traction towards the glass ceiling (Parker, 2015). In 1990, female faculty members were nearly equal in number to male faculty members at two-year institutions (Loeb, 2006). While more womxn were hired into positions of power, including presidential positions in higher education institutions, they still only make up 30% of all presidents (American Association of University Women, 2020). Additionally, female faculty members are tenured at a significantly lower rate than male counterparts – by 2020, womxn represented only 32% of all full professors (American Association of University Women, 2020). The enrollment difference between womxn and men continues today with womxn being 53% of the student population at higher education institutions (Department of Labor, 2022). Female faculty members are tenured at a significantly lower level than male counterparts. Womxn who are faculty members and become mothers experience a confluence of identities that are often

conflicting (Laney et al., 2013). The pressure to be a good mother and to continue to be a good faculty member is nearly constant and can cause immense stress. Mothers who are working in higher education have to balance a multitude of tasks and can find that difficult and demoralizing (Raskin, 2006).

History of Academic Advising in the United States

Prior to 1870, academic advising was not a formalized part of higher education. There was no defined role that included assisting students in their academic path. This was largely due to the fact that academic programs were prescribed in nature with little to no choice in what classes were taken. In 1870, Johns Hopkins University introduced options of “majors,” allowing students more choice in their program (Cate & Miller, 2015). From the implementation of majors, academic advising began as a responsibility of faculty members in higher education institutions. Specific theory or approaches were not necessarily employed, nor was there a body of scholarly work to support academic advising as a separate and unique profession.

In the late 1970's, a conference organized by two advising professionals was held specifically for other advising professionals. This finally allowed advisors to meet and discuss advising. The success of the initial conference spurred the birth of NACADA, known then as the National Academic Advising Association (changed to “The Global Community for Academic Advising” in 2013). As the profession of advising has evolved, and the impact of academic advising has been recognized as a positive factor in a student's academic career, the interactions between students and advisors have also evolved (Drake, 2011). Today's advisors grapple with balancing the time needed to make good contact with students and ensuring that all students get the information they need to be academically successful. The role of an academic advisor is

much more defined than it was in the past and the expectations of an advisor have increased in terms of retention and persistence of students.

Statement of the Problem

In the past century there has been a significant amount of literature regarding the waves of feminism and the advancement of womxn in higher education. In addition to the waves of feminism and womxn's influence on higher education, there has also been a thorough recounting of the history of academic advising. However, despite all three of these areas being studied in great detail, the connections between all three has not yet been explored in the literature.

Purpose of the Collected Papers

This dissertation explored feminism and feminist pedagogy in two helping professions though (a) an examination of the use of feminist pedagogy existing literature in nursing, and (b) the lived experience of female primary-role academic advisors. These findings then shaped a model of feminist academic advising grounded by feminist pedagogy. This dissertation was guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: How do scholars discuss feminist pedagogy in nursing, an exemplary helping profession?

RQ2: How do female primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and feminists express feminist identity in the academic advising workplace?

Conceptual Framework

To understand how womxn navigate their own workplace identity and their femininity, there must be some understanding of how identity itself influences how people operate in both their personal and professional lives. Identity is the outward expression of self (Hammack, 2015). There are many facets to identity and how it develops individually; many of these facets

are dependent on socioeconomic, generational, or cultural influences (Patton et al., 2016). Because of these facets, identity development theorists have studied multiple angles and approaches. Founding theorists (Chickering, 1969; Erikson, 1968) outlined how identity is formed through experiences and is particularly influenced in young adulthood. These theories are used in higher education in understanding how the needs of students and their individual identity development changes as they mature.

Social identities became more outwardly visible through the waves of feminism, the civil rights movement, and other social movements (Patton et al., 2015). These movements also opened up areas of scholarly inquiry of more specific identity development. In the 1970's, several identity theorists focused on specific identity development related to one's culture, gender, and sexuality. Cross's (1971) Black identity theory has led to several other identity theories, including the feminist identity development theory (Downing & Roush, 1985). Homosexuality identity theories spurred from the gay rights movement and served as a base for eventual Queer identity theories by (Miller et al., 2016; Rhoads, 1994). Josselson (1973) and Gilligan (1977) focused on the influences that led to the development of womxn's identity. The groundwork laid by Josselson and Gilligan eventually led to the concept of feminist identity (Patton et al., 2015).

Feminist Identity

Feminist identity theories spurred from decades of previous development theories (Erikson, 1968), women's identity theory (Gilligan, 1982), and Black identity development (Cross, 1971). Feminist development theory (Downing & Roush, 1985) explored how womxn work through five stages of feminist development. As womxn develop a feminist identity, they begin with an acceptance of how men and womxn exist in a patriarchal world (stage 1- passive

acceptance). Traditional gender roles are embraced and do not cause internal concern. In stage 2 (revelation), womxn begin to question and/or push back against the traditional male and female societal roles. This can occur from experiences that a womxn's thinking and pushes her to question how society treats womxn. As womxn develop further in their feminist identity, they experience an appreciation of relationships with other like-minded womxn. Embeddedness-emanation is stage 3 and allows for a womxn to release anger caused by societal expectations. Rather than focusing on the frustration of social expectations of womxn, the focus can shift to how to support other womxn to help erase these social expectations. The anger is used as power in this stage, rather than something that limits womxn. As womxn move into the synthesis stage (stage 4), they begin to appreciate and honor being womxn. In this stage, womxn recognize the power they hold. Lastly, in stage 5, active commitment, womxn use their power to affect change. In this final stage, womxn are able to use their relationship with feminism as akin to spirituality and as a life guide (Downing & Roush, 1985). Most womxn do not reach the final stage of the feminist identity development and instead hover between stages 2 and 4. The way in which each stage is outlined explains how womxn would feel or act during, which makes it useful in understanding how womxn who identify as feminists use their feminism in both their personal and professional lives.

Prior to feminist identity development (1985), very little research existed on “the development of a positive feminist identity” (Downing & Roush, 1985, p. 702). Since then, feminist scholars have used feminist identity development theory to inform many additional studies. This framework has been used as an element in collective identity (Ashmore et al., 2004) and as a base for which well-being has been measured (Yakushko, 2007). Some scholars use the

theory to understand the distress that feminist occur as they move through the stages of development (Fisher & Good, 2004).

Professional Identity

Professional identity evolves over time as people move further into careers (Wiles, 2013). As employees, people bring their personal beliefs, values, and interests along as part of their identity (Gee, 2000; Henderson & Bradey, 2008). Studies have explored the relationship between personal and work identity (Costello, 2004; Enyedy et al., 2006; Gee, 2000; Kelan, 2013) and the complex relationship between personal and work identity (Adams & Crafford, 2012; Bothma & Roodt, 2012; Kira & Balkin, 2014). Professional identity is often shaped by the profession itself and the norms within that profession (Wiles, 2012). However, people can be different at work than they are in their personal life: “The notion of identity lies at the intersection between one’s personal history and individual psychology on the one hand and one’s cultural history and community of practice on the other hand” (Enyedy et al., 2006, p. 71). In fact, some studies have shown that hiding a personal identity at work can be detrimental to professional identity as it can limit some of the potential interactions and advocacy that can come with a personal identity (Medlin & Wilby, 2023). Personal beliefs, values, and morals are incorporated in how people approach life and therefore have an influence on their professional identity.

Professional Identity in Higher Education

There has been significant change in higher education in the last several decades (Henkel, 2009). The identity of higher education professionals has also shifted in tandem with the changes in higher education. Faculty at higher education institutions were often held in high regard as scholars or experts in their fields (Rhoades, 2009). Much of the perceived identity of higher education professionals was tied to the knowledge base that faculty members held (Valimaa &

Hoffman, 2008). However, many of the professionals within higher education are not faculty, but instead are administrative staff, student-focused staff, legal and compliance staff, and a multitude of other roles or positions. Each subsection of employees within a higher education setting has its own set of professional identities related to the work, unique to the service they provide, or the tasks they are responsible.

Professional Identity for Womxn

Due to a dual set of expectations they endure in a professional world, womxn develop professional identity differently than men (Chowdhury & Gibson, 2019). For instance, womxn often have one foot in their professional world and one foot in a personal world in which they are a caretaker. Skills that are expected in professional settings are often inherently associated with masculine behaviors (Madden, 2011). Being firm, aggressive, or bold are often associated male behaviors and are celebrated in a professional setting. Womxn who are attempting to adhere to professional norms by incorporating traditionally “male” traits into their professional identity are often seen as rude, aggressive, or unpleasant: “Professional women are either ‘too female’ to be professional or ‘too professional’ to be feminine” (Pfafman & McEwan, 2014, p. 204). There are instances in which the norms within a profession are inherently “feminine” and in these cases, the womxn can shape their professional identities to be consistent with the associated norms (Britton, 2000; Chowdhury & Gibson, 2019). An additional impact of professional identity in womxn is the lack of available female role models in professional settings (Madden, 2011). With so few womxn representing leadership roles, younger womxn who are navigating the workplace for the first time are lacking the ability to observe other womxn and adopt their professional identity skills (Ely, 1995).

There is an added layer of complexity for the professional identity of womxn who are also mothers. For womxn who are professionals, the identity they hold in the workplace can be influenced by being a mother (Ladge & Greenberg, 2015) and there are inherent changes in how womxn navigate identity after becoming a mother (Laney et al., 2015). Being a mother can mean identity splits between that of a caretaker at home and a professional at work. Many of the traits associated with mothers such as nurture, care, and sensitivity are not associated with the expectations of a leader, which means that mothers who are also professionals must either mask those traits at work or adopt different traits as part of their professional identity (Chowdhury & Gibson, 2019).

Navigating Feminist and Professional Identity

In a work setting being a feminist and a professional can translate into being more vocal about inequities (Peterson, 2004). Additionally, the sisterhood of feminism encourages bonding with other feminists (Birdsong, 2020). In the workplace, this could look like strong friendships, networking, and the feeling of being backed by a group rather than being alone. The social aspect of group empowerment lessens the insecurities of being a womxn in the workplace. The camaraderie and bonding between womxn in the workplace are important aspect of workplace satisfaction, which in turn affects the success of womxn in the workplace (Peterson, 2004). However, many feminists struggle to balance the unpaid emotional labor that occurs within the home and subsequently at work (Wharton, 2000). Professional identity for womxn working in helping professions within higher education often includes an aspect of emotional labor and can influence their professional identity (Rogers, 2017).

Approach to Practice

The second area of the conceptual framework consists of approaches to professional practice. There are three areas relevant to the studies in this dissertation: caregiving as a feminine trait, caregiving and the ethic of care, and feminist pedagogy. Caregiving is an essential component of helping professions (e.g., academic advising, nursing) and has been tied to the ethic of care and how it is related to caregiving in times of crisis. Feminist pedagogy has been incorporated into the education of helping professions and used as a base to build professional practice.

Caregiving as a Feminine Trait

Caregiving has historically been considered a feminine trait, one that womxn hold as an intrinsic component of their being (Wharton, 2000). The gendered nature of work being completed within the home has long been considered societally as a womxn's responsibility (DeVault, 1991). The concept of emotional labor, the work being completed in the home and in relation to the management of other's emotional needs was originally introduced by Arlie Hochschild in 1979 under the title of "emotion work." Prior to Hoschchild, the paradigm of womxn's holding and managing all of the emotional needs of a household was largely unacknowledged. Societally, the expectation of womxn to absorb emotional work has extended from the household into the professional world and can be especially evident in professions that are considered caring professions. Teaching, nursing, personal care, and dental assistant are all helping professions and are statistically more often held by womxn globally (International Labor Organization, 2020). Many of these professions include emotional work in that they require an underlying display of care. Because of this, these professions also experience high incidence of burnout and vicarious trauma, which lead to additional emotional and mental work. Feminists

have long recognized the emotional labor that is incorporated into womxn's lives and the impact it has on womxn's wellbeing (Newcomb, 2021).

Caregiving and The Ethic of Care

The ethic of care is a feminist-based theory formed from the works of Gilligan (1982, 1992, 1997). Gilligan was inspired by the work of Kohlberg (1978) and proposed that womxn operate under an ethic of caring, while men conversely operate under an ethic of justice. An ethic of care posits that the decisions made are considering how to provide care, while an ethic of justice lies more in a black and white or right and wrong viewpoint. Gilligan proposed that womxn approach moral circumstances with care as the forefront of their thinking (Auerbach et al., 1985). As time progressed, the framework of the ethic of care evolved as well, being used as an ethical standpoint in a variety of professions such as nursing, occupational therapy, and social work. Gilligan's work served as inspiration for Noddings (1984), who studied the ethic of care in the context of education. Noddings (1984) was interested in how the ethic of care influenced the interactions of educators and students. Some scholars have argued that the ethic of care is quite limited in its scope (Auerbach et al., 1985; Jorgensen, 2006; Tronto, 1993) and it reduces care to a dominant feminine skill.

The ethic of care has recently been brought to the forefront in relation to how students are cared for, and especially so in recent times when a global pandemic changed the entire landscape of higher education (Branicki, 2020). As Covid-19 changed how education was delivered (Piotrowski & Chula, 2020), there was a significant need to address the continual stress that students were under during this time. The use of an ethic of care in this instance meant that students were approached not only with an academic goal in mind, but also with the understanding that they were experiencing a tumultuous event that was impacting their everyday

life. Branacki (2020) argued that the use of an ethic of care in a crisis situation such as a global pandemic can help to reduce the impact on marginalized groups and womxn.

Feminist Pedagogy

Feminist pedagogy in higher education began as an effort bring gender justice (hooks, 2000) to the classroom. Feminist pedagogy shifted the content in the classroom from being largely male centered to a more even representation of womxn (Bondy et al., 2015). Initially, feminist pedagogy was implemented in women's studies curriculum and focused on creating a classroom that highlighted empowerment, community, and leadership (Shrewsbury. 1987).

As feminist pedagogy evolved over time, there was a shift from a focus solely on equalizing education for womxn, to one that focused more on equity for all in the classroom (Oppenheim-Shachar, 2021). This included additional attention paid to the actual delivery of content and the environment of the classroom (Shrewsbury, 1987). Rather than an environment in which content is delivered largely through lecture (teacher to student) a shift to include alternative methods of content delivery became an important component (Shrewsbury, 1987). Alternative delivery methods allow for and expect the student to become more engaged within their own learning and allow for instructors to include their own positionality into their instruction (Bondy et al., 2015). Feminist pedagogy intends to highlight the voice and experiences of the students alongside the instructors and the content of the course.

While there is no one definition for what constitutes feminist pedagogy, scholars have outlined basic components that are generally thought of as a foundation (Webb et al., 2000). These components typically consist of changing the dynamic between teacher and student from an authority and passive recipient of information to that of collaborators in content (Bowker & Dunkin, 1992). A sense of empowerment is also an essential component for feminist pedagogy.

Empowerment builds from the reduction or removal of power dynamics in the classroom. In the sense of feminist pedagogy, empowerment acknowledges the power dynamic, but works to also give students the opportunity to gain power in the classroom (Shrewsbury, 1987).

Feminist pedagogy is an attempt to build community in the classroom. Building community aligns with a collaborative learning environment, which highlights learning from others in the classroom. Every voice within a class utilizing feminist pedagogy has equal importance and the communal learning can bring students together to tackle a concept or problem (Colwill & Boyd, 2008). The goal of community as a feminist pedagogical component is to highlight the voice of each person within a learning environment is valued and can help to shift the power from instructor to student (Webb et al., 2000). Along with the intention to highlight each voice, the personal experience of each student is of importance in a feminist classroom. This approach aims to increase mutual respect between students, to increase understanding and empathy of students, and to broaden students' exposure to differing views (Vaccaro, 2017).

Leadership is the third component of feminist pedagogy and is meant to operate in tandem with empowerment and community (Shrewsbury, 1987). By creating a safe space through community and empowering students to use their experiences as a base for the classroom content, a sense of leadership among students is the intended result. Students' learning through feminist pedagogy are encouraged to take ownership in their own learning, help to guide classroom discussions, and be an active part in the creation, delivery, and consumption of content (Bondy et al., 2015).

Description of Collected Papers

The fulfillment of this collected papers dissertation will take place across three papers related to feminist pedagogy in academic advising. Figure 1 presents the running title, purpose, research questions, conceptual framework, methodology, and intended publication outlet for each of the studies in these proposed collected papers dissertation. These papers are further described in the sections that follow.

Figure 1.1- Description of Collected Papers

	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3
Title	Feminist Pedagogy of an Exemplary Helping Profession: A Structured Literature Review	The Lived Experiences of Primary-role Advisors Who Identify as Feminists	Feminist Academic Advising: A New Paradigm for Equity and Inclusion
Purpose	To understand how feminist pedagogy has been utilized in nursing, which serves as an exemplary helping profession.	To explore how primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and feminists describe the role feminism plays in their advising practice	To advance a feminist approach to academic advising.
Research Question	How does the literature describe the use of feminist pedagogy in the nursing profession?	How do primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and as feminists describe the role feminism plays in their advising practice?	N/A
Conceptual/Theoretical Framework	Feminist Pedagogy (Shrewsbury, 1987)	Feminist Theory (Petersen et al., 2015; Sharma, 2019)	
Methodology	Structured literature review (Rocco et al., 2023)	Feminist Phenomenology (Oskala, 2004)	Non-empirical
Analysis	Thematic analysis	Thematic analysis	N/A
Publication Outlet	<i>Gender and Education (Chicago 16th)</i>	<i>NACADA Journal (APA 7th)</i>	<i>Discovering Socially Just Academic Advising Empowerment, Advocacy, and Courage in Higher Education (APA 7th)</i>

Paper 1: Feminist Pedagogy of an Exemplary Helping Profession: A Structured Literature Review

Nursing is an exemplary helping profession that incorporates feminist pedagogy (first introduced by Crowley, 1989) in the education and training of nurses, as well as the practice of the profession. Helping professions are “occupations that provide health and education services to individuals and groups” (APA, 2022, para. 1). For the last 30 years, nursing has been ranked as the number one most trusted profession in the nation (Riley et al., 2021). The high level of respect and trust has much to do with the service and care nurses provide the public in vulnerable times. Nurses are held to high ethical standards that “require the openness, sensitivity and knowledge to be able to respond to differences” (Peter & Morgan, 2001, p. 7). The trusting nature of the profession of nursing is what keeps it in a category of respect in the public eye. In addition to trust and care, nurses are expected to be knowledgeable in complicated medical situations (Bono-Neri, 2019). The combination of specialized knowledge and ethical standards makes nursing stand out as an exemplary profession.

Every year in the U.S. since the 1980’s there has been an increase in the number of people enrolling in educational programs for helping professions (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). These professions provide essential care and service to the public. Scholars have discussed how nursing students are educated and the impact they have on society as a profession (Riley et al., 2021; Scheckel, 2009), and have called for reform of nursing education to focus on social justice and inclusivity (Valderama-Wallace & Apesoa-Varano, 2019), but have not discussed the how the use of feminist pedagogy can help to achieve this reform.

The purpose of this structured literature review (Rocco et al., 2023) is to examine how the scholarly literature of feminist pedagogy is used in an exemplary helping profession, nursing. This review was guided by the following research questions: How does the literature describe the use of feminist pedagogy in the nursing profession? As nursing is an exemplary helping profession and one that is respected for the high levels of ethical standards (Riley et al., 2021), exploring the scholarly work available can help to gain an understanding of how it is being employed and can be applied to other caring professions, such as academic advising. This paper is structured by three sections: method, findings, and discussion and implications.

Structured literature reviews intend to explore the available literature concerning a specific research question or questions (Rocco et al., 2023). Once the question(s) is/are identified, parameters are established to guide the continuation of the review. The parameters can include date ranges, specific databases, types of kind of scholarly work, and a variety of others. It is generally up to the reviewer/researcher to create the parameters, but once established, they must strictly adhere to them. Accepted works are organized using analysis (analysis can be completed through several methods depending on the intention of the review) and then organized into a scholarly manuscript.

Data was collected for a one-week period and consisted of five phases:

- Phase 1: Initial Search using Allied Health Nursing
- Phase 2: Initial Search Using Google Scholar
- Phase 3: Secondary Consultation with Librarian
- Phase 4: First Read Through
- Phase 5: Second Read Through

The final sample consisted of 12 publications (conceptual, empirical studies, literature reviews), book chapters, and practitioner pieces.

Records including citation information (article title, author, year, journal); the type of article (e.g., empirical, book chapter); and the way the article became a part of the sample (Phase 1 or Phase 2) were kept both in an Excel file and in Zotero. In Zotero, notes were kept in the notes function attached to each article. Articles were read first via printouts with highlighted sections and then online and were highlighted using Adobe Acrobat tools function and were then copied over to the notes function in Zotero.

Thematic analysis is “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). The intention of thematic analysis is to find “repeated meaning across a data set” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 86). For this study, thematic analysis was used to identify similarities in the articles selected for review. Reading through each article and using basic descriptive questions such as “what is happening in this article?” “What were the author or authors aiming to explore in this article?” “What key points are being made in this article?” as starting points, I pulled important or interesting portions (Lochmiller, 2021, p. 2035). These items were copied over into a notes section in Zotero with the intention of sorting them into similar groupings. From this point, I began coding the data.

Data was categorized using the 6-step analysis protocol (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Articles were first read to familiarize myself with the information within (step 1). After articles were thoroughly reviewed for content, I pulled out sections or ideas that were interesting and begin to group them by relevancy (step 2). Next, using coding software, I pulled together interesting ideas and placed them in larger coding groups and with the help of the software, themes began to emerge (step 3). As the themes emerged, I explored them further to determine if there was

enough significance to continue with them (step 4). Significance was determined through saturation or through connection to feminist pedagogical guidelines. If there was enough significance, the themes that remained were explained so that others can understand both where they emerged, and how they are significant (step 5). Lastly, these finalized themes were wrapped up into a findings section (step 6).

Themes that emerged from the literature were classroom climate, curriculum design, and care versus cure. There were three implications for this study: the focus on the experience of the academic advisor themselves, the impact personal identity has on advising practice, and how feminism can impact academic advising as a field.

Paper 2: The Lived Experiences of Primary-role Advisors Who Identify as Feminists

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore how primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and feminists describe the role feminism plays in their advising practice. This study was guided by the following research question: How do primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and as feminists describe the role feminism plays in their advising practice?

Phenomenological studies explore a homogeneous group of participants that experience a similar phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994, Peoples, 2021). In this case, the phenomenon is being a womxn and self-identifying as a feminist and being employed as a primary-role academic advisor. While traditional phenomenology aims to explore the lived experiences of the participants, a feminist phenomenology “must seek to understand how sexual difference as an intersubjective structure is constituted and how it is further interlocked with embodiment and singular experiences” (Oksala, 2004, p. 21). A feminist phenomenology highlights womxn voices as a unique and equally relevant and important perspective (Hand, 2013) and provides a

logical approach to both protecting and celebrating the female participants and their unique views as womxn. This study provides a space to explore how the participants navigate their personal and professional spaces.

In a phenomenology, a primary method of collecting data is semi-structured interviews (Bevan, 2014). Interviews were the primary source of data for this study. The participants for the interviews needed to be homogeneous in nature to allow for more rich analysis of the nuances experienced within the phenomenon of interest.

The interviews were focused around the three categories of the interview that Seidman (2006) introduced: contextualization (the world in which the participant lives and experiences/the institution), apprehending the phenomenon (identifying how feminism plays into both work life and personal life for the participants/the womxn), and clarifying the phenomenon (description of the phenomenon according to the participant/the practice). Accordingly, my three interviews revolved around the womxn (first interview), their practice (second interview), and their institution (third interview). Interviews were conducted beginning in August 2023 and concluded in December 2023. The location of the interviews was an important aspect to consider because participants were from varying locations across the country. Zoom allowed for convenience for participants as well as allowing for accessibility. Participants were asked to sign a release form that outlined the intent of the study, the permission to use the data collected in the study, and outlined the process of collection.

As a secondary data source, participants were asked to submit a reflection with a prompt related to their own perception of their feminist identity development. The reflection prompt was sent using Qualtrics. The selected prompt was specifically related to feminist identity development and how participants viewed their own perspective of their feminist identity

development. The feminist identity development phases (Downing & Roush, 1987) were provided to the participants as part of the journaling process. Upon conclusion of each interview, participants were given a transcript within 48 hours and asked to clarify, add, or correct anything they wish.

A transcription of each interview was completed using Otter.ai and read within 48 hours of each interview. This was to ensure that a timely review was completed and to maintain an effort to stay within the moment of each interview. Additionally, when reviewing each transcript, “unnecessary or irrelevant” (Peoples, 2021, p. 59) information was removed and archived. This included information that was not relevant to the intention of the study, such as their future travel plans or the hobby they’d picked up recently.

Data was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify and categorize themes within a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In feminist phenomenology, the researcher is enveloped in the research, including their own perspective alongside their participants. Feminist phenomenology differs from other forms of qualitative research because the questions related to data collection are aimed at exploring gender differences and to “allow for a clearing where women’s voices can be heard” (Simms & Starwaska, 2013, p. 11). Ultimately, the goal of a feminist phenomenology is to empower the participants and to give them a place for their voice to be heard (Simms & Starwaska, 2013).

To analyze the data, I started by reading through the transcripts of each interview. Because the three interviews have different foci, I read through the transcripts of each of the three interviews as a participant set, rather than all at once. My initial set of analysis occurred through asking basic descriptive questions to understand what participants were conveying (Lochmiller, 2021). As I asked these questions to myself, I created reflections of each interview

and participant to assist in a deeper understanding and connection with the data. Once I had a better understanding of the participants responses, I moved onto first cycle coding (Saldaña, 2015) by “identifying meaningful and potentially relevant passages that will be analyzed further” (Lochmiller, 2021, p. 2035). These significant passages were noted in the reflection pieces for each interview. Next, I looked for frequency of patterns within the first cycle coding. As frequencies were identified, these patterns were labeled as potential themes and grouped together based on similarity. The identified potential themes were analyzed to “identify disconnections” (Lochmiller, 2021, p. 2036) among patterns. These disconnections were coded as potential themes, then reviewed and further defined.

The themes that emerged from the findings were mindfulness of physical space as a cornerstone for comfort, power of communication in forging meaningful connection and relationships, and empowering students to make their own decisions. There were three implications for this research: the focus on the experience of the academic advisor themselves, the impact personal identity has on advising practice, and how feminism can impact academic advising as a field.

Paper #3: Feminist Academic Advising: A New Paradigm for Equity and Inclusion

The purpose of this conceptual paper is to advance a feminist approach to academic advising. Building from the analysis of the helping professions literature review of use of feminist pedagogy in nursing, this paper will suggest a framework of feminist pedagogy that could be utilized in academic advising.

Womxn who identify as feminists and are also primary-role academic advisors follow a set of individual expectations of relationships between themselves as the advisor and the students they advise. In practice, this begins with how the relationship is established. The three major

components of a feminist academic advisor are building strong and meaningful relationships with students through strategic interactions, paying close attention to the power dynamic between advisor and advisee in both the physical space and the academic realm that is inherent in higher education, and employing a lens of social justice and advocacy to the interactions and conversations with advisees. Feminist academic advising is a relationship-centered approach necessitating being mindful of power dynamics, intentional about physical space, a social justice advocate, a holistic understanding of students, and working towards resilience and community building.

Significance of the Collected Papers Dissertation

The profession of academic advising has many theoretical approaches to how advising should be administered to students. However, even with a growing body of literature, there is very little, if any at all, that specifically addresses feminism and academic advising. Completing both a structured literature review that aims to understand the existing literature on feminist pedagogies in helping professions and an empirical study to better understand the lived experiences of primary role academic advisors who are also feminists will provide much needed research for the advancement of a feminist approach to academic advising. In addition, providing a conceptual look at how existing feminist pedagogies can be applied to advising could give other feminist advisors a basis with which to model their own advising practices.

Feminist pedagogy as an approach to learning intends to reduce the power dynamic in the classroom (Shrewsbury. 1987). In reducing the power dynamic and implementing the three tenets of empowerment, community, and leadership, feminist pedagogy has the potential to advance advocacy in academic advising, increase the equity in how students are supported, and shift the relationship between advisors and students to one that empowers the student.

Structure of Collected Papers

This doctoral dissertation will follow the Kansas State University guidelines for dissertation format. It will consist of an introductory chapter and a closing chapter written solely for the dissertation, as well as the three related studies outlined above to be submitted to peer-reviewed journals. Dissertation chapters will be as follows:

Chapter I: Introduction, related literature review, research rationale

Chapter II: Paper I: Feminist Pedagogy of an Exemplary Helping Profession: A Structured Literature Review of Nursing

Chapter III: Paper II: The Experiences of Primary-Role Advisors Who Identify as Feminists

Chapter IV: Paper III: A Model of Feminist Academic Advising

Chapter V: Conclusions, directions for future research

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Chapter 2 - Feminist Pedagogy of an Exemplary Helping Profession: A Structured Literature Review of Nursing

How education or training is delivered and the theory behind it is formally known as pedagogy, which “engages questions of teaching and learning with questions of culture and power” (Galarte, 2014, p. 145). Pedagogy is used in education from many perspectives, each of which provides new approaches for delivering information to students and conducting a classroom (Murphy, 2003). As U.S. higher education evolved from prescribed curriculum to a system of class selection and broad curriculum across numerous programs, so did the approaches to delivering content to students and the theory behind how course content was created (Alters & Nelson, 2002). While content creation was important to ensuring courses that delivered information to students were accurate, the *way* content is delivered was not necessarily considered as explicitly (Jamison et al., 2005). As new populations became learners within higher education institutions, the ways in which content was delivered to students changed in response to the needs of those populations as well as the courses and the content being delivered (Cohen & Kisker, 2009).

In response to the evolution of education, new perspectives of how higher education was oppressive to those with less privilege began to emerge. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Friere (1970) argued that education is a privilege and the delivery of content is oppressive to many. Additionally, Friere pointed out that education excluded a wide variety of voices and influenced how pedagogy was implemented into education. Scholars used Friere’s (1970) concept and expanded on it by applying it to several oppressed populations such as womxn (Shrewsbury, 1987), persons of color (hooks, 1994), and queer folx (Kamushiro, 2003). These scholars recognized the oppression that the population they belonged to were experiencing and adopted

pedagogical approaches that best recognized the needs of those populations as learners.

Recognizing and adapting educational approaches to the specific needs of these populations helped to reduce the oppression they experience within an educational system.

One of these approaches was feminist pedagogy, which emerged during the second wave of feminism (1963-1980's). Feminist pedagogy sought to equalize the experiences of students in a classroom learning environment (Crowley, 1989; Shrewsbury, 1987). The basis of a feminist pedagogy is to reduce the power dynamic between helper (e.g., nurse, teacher, advisor) and helped (e.g., patient, student, advisee) (Shrewsbury, 1987). Additionally, feminist pedagogy aims to shift the way students are taught from a patriarchal or male-centered viewpoint to that of one that is inclusive of and highlights women (Hughes, 1995). Feminist pedagogy is used in teaching practices in higher education to “pay attention to women’s experiences as a cornerstone” (Manicom, 1992, p. 370). A feminist pedagogical approach is important in the education and growth of students of helping professions: “the potential power of feminist ideology in preparing new graduates to become critically awakened to injustices in health care delivery, envision multiple possibilities, and strive to make a difference” (Giarratano, 2003, p. 27). In short, feminist pedagogy appreciates the unique strengths that learners bring to the classroom and intends to empower them to gain ownership over their knowledge.

Feminist pedagogy has been used in helping professions, which are “occupations that provide health and education services to individuals and groups” (APA, 2022, para. 1). One helping profession, nursing, is considered to be exemplary, “extremely good and deserving to be admired and copied” (The Britannica Dictionary Online, 2024). Feminist pedagogy was first introduced into nursing literature by Crowley (1989), who recognized the ethic of care (introduced by Noddings, 1994) needed a different approach to understand *how* nursing students

were taught to be skilled professionals. This new feminist pedagogical approach suggested that faculty and students had a more caring and mutually influential relationship. Ultimately, the goal of the feminist approach to nursing education was meant to bolster the caring nature of nursing through classroom instruction and relationships.

Nurses are taught to care about their patients and embody the concept of care in their everyday interactions on their jobs. For the last 30 years, nursing has been ranked as the number one most trusted profession in the U.S. (Riley et al., 2021). The high level of respect and trust has much to do with the service and care nurses provide the public in vulnerable times. Nurses are held to high ethical standards that “require the openness, sensitivity and knowledge to be able to respond to differences” (Peter & Morgan, 2001, p. 7). In addition to trust and care, nurses are expected to be knowledgeable in complicated medical situations (Bono-Neri, 2019). The combination of specialized knowledge and ethical standards makes nursing stand out as an exemplary profession.

Despite the recognition of nursing as a profession with high ethical standards and the increasing interest in feminist pedagogy within educational frameworks, there remains a gap in understanding how feminist pedagogical approaches are integrated into nursing education and practice. Existing literature predominantly examines feminist pedagogy in the context of general higher education or specific to disciplines outside of the healthcare sector. Consequently, there is a lack of synthesized knowledge regarding the extent, variety, and outcomes of feminist pedagogy applications in nursing, which is critical for understanding its potential transformative impact on both the profession and patient care.

Furthermore, while feminist pedagogy has the potential to address issues of power, identity, and social justice within healthcare education, its specific contributions to creating

ethical and equitable nursing practices have not been sufficiently explored. This gap hinders the development of educational strategies that could prepare nurses to engage more effectively with the diverse and complex social issues encountered in healthcare settings.

Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this structured literature review (Rocco et al., 2023) is to examine the scholarly literature of feminist pedagogy used in an exemplary helping profession: nursing. This review will be guided by the following research question: How does the literature describe the use of feminist pedagogy in the nursing profession? As nursing is an exemplary helping profession and one that is respected for the high levels of ethical standards (Riley et al., 2021), exploring the scholarly work available can help to gain an understanding of how it is being employed and can be applied to other caring professions. This paper proceeds in four sections: literature review, methods, findings, and discussion and implications.

Conceptual Framework

The use of a feminist pedagogy in the education of nursing professionals aligns with the overall goal of nursing, which is to provide care for patients. The high level of ethical integrity the public perceives from nurses is in part due to the person-centered care that nurses uphold as part of their standards (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2021). Nurses endure rigorous schooling to learn the technical aspects of their jobs, but another equally important aspect of nursing is the care they provide and the empathy they exude. Nurses are seen as kind, caring, understanding, and smart and this is all due to the education they receive and then apply to their jobs (Reinhart et al., 2020). Care is a pillar of the nursing profession (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2021) and has been incorporated into the education of nurses for several decades.

Much of the scholarly evidence of use of feminist pedagogies in the classroom has been seen in women's studies courses (Bargad & Hyde, 1991). Feminist pedagogy aligns with the focus of womxn's studies courses in highlighting the experiences and successes of women and calling out the oppression women have historically faced (Manicom, 1992). Practitioners of feminist pedagogy shift the focus from talking *at* students to talking *with* students. Such teaching methods treat students as active participants in their learning changes the way information is delivered and disseminated to students (Ironside, 2001).

Shrewsbury (1987) first coined the term feminist pedagogy and outlined the basic concepts of a feminist approach to teaching and gave other practitioners a set of guidelines to follow in their bid to create a feminist classroom. Inspired by Friere (1970), Shrewsbury (1987) outlined a feminist approach to pedagogy. Feminist pedagogy focuses on the approach to teaching and classroom experience for students. Shrewsbury (1987) outlined three tenets that create a feminist pedagogy: empowerment, community, and leadership.

First, through empowerment, students are given autonomy to learn and engage with the materials in ways allowing them to have ownership over it. An empowered student can spend time with the course content and use their own experiences to relate to it. This also means sharing their experiences in the classroom to help others to engage with the material. Typically, students who experience empowerment in the classroom utilize this through speaking up in class, knowing their voice will be heard and accepted without judgement, and they will be challenged in the classroom as a way to continue to build their self-confidence and efficacy.

Second, classroom participation and sharing experiences also leads to the second tenet, community. Students in feminist classrooms are encouraged to work as a cohesive group, or at least to have an open discourse to comfortably discuss differences in the classroom. The main

component of community in a feminist classroom is connection, both between student to student and student to teacher. There are a set of rules within the community that allow each student to be equally important in their learning and experiences. Dialectic conversation and conversation to explore content are essential to help to create a sense of community for learners.

The third tenet, leadership, is closely tied with empowerment and community, as students who are given the space to feel empowered and safe can turn that into leadership within the classroom. Students are able to build leadership skills and practice them in the feminist classroom. Leadership can be achieved through allowing students to lead discussions, participate as instructors within the classroom, and introduce new content or delivery methods to understand content. Students who are engaged with and feel as though they have ownership of the content can step into leadership roles within the classroom.

Shrewsbury (1987) inspired other scholars (Briskin, 1990; Hezekiah, 1993; Welsh, 2011) to delve deeper into feminist pedagogy and expand on the basic concepts she outlined. Briskin (1990) used a feminist pedagogical approach to detail the use in the classroom as a benefit to students. Digging in deeper, Briskin (1990) suggested that feminism points out the discrepancies in how women are highlighted in education and that anger can be used as a tool in the classroom to build understanding of concepts. Ironside (2001) recognized that feminist pedagogy opened up new avenues for additional pedagogical approaches and influenced the evolution of critical pedagogies.

A feminist pedagogical approach specific to nursing was eventually explored by Hezekiah (1993). With an emphasis on care and ethical approaches to situations in nursing, implementing a feminist approach in the classroom made sense. Following other nursing scholars, Hezekiah (1993) explored how feminist pedagogy could be beneficial to nursing

education led by five “basic process goals – mutual respect, trust, and community, shared leadership, cooperative structures, integration of cognitive and affective learning, and action” (p. 55). Collectively, these goals aim to expose nursing students to the oppression they may experience and give them skills to be able to combat it in a professional setting. Using evidence that feminist pedagogy in nursing classrooms helps nursing students to gain empowerment, Welsh (2011) more recently expanded on how feminist pedagogy could be reutilized and incorporated into progressive nursing education. In particular, Welsh (2011) highlighted the connection between the oppression that some populations experience with their healthcare, and the importance related to nurses entering into the field.

Finally, there has been a shift in nursing education in recent years to include a focus on social justice and the impact nurses can have on society to advocate for underserved populations (Lingel et al., 2022). The shift to social justice and equity has enveloped feminist pedagogy as part of the framework of nursing education, but has removed the formalized reference to feminist pedagogy as an educational approach. Despite this shift, feminist pedagogy—with the tenets of empowerment, community, and leadership—remains a logical approach to inclusion of social justice initiatives in nursing education.

Methods

Using structured literature review (Rocco et al., 2023), I examined the extant nursing literature on feminist pedagogy. Structured literature reviews explore the available literature concerning a specific research question or questions within a specified set of parameters. Once the question(s) is/are identified, parameters are established to guide the continuation of the review. The parameters can include date ranges, specific databases, types of kind of scholarly work, and a variety of others. It is generally up to the reviewer/researcher to create the

parameters, but once established, they must strictly adhere to them. Accepted works are organized using analysis (analysis can be completed through several methods depending on the intention of the review) and then organized into a scholarly manuscript. For this review, criteria for inclusion were scholarly articles (removing dissertations or theses) written in English.

Data Collection

Data was collected for a one-week period in October of 2022. Data collection consisted of five phases.

Phase 1: Initial Search using Allied Health Nursing

In October of 2022, I consulted with a university librarian for assistance in locating which databases should be used for the initial search. Based on the purpose and research question, the librarian recommended using Allied Health Nursing database. The database was accessed using a university library search function. To gather both “pedagogy” and “pedagogies” in the result, I searched using the term “feminist pedagog*,” which allowed for inclusion of the term feminist pedagogy and pedagogies, not in full text (NOFT), which is meant to reduce the number of articles that do not focus on feminist pedagogy, AND “nursing” to narrow to articles that included nursing. This resulted in 33 articles. Inclusion criteria further reduced the articles to 24. Three duplicates were identified and removed, which reduced the articles to 21. Once the initial list of articles was compiled, a pdf of each article was downloaded and placed into Zotero under a folder titled SLR- Nursing. Specific information for each item (title, author, date, journal) was pulled into a Google Sheet for later use. Phase one initially produced 21 articles.

Phase 2: Initial Search Using Google Scholar

The second phase was to use the search term “feminist pedagogy in nursing” on Google Scholar. This produced 5,140 articles. The initial results were further narrowed by selecting “sort

by relevance,” then by selecting “review articles,” to search through all articles for the term “feminist pedagogy & nursing education, which resulted in 174 articles. Using relevance as a parameter removed articles that had the terms “feminist,” “pedagogy,” or “nursing” in the article but was not the focus of the article. Review articles further sorted the articles to ensure that all three terms—feminist, pedagogy, and nursing—were all included in the search. Articles not written in English were removed, resulting in 151 articles. Each article was selected (using star save function in Google Scholar) and using the “find” function the term feminist pedagogy was searched.

Despite using the term “feminist pedagogy,” there were several additional articles that did not contain the search term as the focus of the article and were removed from the collection. From this reduction, 11 articles remained that included content about feminist pedagogy in nursing. When compared to the Allied Health Nursing list, two duplicates were removed, leaving nine articles. For articles that adhered to the previously listed parameters, a pdf was downloaded and moved into Zotero under a separate folder titled “SLR- Nursing- Google Scholar.” Nine articles were accepted from this phase.

Phase 3: Secondary Librarian Consult and Search

After a Google Scholar search was conducted, the concept of feminist pedagogy only related to the training of nurses and not in the practice of nurses was unearthed as a concern in the breadth of the literature review. With this concern in mind, a second consult was conducted with another university librarian, who consulted with a colleague and together they tackled the concept of feminist pedagogy in nursing practice through a targeted search. After a full search using several different databases, three articles were found that were related to feminist pedagogy in nursing practice. These articles were included in the initial read through to

determine if the content is relevant to this literature review and contain enough content of feminist pedagogy to remain in the review. This phase produced three articles.

Phase 4: First Read Through

Once initial resulting articles were pulled into Zotero, a first read through was conducted on all articles. At this point, the parameter of at least three sentences regarding the use of feminist pedagogy in nursing was employed. For example, articles that mentioned feminist pedagogy as an instructional method but did not expand any further were removed. An example of a removed item was “Family and Educational Policy: Recent Research Developments” (David, 1995), which only mentioned feminist pedagogy as an instructional method in relation to feminist research. Any articles that did not contain this amount of reference to feminist pedagogy were removed under a “not enough feminist pedagogy content” designator. These 20 articles were moved to a “discarded articles” folder in Zotero for storage. The subtotal after this phase was 12.

Phase 5: Second Read Through and Final Sample

Once all articles were initially combed through for feminist pedagogy content, I completed a secondary and more thorough read through. All articles were read and using the “notes” section in Zotero; important citations or notations were pulled out and placed into notes. Each note included a location (e.g., page or paragraph number) and if relevant, references to similarities with other articles. The final sample consisted of 12 publications (seven conceptual papers, four empirical studies, and one book chapter). Table X displays the title, author, date, how it was found (i.e., Allied Health or Google Scholar) and type of publication.

Table 2.1- Final Sample List of Accepted Articles

Title	Author	Date	Allied Health or Google Scholar	Type of Publication
Cooperative learning and feminist pedagogy: A model for classroom instruction in nursing education	Beck, S.E.	1995	Nursing Allied Health	Empirical Study
Nurse education: A feminist approach	Chapman, E.	1997	Google Scholar	Conceptual
The effectiveness of feminist pedagogy in empowering a community of leaders	Falk-Rafael, A. R., et al.	2004	Nursing Allied Health	Empirical Study
Linking nursing theory and practice: A critical feminist approach	Georges, J. M.	2005	Nursing Allied Health	Conceptual
A journey into feminist pedagogy	Gray, P.	1995	Nursing Allied Health	Conceptual
Feminist pedagogy: A framework for nursing education?	Hezekiah, J.	1993	Nursing Allied Health	Conceptual
Creating a research base for nursing education: An interpretive review of conventional, critical, feminist, postmodern, and phenomenologic pedagogies	Ironside, P. M.	2001	Nursing Allied Health	Conceptual
Understanding the art of feminist pedagogy: Facilitating interpersonal skills learning for nurses	Lamont, E.	2013	Nursing Allied Health	Empirical Study
Feminist pedagogy: Developing creative approaches for teaching students of nursing	McAllister, M. & Ryan, M.	1995	Nursing Allied Health	Conceptual
Feminist critiques in the professions	Noddings, N.	1990	Google Scholar	Book Chapter
Classroom participation: A model of feminist pedagogy	Tedesco-Schneck, M.	2018	Nursing Allied Health	Empirical Study
The construction of feminist pedagogy in nursing education: A preliminary critique	Weyenberg, D.	1998	Nursing Allied Health	Conceptual

Data Organization

Records including citation information (e.g., article title, author, year, journal); the type of article (e.g., empirical, book chapter); and the way the article became a part of the sample (Phase 1 or Phase 2) were kept both in an Excel file and in Zotero. In Zotero, notes were kept in the notes function attached to each article. Articles were read online and were highlighted using Adobe Acrobat tools function and were then copied over to the notes function in Zotero.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). The intention of thematic analysis is to find “repeated meaning across a data set” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 86). For this study, thematic analysis was used to identify similarities in the articles selected for review. Reading through each article and using basic descriptive questions such as “what is happening in this article?” “What were the author or authors aiming to explore in this article?” “What key points are being made in this article?” (Lochmiller, 2021, p. 2035) as starting points, I pulled important or interesting portions. These items were copied over into a notes section in Zotero with the intention of sorting them into similar groupings. From this point, I coded the data.

Data was categorized using the six-step analysis protocol (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Articles were first read to familiarize myself with the information within (step 1). After articles were dissected for content, I identified sections or ideas that were interesting and began to group them if relevant (step 2). Next, using coding software, I brought together the interesting ideas and placed them into larger coding groups and with the help of the software, themes began to emerge (step 3). As the themes emerged, I explored them further to determine if there was enough significance to continue with (step 4). If there was enough significance, the themes that remained were explained so that others can understand both where they emerged, and why they are significant (step 6). Lastly, these finalized themes were wrapped up into a findings section (step 6).

Findings

This review unearthed three predominant themes the creation and maintenance of an inclusive classroom climate, the design of a curriculum that challenges traditional power

dynamics and fosters a woman-centered perspective, and the ongoing tension between care and cure in nursing practice. Each theme underscores a different facet of how feminist pedagogy integrates into nursing, highlighting the transformation of teaching methods, learning environments, and curricular content.

Classroom Climate

One aim of a feminist pedagogical approach in nursing is to create a welcoming and safe classroom environment (Georges, 2005). This begins with how the physical structure and setting of the classroom is considered (Georges, 2005). In a feminist pedagogical classroom, there is an awareness of how a physical arrangement can dissuade participation among students (Tedesco-Schneck, 2018). This can be as simple as the instructor standing or sitting in front of the class rather than being behind a lectern (Tedesco-Schneck, 2018). In addition to the physical nature of the classroom, in nursing courses making connections with students through showing interest and care (Lamont, 2013) can change how the dynamic between student and instructor exists. Remembering students' names and actively using them in interactions with students changes the relationship between instructor and student and makes the classroom environment more engaging (McAllister & Ryan, 1995; Tedesco-Schneck, 2018). Additionally, focusing on content through discussion instead of lecture reduces some of the passive learning and allows for students to actively engage with the course content and the rest of the class (Weyenberg, 1998).

The goal of a feminist classroom climate in nursing is one of cooperation, mutual respect, and trust (Ironside, 2001). The focus should be on fostering exploration of beliefs and values (Beck, 1995) and creating a cooperative learning environment that is safe for students to engage within (McAllister & Ryan, 1995). A misunderstanding of feminist pedagogy, especially during the time period in which it was incorporated most predominantly into nursing education (the late

1980's through the early 2000's), is the notion that it is only for female students. However, the belief of feminism being only for womxn is incorrect, as the feminist classroom is intended for all learners to excel and connect with the content on a deeper and more personal level (Hezekiah, 1993). This is especially important when considering that the population of male nurses has experienced an upward trend for the last 20 years (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2023). In order to engage all students and embrace a feminist approach to teaching, nursing instructors must reject passive teaching and instead partake in active teaching with efforts to engage students with the content through participation (Lamont, 2013). The environment in a feminist classroom itself must feel supportive and safe in order for students to be willing to contribute (McAllister & Ryan, 1995). Additionally, all students must participate in process skills and tasks related to learning and instructors must ensure that such tasks are evenly distributed regardless of gender (Hezekiah, 1993). Hezekiah (1993) further indicated that female students should not always be tasked as notetakers or with administrative duties but rather, these duties should be assigned regardless of gender.

While building a supportive and safe environment is key to a feminist approach to nursing education, there must also be space for creating disruption as well (Gray, 1995). This can come in many forms, but the most basic is to challenge long-held beliefs of nursing and the medical fields and to encourage students to feel the discomfort of existing in a space in which the norm is not always correct (Gray, 1995). Additionally, the feminist nursing classroom must be prepared to support conflict both between students as well as between students and instructor (Beck, 1995). Conflict should be productive and safe, and should also highlight the skills needed to navigate and accept conflict as a necessary part of the nursing profession (Weyenberg, 1998).

The scholarly work of feminist pedagogy in nursing emphasizes empowerment being based on how womxn can be empowered and how instructors can mitigate the imbalance of power within a classroom (Tedesco-Schneck, 2018). However, this notion assumes that power is to be given or taken, and instead of this being the standard, a feminist classroom should assume that power belongs to all within that community and should be shared and distributed as a flowing energy (Beck, 1995; Weyenberg, 1998). Rather than a personal transaction between student and instructor (Ironsides, 2001), the feminist classroom should assert that the “responsibility of learning is shared between students and instructors” (Tedesco-Schneck, 2018, p. 267), which further decreases the power within the classroom (Gray, 1995) and increases the leadership among the students (Beck, 1995). This requires active participation (Tedesco-Schneck, 2018) from students and assumes that students can and will challenge everything within the classroom (Beck, 1995).

From the perspective of the instructor, there is a responsibility to raise consciousness of the students (Hezekiah, 1993) through open conversation that highlights and allows students to “give birth to their own ideas” (Beck, 1995, p. 223). Additionally, there should be a focus on social justice and an intention to increase awareness of political issues that will affect their eventual professional roles as nurses (Falk-Rafael et al., 2004). An overall goal would be to see intellectual growth among students (Falk-Rafael et al., 2004; Georges, 2005) but to also cultivate a progression of leadership and confidence (Beck, 1995) and personalizing what is being learned (Tedesco-Schneck, 2018). Instructors can use practicing nurses as nursing scholars as a supplemental learning experience for students to further reduce a power dynamic and increase classroom engagement (Georges, 2005). Intentionality of including womxn’s stories within the

classroom increases the validity of the lived experiences and institutional knowledge that nursing professionals hold (Chapman, 1997).

Specific to the profession of nursing, the power dynamic that exists in the complex hierarchy within the medical fields needs to be addressed in the classroom (Chapman, 1997). This power dynamic exists both between doctors and nurses as well as nurses and other nurses (Hezekiah, 1993). Nursing students must be prepared to address the dynamic of this power system and that they exist within it and even use some of this power in relation in how they interact with patients (Gray, 1995). Patient advocacy and confidence in their own abilities as professionals must be included in nursing curriculum (Falk-Rafael et al., 2004) and should not be limited to non-technical courses (Noddings, 1990).

Curriculum Design

From a curricular standpoint, much of the existing nursing education comes from a masculine and Eurocentric viewpoint (Georges, 2005). Despite more womxn than men being employed as nurses, the educational content in nursing classrooms continues to focus on a male viewpoint (Weyenberg, 1998). The educational standard is one of the patriarchies, which inherently oppresses womxn and denies them the uniqueness of a womxn's viewpoint (Gray, 1995). Much of the previously used content in nursing education assumed that both the practitioner and the patient were male, which denies the unique experiences of womxn as professionals within medical fields and womxn as patients (Chapman, 1997). Shifting the curriculum to that of a more equally balanced viewpoint, and possibly a more womxn centered viewpoint legitimizes the womxn in a nursing classroom and aims to dismantle the covert and overt patriarchy that exists (Weyenberg, 1998).

As the nursing profession is largely dominated by womxn, the need for a feminist approach becomes more vital (Noddings, 1990). Specifically, focusing on the way womxn learn and think must be a consideration when creating content for nursing courses (Chapman, 1997). Intentional focus on personal experiences of validation of students is essential to the feminist nursing curriculum (Georges, 2005). In addition to the concept of focusing on a more womxn centered approach, a secondary goal of highlighting the importance of womxn in higher education should also be included (Georges, 2005). All of these goals can be achieved through the integration of feminist scholarship into nursing curriculum (Gray, 1995; Noddings, 1990).

While the concept of a feminist pedagogical curriculum being implemented into nursing could be a standard practice, some concerns of how it can be integrated into technical courses has been posed (Chapman, 1997). If feminist pedagogy is to be used in a nursing curriculum, the method of evaluating said courses must also be examined (Weyenberg, 1998). The focus in technical classes must consider the need for nursing students to learn complicated and practical skill sets, while also considering the need for a feminist approach and what influence it can have on the content and the student (Noddings, 1990). Additionally, a feminist approach to all courses would require a closer look at the dichotomy of the interest of womxn as students and the interest of their eventual male patients and their needs (Chapman, 1997). These concerns could provide an outlet for creativity for the instructors of technical courses to both highlight the practical skills and the caring skills that would make nursing students more well-rounded professionals upon completion (McAllister & Ryan, 1995).

Care Versus Cure

At the time of the publication of these sources, nursing had long been considered as a “womxn’s true profession” (Hezekiah, 1993, p. 54) and linked as womxn’s work (Chapman,

1997; Hezekiah, 1993; Noddings, 1990). This designation lessens the importance and the impact of nursing as a profession and as a valid occupation. In a feminist nursing classroom there is a specific focus on how womxn are or are not highlighted in the content and in how caring, an integral element of being a nurse, is often thought of as a feminine trait (Noddings, 1990). This is particularly concerning from an educational lens because the nursing profession has a commitment to providing excellent care. Some feminists and feminist nursing scholars even consider caring as an oppression of womxn (Noddings, 1990). A nursing classroom must properly address both the need for care and elevate it as skill that should be valued. In the medical fields there are institutionalized power relationships and a structure of hierarchy between doctors and nurses (Falk-Rafael et al., 2004). The structure adds to the powerlessness that womxn feel as people *and* nurses and becomes significantly more important to address in a nursing classroom (Chapman, 1997).

At the most basic level educational requirements of a nursing program expect that students emerge as professionals that are capable of providing the level and capacity of technical care that can keep patients alive (Chapman, 1997). However, this produces a conflict between care and cure in nursing education (Chapman, 1997). Much of nursing education sees human caring as a central mission and as the pinnacle of nursing (Noddings, 1990). The courses within nursing curriculum vary from technical to theoretical and debate exists in which courses feminist pedagogy can successfully be implemented. Many nursing educators argued that feminist pedagogy cannot be included in technical courses, while others posited that the technical courses are the exact ones that need a feminist lens (Weyenberg, 1998). Shifting the emphasis on disease to one of caring increases the patient focus, and reminds nursing students that patients are persons (Chapman, 1997).

Historically there has been an emphasis on the “handmaiden and bureaucratic tasks of nursing” (Lamont, 2014, p. 679) and the implementation of feminist approaches to nursing education sought to remove this focus. A shift through the use of feminist pedagogy can allow a “redesign of both content and teaching methods to be more congruent with the nursing profession’s historic commitment to social activism as an expression of caring” (Falk-Rafael et al., 2004, p. 108). The inclusion of feminist pedagogy in nursing curriculum can make the students emerging from the programs implementing this kind of focus “active agents of transformation of health care” (Weyenberg, 1998, p. 351). This would provide a reaffirmation of caring as an acceptable approach to nursing (Noddings, 1990) and remove or reduce the conflict of care versus time that is often at play within medical facilities (Chapman, 1997). Nursing students who are learning through a feminist lens are able to mesh interpersonal and technical skills, making them more well-rounded nursing professionals and helping to change the focus of health care (Falk-Rafael et al., 2004). Eventually, the refocused efforts of care could remove the hierarchical conflict between RNs and other skilled nursing professionals, creating a better medical experience for patients (Chapman, 1997).

The continued oppression of womxn in the professional world adds to the struggle nurses experience once they have entered into their careers. This struggle must be addressed in the classroom with the intention of providing nursing students strategies to recognize and dismantle the oppression in the workforce (Hezekiah, 1993). Womxn are socialized to mistrust their own value in society (Georges, 2005) and are taught that a sense of suffering is normal (Weyenberg, 1998). However, nursing educators can work to empower students in the classroom through continued focus of the importance of their own value both as professionals and as womxn (Chapman, 1997). An element of the value of womxn extends beyond the nursing classroom and

the medical facility and into the home when patients are sent home and the expectation of care transfers from a nurse to a womxn at home (Noddings, 1990). Nurses are often caught knowing that the responsibility for care will be a burden for a womxn at home, adding to the undervalued feeling and overall oppression of womxn. The dichotomy and the impact of being both professionals and caretakers is typically not addressed in a traditional classroom, but should highlighted in a feminist classroom (Chapman, 1997; Noddings, 1990).

Discussion

Before presenting the findings of the sample, it is important to look at the trends of the data and what this suggests of the use of feminist pedagogy in the field of nursing. Date ranges of the articles used are outlined in Table 2.2 below, showing that nearly all the accepted work was from a small date range. This table indicates that while the accepted works are relevant for the parameters of this study, the dates show that the use of feminist pedagogy within nursing education was primarily used between 1990 and 2005. The use of feminist pedagogy in nursing was most popular shortly after it was introduced by Crowley (1989) and continued to influence the field for the next 20 years, but has since been enveloped by other pedagogical approaches.

Table 2.2 Date Range of Articles

Title	Date
Feminist critiques in the professions	1990
Feminist pedagogy: A framework for nursing education?	1993
Cooperative learning and feminist pedagogy: A model for classroom instruction in nursing education	1995
A journey into feminist pedagogy	1995
Feminist pedagogy: Developing creative approaches for teaching students of nursing	1995
Nurse education: A feminist approach	1997
The construction of feminist pedagogy in nursing education: A preliminary critique	1998
The construction of feminist pedagogy in nursing education: A preliminary critique	1998
Creating a research base for nursing education: An interpretive review of conventional, critical, feminist, postmodern, and phenomenologic pedagogies	2001
The effectiveness of feminist pedagogy in empowering a community of leaders	2004
Linking nursing theory and practice: A critical feminist approach	2005
Understanding the art of feminist pedagogy: Facilitating interpersonal skills learning for nurses	2013
Classroom participation: A model of feminist pedagogy	2018

The available literature related to use of feminist pedagogy in nursing education outlines the benefits of using this approach to prepare nursing students for their eventual careers in the medical fields. Though nursing students have long been taught the technical and skilled protocols of the occupation, the inherent component of care was rarely highlighted as an asset to the profession. Rather, care has always been a secondary element in the education of nursing, one that trailed behind the medical aspect of the job (Chapman, 1997). However, when using a feminist pedagogical approach to the education and preparation of nursing students, the possibility of care and cure being equally valued becomes more evident and allows for nurses to see themselves as professionals and providers of care (Chapman, 1997; Gray, 1995; Noddings, 1990).

Within the scholarly work included in this study, an area of feminist pedagogy that must be addressed is the inherent notion that men, trans individuals, and non-binary folx are not considered within these educational landscapes. Because of the datedness of the accepted works within the sample and the majority of the field at the time being comprised of womxn, the notion of men or other gender identities being included within the literature was scant. However, with men's making up about a tenth of the profession today, men and other gender identities are in nursing classrooms and need to be considered when deciding an educational approach in order to address their needs and the experiences they may have once they enter the field. The idea that men, trans individuals, and non-binary folx are not part of the nursing profession can have negative effects of the effectiveness of feminist pedagogy within the nursing classroom and eventually within the nursing profession (Weyenberg, 1998). Several gender identities are employed as nurses and working in helping occupations and can provide patients with care as well as medical attention. If feminist pedagogy is to be used within nursing education, the recognition of a variety of genders learning in those spaces must be considered and incorporated into the teaching approaches.

While the focus on care is a positive skill of the field, the additional benefit of a socially just and equitably minded group of professionals is equally, if not more so, positive (Hezekiah, 1993). Nursing students who experience education led by feminist pedagogy enter their careers more likely to challenge the medical systems and to be aware of inequities that exist within the medical fields. Nursing scholars (Beck, 1995; Chapman, 1997; Hezekiah, 1993; Weyenberg, 1998) agreed that the nursing profession should "persistently question the truths of the practices" (Weyenberg, 1998, p. 351). Without a feminist approach that encourages discourse and conflict

as forms of education, nursing students may lack the ability to question as early professionals and miss opportunities to make changes to systems that are historically oppressive to many.

However, much of the scholarly work related to feminist pedagogy used in nursing is more than 30 years old and raises questions about the effectiveness of the use now. Based on a cursory exploration of the more recent scholarly work related to pedagogy used within nursing education, much of nursing education has moved towards a social justice and equity led pedagogy. The new approach to nursing education pedagogy is led by the intention of producing nursing professionals that enter the field prepared to encounter unjust medical systems that oppress many. Nursing students are entering a very different professional landscape than they were 30 years ago and the rigors and pressures of the job are even more expansive than they have been in the past. Covid-19 tested the abilities and structure of the nursing system, sending many nurses into other fields and leaving the profession reeling. Today's nursing students need more than a single educational pedagogy to lead them into the profession and instead need a mixture of several approaches to prepare them. Only two of the 12 accepted articles addressed how the use of feminist pedagogy can be modified or modernized for changing demographics within the profession. This is not particularly surprising, given the datedness of the sample. However, feminist pedagogy has evolved in the 30-plus years since the works included in this sample were published. In the scholarly work today that utilizes feminist pedagogy, it appears under different labels such as social justice, intersectional pedagogy, and critical pedagogy.

Nursing being considered an exemplary helping profession sets an expectation for nursing students to become leaders within their field. Nurses are pulled in many directions as professionals and addressing this through feminist education can empower students to both stand up for themselves and advocate for their patients as well (Georges, 2005). Advocacy and social

justice work are learned through practice, which can be accomplished through an empowered and safe classroom experience (Hezekiah, 1993). Feminist pedagogy in a nursing classroom provides a primary example of how the education of womxn has evolved to celebrate the unique ways womxn learn and experience the world.

Implications

In the medical fields there are institutionalized power relationships and a structure of hierarchy between doctors and nurses (Falk-Rafael et al., 2004). The structure adds to the powerlessness that womxn feel as people *and* nurses and becomes significantly more important to address in a nursing classroom (Chapman, 1997) due to the high number of females in the profession. This structure, combined with the focus in nursing education on cure rather than care, makes the professional landscape of nursing a challenging one to enter into.

The incorporation of feminist pedagogy into nursing education by nursing educators aims to prepare new nurses for the hierarchical system within the medical fields, but can also prepare them for the complexities of the policies and practices within healthcare that can be oppressive in nature for some populations. Incorporating a focus on social justice to increase awareness of political issues will help to prepare them for the inequities that they are certain to encounter within the nursing profession (Falk-Rafael et al., 2004). Feminist pedagogy can prepare nursing students with first-hand experiences of how current nurses are combatting these inequities, which empowers them to use the experiences of others to build their own professional practice as nurses (Chapman, 1997). The intentional incorporation of personal experience into nursing education intends to give nursing students a better understanding of the complexities of the profession and the struggles that they may encounter as new nurses.

While nursing education that incorporated feminist pedagogy was done so during a time period in which womxn were the primary gender that made up the profession, the use of feminist pedagogy is not limited to female students. Rather, in looking at how feminist pedagogy is incorporated into nursing literature and education now, it falls under different designators and aims to be inclusive to those of any gender identity. The incorporation of feminist pedagogy is likely to now be found under designators such as critical pedagogy (Chinn & Falk-Rafael, 2018), social justice education (Shazad et al., 2022), or intersectional pedagogy (Bhandal et al., 2023). Each of these pedagogical approaches have similar intentions as feminist pedagogy, to empower the students and provide them with skill sets to question the inequities that exist within structures of power, such as the medical system.

Limitations

There are three limitations to this study: the datedness of the scholarly work within the sample, the exclusion of scholarly work not written in English, and the use of only one database to locate potential work to include in the final sample.

The included works within the accepted sample are nearly all more than 20 years old and are therefore dated in relation to the accuracy of the nursing profession and the education of nursing professionals. While the sample fit within the parameters set by the structured literature review, it did not include the ways in which feminist pedagogy has been incorporated into nursing education in more modernized ways through social justice education, intersectionality pedagogy, and critical pedagogy. The impacts the significance of the findings in that because the accepted works are so dated in nature, the use of feminist pedagogy within nursing education is no longer thought of in the same way as it was 20 to 30 years ago.

Second, because I am not fluent in any language other than English, this may have limited the possible articles I was able to access. I am unaware if there are other countries that speak languages outside of English which utilize feminist pedagogy in the education of their nursing students, and if so, it is possible that by excluding other languages, I also excluded scholarly work that could have contributed to extant literature.

Third, although there were consultations with university librarians to select the most relevant database to search, only one was identified as the most relevant to use. It is possible that additional articles or other scholarly work was available through additional databases, but was not access because of the focus solely on Nursing Allied Health. There are additional databases such as PubMed that could have produced additional work that could have been included and contributed to the overall sample.

Future Research

While this review focused solely on nursing as the helping profession in which feminist pedagogy was used, there are several other applications in which feminist pedagogy and nursing could be studied. One potentially interesting area would be a study of how nursing educators report their own use of feminist pedagogy in the classroom. This approach to a study would go beyond the literature that is available and examine how current educators utilize the framework of feminist pedagogy to prepare nursing students for their eventual careers. Focusing on why educators chose to use feminist pedagogy in particular over other pedagogical approaches, as well as their perceived benefits to the nursing students would be fascinating and could inform the field on if and how feminist pedagogy continues to influence the field of nursing.

In addition to studying the educators in nursing, a study that explores the effect of feminist pedagogy on male nursing students would also provide a unique viewpoint. Much of the

intent of feminist pedagogy is to empower students, which is relevant for all students and could have an impact on male nurses in a different way than in female nurses. Because the population of male nurses is significantly smaller than that of female nurses, it would be interesting to explore how classroom approaches, including feminist pedagogy, influences their eventual professional practice. Additionally, male nurses provide a unique experience within the profession and therefore would provide a unique perspective of how their education prepared them for their careers.

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Chapter 3 - The Lived Experiences of Primary-role Academic Advisors Who Identify as Feminists

In the United States workforce, womxn (an alternative spelling to avoid the suggestion of sexism perceived in the sequences *m-a-n* and *m-e-n*; Kunz, 2019) experience their interactions with their work and their workplace differently than men (Peterson, 2004). Despite over a century of womxn being part of the workforce, “[womxn] remain significantly underrepresented in the corporate pipeline” (Krivkovich, 2017, para. 1). This underrepresentation is not just due to hiring practices, but also due to how womxn view themselves as employees. To gain traction in a workplace, womxn often must make personal decisions about how to act, how to work, and how to balance their personal or family life with their work life (Heilman, 2012).

Gendered differences in workplace experience are evident across several fields and “male values dominate contemporary work cultures” (Peterson, 2004, p. 108). These values include an expectation that work is done “for the purpose of achievement and fortune” (Peterson, 2004, p. 118). In contrast, womxn value the “strength of relationships and the balance between work and family” (Peterson, 2004, p. 118). Even in fields dominated by womxn, the imbalance overall, especially in positions of leadership, remain. For example, in the non-profit sector, womxn dominate the overall numbers at 72%, but when it comes to positions of leadership, they represent only 32% (American Association of University Women, 2018).

Higher education is not immune to the dominant culture and reflects the gendered structure that exists in the U.S. workforce (Ballenger, 2010). This becomes especially evident when considering the imbalance of womxn in leadership positions in higher education: “in academia, women have earned the majority of doctorates for eight consecutive years but are only 32% of full professors and 30% of college presidents” (Warner et al., 2018, para. 9). Some

scholars (Ballenger, 2010; Madden, 2011; Zwiech, 2009) reported a dichotomy in stereotypes of leaders and stereotypical feminine traits. Employees expect a leader to be direct, strong, and to use a top-down approach. These traits are often unconnected to how a womxn *should* act according to societal expectations, and this exacerbates the notion that stereotypical feminine behaviors don't typically align with the traits that employees look for in a leader (Heilman, 2012).

Feminism has played a part in shaping how womxn in higher education have been able to gain some traction. This is due, in part, to research being conducted that highlights how womxn have influenced change in higher education and the contributions they have made. Despite this, a subsection of womxn working in higher education have not yet been studied thoroughly. As a group, primary-role advisors are understudied (McGill, 2018). Although no statistical evidence yet exists quantifying the demographic makeup of academic advisors, the profession seems to be predominately female, as seen in the makeup of the membership of NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising (M. Holladay, personal communication, April 8, 2024), which shows that 61% of the members identify as womxn. Womxn in a faculty setting in higher education have been thoroughly studied (Christman, 2003; LePan et al., 2013; Samble, 2008), as have womxn in higher education as a whole (Guest, 2016; Loeb, 2006; Phillips et al., 2022; Schwartz, 1997). However, despite advising's being predominantly employed by womxn, there is scant literature examining the lived experiences of female primary-role academic advisors (Solon et al., 2022), particularly those who identify as feminist.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore how primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and feminists describe the role feminism plays in their advising practice. This

study was guided by the following research question: How do primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and as feminists describe the role feminism plays in their advising practice?

Conceptual Framework

Feminist theory, with its diverse definitions and applications, serves as a foundational framework for interrogating and dismantling gender-based disparities in society (Petersen et al., 2015). Feminist theory aims to break down the hierarchical systems that protect people in power and disenfranchise people without power (Sharma, 2019). Its application across various settings, particularly in education and academic advising, aims to challenge hierarchical systems and empower individuals from marginalized backgrounds. The conceptual framework for this study revolves around feminist theory informing practices in academic advising, promoting equity and inclusion.

Feminist theory examines gender matters, uncovering patterns and their societal implications (Petersen et al., 2015). With its roots in challenging the status quo, feminist theory encompasses a range of perspectives, including the ethic of care (Gilligan, 1988), intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), and consciousness raising (Sarachild, 1978), each contributing to a nuanced understanding of power dynamics in various contexts.

Gilligan (1988), inspired by Kohlberg (1971), proposed that womxn operate under an ethic of caring, while conversely, men operate under an ethic of justice. An ethic of care posits that decisions made are considering how to provide care, while an ethic of justice lies more in a black and white or right and wrong viewpoint. Gilligan (1988) proposed that womxn approach moral circumstances with care as the forefront of their thinking (Auerbach et al., 1985). As time progressed, the basis of the ethic of care evolved as well, being used as an ethical standpoint in a variety of professions such as nursing (Woods, 2011), social work (McAuliffe, 2023), and

teaching (McKenzie & Blenkinsop, 2007). Gilligan's (1988) work served as inspiration for Noddings (1984), who studied the ethic of care in the context of education. Noddings (1984) was also interested in how the ethic of care influenced the interactions of educators and students.

Building on the ethic of care's focus on relational dynamics, intersectionality introduces a critical lens for examining how overlapping identities affect individuals' experiences, especially in educational contexts. Intersectionality grew from Black feminist theories including double jeopardy (Beal, 1969) and interlocking expressions (Combahee River Collective, 1977). Intersectionality highlights the complex interplay of gender, race, and other identities, underscoring the importance of recognizing and addressing layered oppressions in educational settings (Azmitia et al., 2023; Crenshaw, 2013).

In the realm of higher education, intersectionality becomes essential in understanding how students' complex backgrounds influence their integration into an institution (Wijeyesinghe & Jones, 2014). Intersectionality among advisees becomes even more important when considering that 45% of enrolled college students identify as other than white (Education Data Initiative, 2024) and 17% identify as queer (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2020). An understanding of the complexities and unique identities of advisees should be embedded into every advisor's practice and advisors should be aware of the discrimination students may face: "Our advisees may be experiencing even more oppression than we realize due to the intersections of their marginalized identities" (Schindler & Stevens, 2021, p. 67).

Consciousness raising, evolving alongside these theories, fosters awareness and collective action against oppressive systems (Gornick, 1971; Sarachild, 1977). The concept of consciousness was first introduced by Friere (1970/2020), who theorized that people must question the reality and systems that are oppressive and work as a society to break the systems

down. In relation to education, consciousness is often seen in how the system of education has or has not oppressed certain populations (Watts et al., 2011). Additionally, students were seen as co-creators of knowledge rather than empty vessels that instructors were to fill with information (Puroway, 2016). Consciousness was adopted in several other applications and used as a basis for social justice and equity competency (Styslinger et al., 2019). Radical feminist liberation groups began gathering during the 1960's as an effort to create large scale change. These gatherings were coined consciousness raising groups and became a place for womxn to meet and "raise awareness and understanding" (Sarachild, 1977, p. 145). A key component of consciousness raising groups is to collectively gather with a goal in mind with the removal of an individualistic mindset (Gornick, 1971).

However, as intersectionality took hold in feminism as a belief and mentality, the concept of consciousness raising groups shifted slightly. Instead of an intentional blindness for individual uniqueness, intersectionality encouraged consciousness raising groups to embrace the strengths and unique aspects each member brings to a group. The strength from these groups now came from the mixing of different viewpoints and experiences coming together to create solidarity (Keating, 2005).

In higher education institutions, consciousness raising became part of the culture through womxn studies curriculum and advocacy that aimed to create more equitable spaces for students to learn and grow. Within academic advising, the integration of feminist theories facilitates a comprehensive approach to supporting students. Advisors, informed by the ethic of care, strive to build empowering relationships, fostering self-efficacy and resilience (Drake, 2011). Understanding intersectionality is crucial for acknowledging the unique challenges faced by students with overlapping marginalized identities, enhancing advisors' ability to provide tailored

support (Schindler & Stevens, 2021). While feminist theory can be used to address the systemic barriers in education and in academic advising, transformative learning intends to equalize learning by “reframing problematic frames of reference” (Mezirow, 2003, p. 58). Consciousness raising and transformative learning principles guide advisors in encouraging students to critically engage with their learning environments and societal structures (Mezirow, 2003; Illeris, 2014). A key component to transformative learning is that the learner themselves must be reflective of their learning (Baumgartner, 2019). Reflectiveness indicates that the learner has not only taken the content in, but is actively considering and utilizing the information. Additionally, for learning to be transformative, action must also occur. Action can be accomplished through large scale efforts like liberation groups, through smaller protests, or even individual decisions (Mezirow, 2003).

Integrating feminist theory into academic advising has the potential to significantly impact educational practices, promoting more equitable and inclusive environments. By fostering an understanding of and response to the complex identities and experiences of students, advisors can play a crucial role in dismantling systemic barriers and empowering students to navigate and transform their educational journeys.

Methodology

Phenomenological studies explore a homogeneous group of participants that experience a phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994, Peoples, 2021). In this case, the phenomenon is being a womxn, self-identifying as a feminist, and employed as a primary-role academic advisor. While traditional phenomenology aims to explore the lived experiences of the participants, a feminist phenomenology “must seek to understand how sexual difference as an intersubjective structure is constituted and how it is further interlocked with embodiment and singular experiences” (Oksala,

2004, p. 21). A feminist phenomenology highlights womxn voices as a unique and equally relevant and important perspective (Simms & Starwarska, 2013) and provides a logical approach to both protecting and celebrating the female participants and their unique views as womxn. The study provides a space to explore how the participants navigate their personal and professional spaces.

Researcher Role

Preparation for the interview is an essential part of using a feminist phenomenological approach. There are concerns related to the genuineness of the interviews if the researcher approaches the interviews with preconceived notions of what the interviews may produce. This concept, epoché, “refers to the phenomenological reduction and a commitment to adopting the phenomenological attitude” (Bevan, 2014, p. 139). To navigate epoché, the researcher must maintain a “critical stance” (Bevan, 2014, p. 139) as they navigate through the interview processes. Researchers should approach the interviews with humility that acknowledges subjectivity exists, and awareness can be used to avoid pushing a researcher agenda onto participants (Peshkin, 1988).

I identify as a feminist who is still learning about my own expression of feminism and how it intersects in my personal and professional life. Because of this, my expectations as a researcher are to find similarities in how participants' experiences mirror my own. However, I must also be prepared to experience discomfort and potentially even disappointment if participants have viewpoints that do not align with my own. I am proud of my feminism and in the stages of feminist identity development, I find myself strongly stationed in stage 4, synthesis. I appreciate the connectedness of my feminism and the community it brings me, the close friendships I have formed based on feminism, and my internal and external battle to fight for the

rights of womxn. As a researcher, I have explored my own perceptions of feminism and how it is incorporated in my day-to-day life. Additionally, I've spent some time journaling about my own expectations of what the participants experiences were like, and how to protect the study from my own biases (Peshkin, 1988).

Recruitment and Sample

Participants were womxn who also identify as feminists and were primary-role advisors (i.e., not an administrator, faculty advisor, or an advising adjacent role). Participants self-identified as feminists rather than having strict definitions imposed upon them to qualify. Participants were required to be working as primary-role advisors at institutions with more than 10,000 students enrolled. The goal from limiting the participant pool to larger sized institutions was to gauge similarities in experiences of the academic advisors and that of case size and number of advisors per institution.

Participants were recruited through social media and direct solicitation to select institutions and personal contacts. The Student Affairs Moms (S.A.M.s) group on Facebook, the Oregon Academic Advising Association Facebook page, the NACADA Region 8 Facebook page, and the Doc Students of NACADA Group on Facebook were all used to solicit participants. In addition, specific institutions were targeted to expand the demographic base and emails with the participant criteria were sent to a network of contacts.

Table 3.1. Participant Social and Professional Context

Pseudonym	Partnered Status	Kids	Education Level	Age
Amelia	Married (to a man)	2	Master's	33
Nina	Married (to a man)	2	MBA	44
Carol	Married	None	PhD	38
Ann	Partnered	None	Master's	37
Artemis	Partnered	None	Master's	33
Towanda	Single	None	Master's	39
Ella	Married	2	2 Master's	62

Shelby	Married	2	BA	42
Sunrise	Married	3	M.Ed	51
Alexander Hanover-Stuart	Single	None	BA	28
Penny	Married	2	Master's	36
Amber	Married (to a F)	1	Master's	36
Elleene	Married	1	PhD	40
Cleopatra	Married	2	Master's	37
Lynn	Partnered	2	Master's	49
Alyce	Partnered	None	Master's	30
Emma	Married	None	PhD	35
KK	Partnered	2	Master's	44
Lilly	Single	None	BA	23
Aliya Candella	Single	None	Graduate Certificate	38
Alice	Single	None	Master's + some PhD	32
Gray Sanders	Partnered	None	Master's	29

Data Collection

In a phenomenological study, a primary method of collecting data is semi-structured interviews (Bevan, 2014). Interviews are the primary source of data for this study. The participants for the interviews needed to be homogeneous in nature to allow for more rich analysis of the nuances experienced within the phenomenon of interest.

The interviews were focused around Seidman's (2006) three categories of interviews: contextualization (the world in which the participant lives and experiences/the institution), apprehending the phenomenon (identifying how feminism plays into both work life and personal life for the participants/the womxn), and clarifying the phenomenon (description of the phenomenon according to the participant/the practice). Accordingly, the three interviews revolved around the womxn (first interview), their practice (second interview), and their institution (third interview). Interviews were conducted beginning in August 2023. Each participant dictated the pace at which interviews were conducted with some completing all three

interviews in days to some completing interviews over several months. The location of the interview was an important aspect to consider because participants were from varying locations across the country. Zoom allowed for convenience for participants, as well as allowing for accessibility. Participants were asked to sign a release form that outlined the intent of the study, the permission to use the data collected in the study, and to outline the process of collection.

As a secondary data source, participants were asked to complete a journal prompt related to their own perception of their feminist identity development. The feminist identity phases (Downing & Roush, 1987) were provided to the participants as part of the journaling process. The specific prompt used was “after reading through the stages of feminist identity development, please tell me in a few short sentences where would you place yourself on the stages and why?” The journal prompt was sent using Qualtrics and results were discussed with participants in the final interview.

Upon conclusion of each interview, participants were given a transcript within 48 hours and asked to clarify, correct, or delete anything content within the transcript. Any corrections, clarifications, or deletions were then edited into the original transcript and resaved. An original file of the transcript was saved as well for reference.

Interview 1: The Institution

The initial interviews started with a statement regarding the intention of the interviews and the process that would occur. Each participant had an initial interview for approximately one hour. The first interview was used for building rapport and getting a better sense of what the workplace was like for each participant. The importance of building rapport was essential to creating a safe space for participants. The first interview was meant to get a background of the participants institution and the perception and acceptance of advisors on campus. Sample items

included “Describe your institution: size, general location (region), student demographic, types of educational programs” and “Have you been at different institutions in the past? Can you describe the size and details of those institutions as well?”

Interview 2: The Womxn

The second interview was focused on each of the individual participants. I wanted to understand more about their background, what led them to advising, how their individual feminism interacts with their daily life. Sample interview items include “What brought you to advising? Tell me about your background and your education” and “How do you define your feminism?”

Upon conclusion of interview 2, participants were given a journal prompt for them to work on in between interviews 2 and 3 asking them to explore where they identify themselves in the feminist identity stages. Participants were provided with a paragraph that outlined each stage of development. The journaling was meant to provide a base to discuss how each participant’s own feminist identity influences their advising practice.

Interview 3: The Practice

The focus of the third interview was the experience of being a womxn and a feminist and its relationship to each participant’s advising practice. Clarification from previous interviews were implemented in the beginning of the interview, followed by a series of questions that seek to explore how each participant’s feminism is present in their advising practice. Sample interview questions include “Tell me about a typical advising interaction. How do you start each interaction?” and “What is the basis of your advising practice?”

Data Analysis

Using Otter.ai, a transcription of each interview was completed and read within 48 hours of each interview. This was to ensure that a timely review was completed and to maintain an effort to stay within the moment of each interview. Additionally, when reviewing each transcript, “unnecessary or irrelevant” (Peoples, 2021, p. 59) information was removed and archived. This included information that is not relevant to the intention of the study, such as their future travel plans or the hobby they picked up recently.

Data was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify and categorize themes within a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In feminist phenomenology, the researcher is enveloped in the research, including their own perspective alongside their participants. Feminist phenomenology differs from other forms of qualitative research in that the questions related to data collection are aimed at exploring gender differences and to “allow for a clearing where women’s voices can be heard” (Simms & Starwaska, 2013, p. 11). Ultimately, the goal of a feminist phenomenology is to empower the participants and to give them a place for their voice to be heard (Simms & Starwaska, 2013).

To analyze the data, I began by reading through the transcripts of each interview. Because the three interviews have different foci, I read through the transcripts of each of the three interviews by person, rather than by a group of interviews. My initial set of analysis occurred through asking basic descriptive questions to understand what participants are conveying (Lochmiller, 2021). Once I had a better understanding of the participants’ responses, I moved onto first cycle coding (Saldaña, 2015) by “identifying meaningful and potentially relevant passages that will be analyzed further” (Lochmiller, 2021, p. 2035). Next, I looked for frequency of patterns within the first cycle coding. If frequencies were identified, these patterns

were labeled as a potential theme and grouped together based on similarity. The identified potential themes were analyzed to “identify disconnections” (Lochmiller, 2021, p. 2036) among patterns. These disconnections were coded as potential themes, then reviewed and further defined.

Trustworthiness

There are eight “rules” for checking the validity and reliability of a study (Creswell & Poth, 2017). In general, a study need not include all eight indicators. However, being able to address some of the indicators helps to validate the results of the study. In this case, four of the indicators will be addressed in this study.

First, I kept a journal throughout the entirety of the study to reflect my own answers to the questions posed to participants, as well as reflections of the interactions with participants. Journaling was a useful method to record thoughts while reviewing transcripts and to use as a reference later on if needed. Once analysis had begun, the journal was used to help me understand my own thinking about the phenomenon (Peoples, 2021) and to help uncover similarities in answers as they emerged. Journaling was also an opportunity to identify different angles that could be explored further.

Secondly, because I conducted three interviews with each participant, I accomplished prolonged engagement and observation in the field. This validity measure requires that the researcher and participants spend sufficient time together with the researcher observing or collecting adequate data. This measure of validity requires that a relationship is built between researcher and participant (Cresswell & Poth, 2018).

Third, member checking was addressed by sending transcripts to each of the participants within 48 hours of each of their interviews. Member checking requires that the participants are

actively involved in the data collection process by reviewing and providing clarification where needed.

Lastly, rich, thick descriptions demonstrate connection to the participants and the data. As a phenomenology, the intention is to understand the experiences of the participants of this study. Rich descriptions allow for the experiences of the participants to be conveyed in a way that makes them come alive and increases the credibility of the study (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Findings

In this exploration of the practices of feminist academic advisors, I discovered three themes capturing the essence of participants' advising practice: the strategic mindfulness of physical space as a cornerstone for comfort, the transformative power of communication in forging meaningful connections and relationships, and the deliberate empowerment of students to steer their own decision-making processes. These themes not only shed light on the nuanced, often overlooked aspects of academic advising but also underscore a commitment to fostering an inclusive, supportive, and equitable environment. The perspectives of these advisors provide invaluable insights into the art of creating spaces that resonate with students' identities, the critical role of empathetic communication in building trust, and the importance of nurturing students' autonomy.

Mindfulness of Physical Space as a Cornerstone for Comfort

In the first theme, participants underscored the role of physical space in shaping student experiences and fostering an environment of comfort and belonging. This theme delves into the deliberate and thoughtful approach these advisors take towards their physical surroundings, transforming ordinary office spaces into havens of inclusivity and warmth.

First, many participants were keenly aware of how their physical space either created barriers or was welcoming: “Your office space is a way to communicate to your students, but it’s also a way for students to feel comfortable in the space like you are communicating values to them” (Amber). This included how the desk was positioned, whether it was between them and the student or between the student and the door. Both scenarios create unintended barriers that can make students feel uncomfortable, which was repeatedly brought up by participants as something they were actively trying to address as they thought about their physical space. Other participants thought about physical space in terms of how their office provided comfort for all body types that could visit their office. This meant that office chairs were chosen with a variety of body types in mind and different options were available for seating in offices to accommodate specific needs. Ellen said,

I have a special chair in my office. That's extra wide, extra-large, to accommodate different body types and I think other advisors are working to do that as well because we were initially given these really tiny plastic ones, which were awful.

How an office felt to a student entering it was important to the participants, some even went as far as to use scent to create a homey atmosphere that could remind students of their home. Lynn changed the scent in her office in accordance with the seasons to make her office feel similar to being in a home when they walked in. This meant cinnamon or pumpkin smells during fall, peppermint or chocolate scents during winter or the holidays, florals during spring, and fresh, bright scents towards the end of the academic year. KK outfitted her office with tapestries and elephants, while Amber had pillows and blankets for students when they visited her office, encouraging them to get comfy during their appointments. Participants also focused on lighting, noting that overhead lights were often too bright or harsh and they chose to have desk lamps or

floor lamps instead to make the room seem cozier and less sterile: “I generally keep the big fluorescent lights off. I have a couple of desk lamps so that it’s not screaming at you” (Ann).

Nearly all participants were cognizant of how they decorated their space. Some used artwork to speak to their background or to the things that were important to them. Aliya Candella learned this from a previous mentor, who loaned artwork to her to help create an atmosphere in her first office. This led to her continually considering artwork as she moved positions and offices in an attempt to match both where she was in life *and* the student populations she was working with. Of her mentor, Aliya Candella said:

He's like, “whatever space that you have, you better make sure that student sees them self in that space.” I said, “Alright, he’s gonna let you borrow a piece of art.” And it was a native piece of art that one of his former students in South Dakota made. And he let me hold it for seven years. He's like, “I have other art in rotation that you want or hopefully accumulated over time.” I said, “okay,” and so that was probably one of my first years when I’m working the admissions office recruiting before I did advising. But since then, I have always had some type of art in my office.

Demonstrating inclusivity was often shown through pride flags, safe place designators, and pronoun introductions. Ann noted, “I have a pride flag up I have, like different kinds of things in terms of making sure that it’s a welcoming environment.” Participants highlighted their own unique ethnic or cultural backgrounds through artwork, books, or photographs: “I wanted them both to feel a sense of the space they were entering and also so they felt welcome and then also get to know me a little bit in the space as well” (Lynn). Some even used their space to demonstrate their advocacy or value through other means: “After Trump was elected I decided to make my space mega political. I don't actually think it's political. I think I'm just showcasing

women but apparently it might be political. So I have framed art of Toni Morrison, Nina Simone, bell hooks, Chevelle Vargas, Linda Sarsour, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, am I missing anyone... Gloria Steinem, Maya Angelou, so it's a shrine of women" (Amber). Participants agreed that showing some of their own personality was important in creating a space that felt welcoming and lent to an effort to create relationships with students. For some, representing the student population they advised was shown through what was displayed on the walls, "In my room, I have collages all over the wall, especially with like social justice or, like I specialize in like Latinx studies. So a lot of like Latinx history and culture" (Emma).

A significant aspect of physical space frequently addressed was the need for the advising space to be private to make the student feel safe and comfortable. Emma noted, "While students are in the lobby, there's usually like a peer advisor there screening, welcoming students." The ability for a student to share confidential information was highlighted as a pillar of a safe and well thought out physical space: "I have my own office for confidentiality" (KK). Additionally, many participants acknowledged that student were often emotional in advising conversations that surrounded financial aid, poor academic performance, or personal matters. Having physical spaces that provided privacy allow for students to feel comfortable in releasing emotion or sharing sensitive information. Alexander Hanover-Stuart observed, "The walls are pretty thin still, but for the most part, students have access to privacy." Grey Sanders mentioned how important it was to her to create a space that allowed for her to have difficult conversations with students that protected the student from experiencing shame from those conversations.

This theme emphasizes the significant impact of the physical environment in the advising practice of primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and feminists. Participants underscored the importance of arranging office spaces to minimize barriers and foster a welcoming

atmosphere, reflecting on how the positioning of furniture, like desks and chairs, can either invite comfort or create discomfort. They actively selected office furniture to accommodate a diversity of body types and chose decor that would resonate with their students' identities and backgrounds. The use of scents, lighting, and personal touches like tapestries, pillows, and artwork was mentioned as strategies to make the office feel more home-like and inclusive. Advisors also stressed the importance of privacy for confidential conversations, ensuring that their office setup allowed students to feel safe and comfortable sharing sensitive information. This careful consideration of physical space was seen as a fundamental step in creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all students, setting the stage for fostering emotional safety and trust through personal interactions.

Power of Communication in Forging Meaningful Connections and Relationships

The second theme explores the way participants initiate and nurture relationships through intentional dialogue that extends beyond academic guidance, embodying a holistic approach to student engagement. From the very first student interaction, feminist advisors prioritize understanding the individual's experience, laying a foundation of trust and mutual respect.

Beginning with the first meeting of an advising relationship, establishing rapport was essential in engaging students as they began an appointment. This was typically achieved through questions during an initial meeting with students. Lynn said, "I start each interaction with asking the student how they're doing...I try very hard not to jump into classes or problems." Rather than leading with class choices, participants, as feminist advisors, lead with questions about how the students are, how the term is going, how dorm life is, or if there is a favorite place to eat: "I try to start each interaction by connecting with the students in general about how things are going" (Amelia). These kinds of questions are meant to open the advising relationship to one

that is more of a cooperative relationship, rather than one of power between the advisor and the student.

Many participants also made sure to use check in questions throughout their appointments to ensure that students understood the information given and were still comfortable with the appointment. Lilly says to her students, “‘I know there was a lot of info, do you have any questions?’ Sometimes they’re like, ‘No, this is perfect.’ Sometimes they do.” Participants were consistent with checking in with a few minutes left in the appointment to let the student know that the appointment was coming to an end and if there were unanswered questions or if they would like to schedule another appointment to continue a conversation. Amber said, “‘I try to keep careful watch of time. And I’ll let them know like, ‘look, we’ve got about 15 minutes left, what is the priority that you want to discuss? Or how do you want to use that time?’”

Despite the consensus that helping through information-giving and creating rapport with students, there was a clear line between providing information and comfort and too much hand-holding. Many participants noted their commitment to “tough love,” as well as being a helper to students. This generally meant giving the students the information they needed to be able to make informed decisions and if they chose to make ill-informed decisions, to reiterate to them that it is ultimately the student’s decision. The deliberate plan to provide students with as much information as possible and also to keep them accountable is not necessarily exclusive to feminist advisors, but it was a recurring example that participants provided.

For some of the participants, care and nurturing trickled into their relationships with students. Aliya Candella said, “‘You can have a big sister who is annoying as hell and they will be on your ass like, that is me, you know, but I can do it in a loving way.’” While some participants were able to create firm boundaries with students, others embraced the caring aspect

of advising and took on roles of big sister, cheerleader, or auntie as needed. Lynn spoke about the connection between care and feminism and how it intersects with her work as an advisor: “I think it [feminism] is caring. I think it's recognizing the challenges that sexism creates and the care and concern that can that can help in those moments in those situations.” The participants that moved towards this role acknowledged that alongside care they needed to set expectations for the students to be self-sufficient and to take ownership of their decision-making. Amber described her act of raising her eyebrow:

I never tell students something is a bad idea. I call it my raised eyebrow. I tell students, “Look, I’m not sure I’ve never done that...And here’s what it was like, but it is your choice. You can do. You can do that. You can choose that route. I have a raised eyebrow for this reason.”

While not all participants leaned into caring as part of their advising practice, the creation of close relationships with students was often noted as a highlight of being an advisor and when asked what the most important aspect of advising is, most participants stated being a safe place for students or something closely related as being the most important aspect.

The experiences of the feminist advisors and the intention of creating early relationships and continuing these relationships throughout the students’ academic experiences was being acutely aware of student development and their role in assisting their advisees in gaining efficacy and confidence. Alyce noted, “I always ask, ‘Do you know how to do this?’ Because sometimes they do. I don’t want to insult their intelligence. Some are really, really proud they figured it out.” Rather than caring being considered a burden of the feminist advisors, it seemed to ignite them instead. Amber stated, “The trust that students put in you to help them navigate things they already know about themselves. They just need someone to help affirm. Right? The validation is

the long answer.” The responsibility of supporting students in their growth was intertwined in their interactions with students. Occasionally this went as far as assisting students in switching majors, which ultimately ended the formal advisor and advisee relationship with students. There was a clear commitment to supporting student growth, knowing that it also meant students will leave and move onto other endeavors eventually.

These findings highlight the foundational role of communication in fostering meaningful relationships between feminist advisors and their students. From the outset of the advising relationship, these advisors prioritize rapport-building through personal inquiries about the students’ well-being and experiences, deliberately steering away from immediately addressing academic or scheduling concerns. This approach aims to establish a cooperative rather than hierarchical relationship, characterized by mutual respect and understanding. Regular check-ins during appointments ensure students are comfortable and comprehend the information shared, balancing between providing guidance and avoiding excessive hand-holding. Advisors also navigate the fine line between nurturing and promoting independence, adopting roles like a big sister or cheerleader as needed, while encouraging students to take ownership of their decisions. This nuanced approach to communication, grounded in feminist principles, seeks to create a supportive and safe space for students, fostering their development and confidence throughout their academic journey. The emphasis on caring and nurturing within these relationships underscores the advisors’ commitment to student growth, even if it means guiding them towards paths that diverge from the advisor’s direct influence.

Empowering Students to Make Their Own Decisions

This third theme unveils the deliberate strategies employed by these advisors to cultivate an environment that not only encourages, but necessitates, student autonomy in decision-making.

Through a careful blend of guidance and freedom, participants expressed a philosophy in which students are not passive recipients of advice but active participants in shaping their academic and personal futures.

Most participants spoke at length about the ways they interact with students and the emphasis placed on letting the student determine the relationship. This wavered between completely transactional for students who were not in need of assistance to developing deep meaningful relationships with students that lasted long beyond their graduation date. Cleopatra said, “I used to try to years ago come at it very formal, hold them to a high standard because I hold myself to a high standard. I tried that approach. It doesn’t work for relationship building.” This approach begins with the advisors offering the same experience or at least the same opportunity for the same experience to each student. Participants created this opportunity by greeting each student and asking how they could help: “My first-year students are, like a little nervous. And so I might like just check in a little bit more like, how are things, how's living on campus? It always starts with checking in with them” (Towanda). From there, the student is in charge of determining how each appointment or interaction moved forward. Some students need longer to get comfortable with their advisor, which lends to the need for the advisor to use interactions to provide information and create comfort.

From a feminist advising perspective, each student is given all the information and then are given tools to make informed decisions. Ella said, “I frequently remind students, nudge students, that they can make their own choices and that there isn’t one path.” This aligns with equity mindedness and the concept that all students are provided with the same opportunities from their advisors. Gray Sanders noted that she sometimes worries about giving too many details and making the student think that she doesn’t trust their ability to dissect information.

Rather, her intention is to ensure that each student is given ample information with which to make academic decisions.

Some participants noted they had little or no interaction with their own academic advisors during their undergraduate experiences, which motivated them to create different interactions with their own students as professional advisors. This meant several different things, but generally translated to making their office the place where students could go to for advice and information. There was pride in being the one place on campus where students could always get the help they needed. Cleopatra noted, “We have a slogan in our office, if you don’t know where to go, come to us.” Being the helpers of campus seemed to be a common thread among participants, many noting that their mission was to provide accurate and timely information to their students. Conversely, participants who had excellent advising as undergraduates used these experiences to motivate and inform their own advising practices, taking pieces of what they admired or appreciated from their own advisors and eventually putting those artifacts into their own practices.

Participants were committed to fostering autonomy and informed decision-making in their advisees. Advisors emphasize creating an environment where students feel both supported and in control of their educational journeys, striking a balance between offering guidance and allowing students to lead the direction of their advising experiences. This balance ranges from transactional interactions to developing deep, lasting relationships that extend beyond graduation. By initiating interactions with open-ended questions and a focus on student well-being, advisors aim to make students comfortable and confident in discussing their needs and preferences. The feminist advising approach prioritizes equity by ensuring all students have access to the same quality of information and support, enabling them to make choices that best

suit their individual paths. As Nina described, “I am really good at what I do. And part of it is because of my feminism.” This philosophy is rooted in the advisors’ own experiences, with some striving to provide the supportive presence they felt was missing in their undergraduate years, while others draw inspiration from positive advising relationships they experienced. Nina explained this further:

My work as an advisor is just inextricably again linked with being a feminist. I work in a college of engineering. It is a very male dominated profession. A male dominated area of study. We’re decent at my institution in terms of being relatively equal in the number of women and men that are here. But I see it as my role as kind of this you know, as the guide for these students of like, to the women students, hey, you belong here. And no one has the right to make you feel like you don't belong here.

The overarching goal is to be a reliable resource on campus, guiding students toward self-sufficiency and empowering them to navigate their academic and personal growth with confidence.

Discussion

This study explored how primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and feminists describe the role feminism plays in their advising practice. Participants described how they blended the arrangement of physical space, empathetic communication, and the empowerment of student decision-making to create a transformative advising experience. They created their environments, utilizing the placement of furniture and decor, alongside sensory experiences like scents and lighting, to foster a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere that bridges the gap between advisor authority and student approachability. This careful consideration of physical space

acknowledges and respects the individuality and diverse needs of each student, promoting a sense of home and safety.

The connection between physical space and the work environment is part of the larger field of study of environmental psychology (Craig, 1973). Environmental psychology not only explores the size, structure, and location of an office, but also looks at how the “spatial arrangements allow or prevent conversation” (Baldry, 1997, p. 368). The physical layout of a space can have significant impact on the comfort level of people who enter the space (Margolis, 1976). Paying close attention to how furniture is laid out within an office space is important in making a professional space inviting and comfortable. In particular, “furniture positioning and placement can guide the behavior of people entering the office as well as influence the behavior of the passerby” (Davis, 1984, p.273).

In relation to feminist thought, space is considered an important concept of feminist theory and context (Admin, 2014). Feminism often regards taking of space to be a part of the power dynamics that feminists are frequently trying to break down or reduce (de Wet, 2019). The concept of creating brave spaces for womxn to exist in was a feminist notion that emerged in the second wave of feminism (Kenny, 2001). These spaces were intended as places in which womxn could meet and be free from harassment and violence (Clark-Parsons, 2017). The commitment to brave spaces that began in the second wave continues today in higher education spaces, including academic advising, ensuring brave spaces on campuses for students to learn (Fast, 2018).

The relationship between advising and physical space has been identified as an important component of an advising relationship (Marshall, 2012). With academic advising being so dependent on building rapport with students, having a space in which students feel comfortable

is essential to creating that rapport. Additionally, the way a physical space is decorated can also have an effect on how comfortable it feels to students or others entering the space. Spaces that demonstrate personal effects such as art, photographs, or use natural products can put people more at ease, which can make interactions feel less intimidating (Margolis, 1976).

While the physical space is important in creating a space students are comfortable coming to, advisors must also be aware of the importance of providing care for their students and often embed care into their practice (Ohrablo, 2014). In their interactions, participants balanced the delivery of essential information with empathetic listening and genuine care, engaging students through inquiries about their well-being and aspirations. This approach not only cultivates a rapport but establishes a collaborative dynamic, empowering students to take an active role in their educational paths. “Collaborative and caring relationships between feminist staff and students has long been identified as a form of mentoring” (Adams-Hutcheson & Johnston, 2019, p. 457), which lead to more empowered and better connections between students and advisors. Students have reported that feeling cared for by their advisor made them feel more like they belonged within an institution (Soria & Stebleton, 2012). As institutions place more importance on persistence and retention, advisors have more responsibility to help in keeping students enrolled and making progress towards degree completion.

The relationship between an advisor and a student can be transformational and have a lasting impact on academic success (McGill et al., 2021). However, there are barriers to creating transformational relationships, one being the power dynamic that exists between an advisor and advisee. Advisors’ roles, as employees of an academic institution, automatically grants them some power not possessed by their advisees (Schindler & Stevens, 2021). Feminist advisors should be aware of and make specific efforts to reduce this dynamic in an effort to have more

meaningful and balanced relationships with advisees. Incorporating an ethic of care can serve as a reminder of the unequal power dynamic and keep it at the forefront of the advisor interactions (Lawson, 2007). Paying close attention to how interactions with students can be interpreted or received and making deliberate effort to create spaces in which students feel safe, supported, and seen can change a student's experience within an institution (Drake, 2011). Continued support that ranges from providing accurate information and access to resources on campus (Vianden, 2016) and creating a connection for the student with the institution (Drake, 2013) helps to support a balanced advising relationship and to reduce the power dynamic.

To further reduce the power dynamic between advisor and advisee, feminist academic advisors must create relationships based on care. To help incorporate care into an advising practice, advising should be more than a transactional experience for students and advisors and not reliant on retention or persistence. Institutions must also incorporate caring into their advising strategy as well, "when the work of advising is viewed as a service concerned primarily with registration and retention, opportunities are lost" (Troxel et al., 2022, p. 28) or risk losing students. Trusting in students' capacities to make informed decisions, advisors dismantle traditional hierarchies, advocating for a partnership based on equality, respect, and mutual learning and can change the entire trajectory of how a college experience goes for a student (Drake, 2011).

While the focus on creating meaningful and safe relationships is an important factor for feminist advisors, many also find joy in watching students grow and achieve their potential or seeing a student graduate who has struggled academically (Solon et al., 2022). The notion of professional joy becomes even more evident as a motivator for academic advisors when considering the low pay and value advisors receive as employees of higher education institutions

(Troxel et al., 2022). Advisors are historically underpaid and undervalued, and yet, many remain in the field because of the relationships that are created with students (Solon et al., 2022) and the enjoyment it brings them professionally. By providing the right tools, information, and support, they aimed to build students' confidence and competence, guiding them towards decisions aligning with their goals, values, and identities, and catalyzing student growth, self-discovery, and independence.

The insights gained from this study underscore the necessity of reimagining traditional advising models to embrace a more holistic, empathetic, and empowering approach. While previous advising models aimed to highlight the strengths or deficits of the advisees, few were seen as focusing on the strengths of the advisors themselves. In doing so, and by encouraging advisors to bring their own personal values and skills into their practice, feminist advising could shift the way in which advising is incorporated into institutions.

Implications

As we consider the future of academic advising, it is imperative to integrate these feminist practices not only to enhance the advisor-advisee relationship but also to foster environments that champion student autonomy, resilience, and success. There are three implications for this research: the focus on the experience of the academic advisor themselves, the impact personal identity has on advising practice, and how feminism can impact academic advising as a field.

First, this study aimed to increase the focus on how the identity and personal values of advisors positively impacts their advising practice. Much of the existing research related to academic advising is focused on the perspective of the students, rather than the advisors themselves (McGill, 2019). This limits the significance of the experiences advisors themselves

have in their professional roles. Higher education administration often cite advising as being important to the success of students (White, 2015), but have very little understanding of who advisors are or what they actually do in their jobs. The lack of understanding of academic advising creates a sense of dismissal of the significance of what advising does for student success. Additionally, the misunderstanding of academic advising continues to demoralize the profession and to cause excellent practitioners to leave the profession for better paid and better recognized positions (Troxel et al., 2022). Without more research that explores and explains what the experiences are of academic advisors themselves, outsiders will continue to be confused and dismissive of the profession (McGill, 2021).

Second, the personal identity of advisors informs their personal advising practice. The professional identity that advisors bring with them into their practice impacts how they interact with students, which, in turn, impacts the success of the students. Institutions that can embrace the personal and professional identities of advisors and elevate the significance of it will likely find their advisors happier and more fulfilled in their positions. Institutions can support advisor identity by incorporating creativity in advising practices (Huebner, 2011), promoting advisor professional capital (He et al., 2020), and recognizing the contributions advisors provide to the institution (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2015). Studies have shown that employees that are more fulfilled will stay longer and remain more loyal to their current employer (Wyld, 2014), are more productive (Oswald et al., 2015), and feel more embedded in a company (Steindórsdóttir et al., 2020). With institutional support, advisors can adopt a more holistic and inclusive approach, facilitating transformative learning experiences that encourage students to reflect on and challenge oppressive systems.

Third, feminism has had an impact on womxn's lives for decades. Feminism has evolved to not just empowering womxn, but to also empower any group who are underserved, voiceless, and disenfranchised (Signorella, 2020). As institutions incorporate a feminist approach to advising they will see a shift in how advisors' individual strengths are used to build new and better relationships with students. Because student success is dependent on the resources and support they receive through interactions with faculty and staff, the incorporation of care that accompanies a feminist approach to advising can only increase student efficacy. Institutions can further support the work of feminist advisors by providing professional development related to advocacy skills, managing difficult conversations, and continuing to build their ethical toolbox. Advisors who use feminism as a platform to base their advising on are caring, kind, and advocates. They strive to make their advising relationships impactful and to ensure that their advisees know that they are cared for and safe. One participant of this study, Amber said: "I think feminism makes me a better advisor. Because it makes me realistic about the situations and structures our student are working through." When asked, nearly all participants agreed with the statement: "being a feminist makes me a better advisor."

The link between advisor experience, personal identity, and the application of feminist principles in academic advising highlights the complexity of the advising process. Recognizing and valuing the unique perspectives and lived experiences of feminist advisors creates a supportive environment conducive to growth and empowerment. By embracing feminist principles, advisors can encourage inclusive spaces where individuals feel empowered to navigate their academic and personal journeys without harm. The integration of advisor experience, personal identity, and feminist principles not only enhances the advising experience

but also contributes to the creation of a more equitable and inclusive higher education community.

Limitations

There are two limitations to this study and both lend to the opportunity for future research. First, participants were limited to four-year institutions with more than 10,000 students enrolled. Opening up the participants to four-year institutions of any size would increase the scope of the issue and subsequently increase the understanding of what being a feminist advisor truly is. Additionally, having participants from two-year institutions would also provide additional experiences and additional perspective of what being a feminist advisor is. The scope of experience of advisors is so expansive that limiting it to such a small segment of the advising community is likely limiting to the overall scope of the understanding of experience.

Second, participants were required to be womxn. Historically, feminism has been thought of as limited to womxn. However, many progressive feminists agree that men can also be feminists (Signorella, 2020). Limiting the participants to womxn also limited the lived experiences of men who are primary-role advisors and consider themselves feminists.

Future Research

Academic advising is largely comprised of womxn, which is similar to nursing and it creates a similar issue that nursing faces, lack of men in the profession can make the profession perceived as “womxn’s work.” Men who are feminist carry unique experiences that would provide interesting perspective for a study such as this. Inclusion of male feminist advisor experiences could potentially show differences in advising practice for feminist male advisors. This comparison would be interesting to explore further as a base for a feminist advising approach. The inclusion of male feminist advisors would potentially validate the experience of

other male advisors within the field and encourage more to participate in research that explores lived experiences. Future research should explore innovative ways to further incorporate feminist principles into advising practices, examining the long-term effects on student outcomes and institutional cultures.

Conclusion

Academic advisors hold unique and varied backgrounds and in studying how these background impact their advising practices, more can be learned about how advisors craft a professional approach to practice and how this ultimately impacts students. Feminist advisors bring their inherent feminism through intentionality related to physical space and comfort, using care and communication to create deep relationships, and supporting students in making their own decisions. Feminist advising practice is a unique approach to academic advising and one that needs to be studied further to understand more about the impact it has both on the profession of advising, but also on the students and how it affects their advising experience.

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Chapter 4 - Feminist Academic Advising: A New Paradigm for Equity and Inclusion

The purpose of this paper is to advance a feminist approach to academic advising. Building on two studies – a structured literature review of nursing, an exemplary helping profession, and a phenomenological study of feminist academic advisors – this paper will suggest a framework for feminist pedagogy in academic advising practice. Such a multilayered approach to advising considers students' needs and advisor professional identity. Before describing the emerging model, I discuss existing advising approaches, advisor identity, components of feminist pedagogy and how they are incorporated into academic advising. I conclude with implications for advising practice and research.

Academic advising has evolved from an added requirement of faculty members to a full-time occupation (Gordon, 2004). Nearly every higher education institution in the U.S. and in several other countries have academic advisors embedded into the culture of their institutions and their student success strategies (Lee & Metcalfe, 2018). From a professional standpoint, academic advisors serve as experts in institutional policy, academic regulations, course information and sequencing, and degree progression (Steele & White, 2019). But advisors serve as much more than policy experts and degree clearance machines. Advisors provide a safe space on campus for students to share their lives and to be vulnerable and advising offices may be the one place on a college campus in which the student maintains a continual personal relationship throughout their entire academic career (McGill, 2021).

Prior to 1870, academic advising was not a formalized part of higher education (Schulenberg & Himes, 2022). There was no defined role that included assisting students in their academic path. This was largely because academic programs were prescriptive in nature with

little choice in what classes were taken. In 1870, Johns Hopkins University introduced options of “majors,” allowing students more choice in their program (Cate & Miller, 2015). From the implementation of majors, academic advising began as one of the job descriptions of faculty members in higher education institutions. Specific theory or approaches were not necessarily employed, nor was there a body of scholarly work to support academic advising as a separate and unique profession.

In the late 1970’s, a conference organized by two advising professionals was held specifically for advising, allowing advisors to meet and discuss advising specifically (McGill, 2013). The success of the initial conference spurred the birth of NACADA, known then as the National Academic Advising Association (Changed to “The Global Community for Academic Advising” in 2013). As the profession of advising has evolved and the impact of good advising has been recognized as a positive factor in a student’s academic career, the interactions between students and advisors have also evolved (Drake, 2011). Today’s advisors grapple with balancing the time needed to make meaningful contact with students and ensuring that all students get the information they need to be academically successful. The role of an academic advisor is more defined than it was in the past and the expectations institutions have of an advisor increased in terms of their responsibility related to student retention and persistence (Drake, 2011).

Existing Advising Approaches

There are several approaches to academic advising that have been outlined by scholars in the past four decades (Drake, 2015). There are foundational approaches to academic advising such as prescriptive advising (Crookston, 1994), appreciative advising (Bloom, et al., 2008), and strengths-based advising (Schreiner & Anderson, 2005) that shaped how advisors interacted with students and assisted in their academic growth. Initially, prescriptive advising was the approach

that held the most influence in the field (Cate & Miller, 2015). This approach did not consider the autonomy of students and set advisors as a person of power who delivered academic information to students foregoing a focus on relationship building with the students (Brown & Rivas, 1994). Prescriptive advising puts the advisor in an authoritative role (Brown & Rivas, 1994).

As advising evolved from a prescriptive approach, some scholars began proposing different approaches. The first of these, developmental advising, was introduced by Crookston (1972) as a counterpoint to prescriptive advising and focused on the relationship between academic advisor and student. Advising scholars found the approach to more accurately describe how advisors were interacting with students (Grites, 2013). During this same time period, O'Banion (1972/2009) outlined an advising approach that mirrored the concepts introduced in Crookston's (1972) work including developing life skills and accomplishing life goals. The work of academic advising expanded beyond the student's academic success to include considerations of their personal and professional goals and interests, and the interconnectedness of each.

From these seminal works, several other approaches began to emerge in the field. Lowenstein and Stockton (1999) introduced academically centered advising, which evolved from developmental advising and aimed to have students actively participating in their academic choices and goals. This approach led Lowenstein to an "advising as teaching model," which posited that advising was an "interactive process" (Lowenstein, 2009, p. 130) with students' playing an active part in their education and achievement of their goals. In this perspective, the responsibility of the advisor is to deliver content to the students, encouraging them to be active learners, guiding them through their decision-making process, and holding students accountable for the decisions they make in a supportive and encouraging environment.

The concept of advising as teaching led to other approaches that highlighted the students as a responsible party of their academics. For instance, strengths-based advising (Schreiner & Anderson, 2005) holds that the student is motivated by their own strengths, which are identified through strategic interactions with advisors. This approach flipped some of the advising procedures, which tended to focus on deficits of students and how to avoid said deficits (Schreiner & Anderson, 2005). It also works to help students recognize academic strengths, leading to academic choices that align with their strengths.

Each of these approaches has a unique focus and objective. For academic advisors who are now entering the field, there are approaches that can align with internal values and intent as an advisor. There are also approaches that align with the objective of an entire advising office or practice and take snippets of several approaches to create an approach that works best for those students (White, 2015). As the field of academic advising evolves, so do the number of approaches available on which to base a practice. Adaptation of varying approaches align with the changes of how education is delivered (online versus in-person), the demographics of students (traditional-age versus adult learners), and the preferences of students advising experiences (developmental versus prescriptive).

Advisor Identity

While there are existing advising approaches that work for targeted student populations such as academically at risk or students in highly prescribed programs, they do not address the complex identities of the advisors themselves. The lack of attention to personal identity of advisors can hinder the use of personal strengths and values that can help advisors excel in their practice. More personalized approaches to advising practices could mean more professional growth for advisors, leading to more growth of the profession overall.

Professional identity evolves over time as people move further into careers (Wiles, 2013). As employees, individuals bring their personal beliefs, values, and interests along as part of their identity (Gee, 2000; Henderson & Bradey, 2008). Professional identity is shaped by the profession itself and the norms within that profession (Wiles, 2012). However, people can be different at work than they are in their personal life: “The notion of identity lies at the intersection between one’s personal history and individual psychology on the one hand and one’s cultural history and community of practice on the other hand” (Enyedy et al., 2006, p. 71). In fact, hiding a personal identity at work can be detrimental to professional identity as it can limit some of the potential interactions and advocacy that can come with a personal identity (Medlin & Wilby, 2023). Personal beliefs, values, and morals are incorporated in how people approach life and therefore have an influence on their professional identity.

Gender also has a significant influence on professional identity (Chowdhury & Gibson, 2019). Feminine traits are often seen as less important in the workforce, especially for those that are in positions of power (Pfaffman & McEwan, 2014). Many of the helping occupations are employed at higher rates by womxn. Nursing, occupational therapy, and social work are more than 90% employed by womxn (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022). Although no statistical evidence yet exists quantifying the demographic makeup of academic advisors, the profession seems to be predominately female, as seen in the makeup of the membership of NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising (M. Holladay, personal communication, April 8, 2024), which shows that 61% of the members identify as womxn (an alternative spelling to avoid the suggestion of sexism perceived in the sequences *m-a-n* and *m-e-n*; Kunz, 2019).

These professions typically carry an element of care or nurturing as part of the scaffolding of the profession. Caring has long been considered an expression of womxn and

connected to the work that womxn do (Kittay, 2019). However, some feminist scholars have pushed back against caring as a womxn's trait, considering caring as a form of oppression instead (Noddings, 1990). The competing interests of caring for students in an advising setting and knowing that demonstrating caring could cause professional stagnation is one that advisors and other helping professionals must grapple with and consider as they navigate their workplace settings.

A New Paradigm: Feminist Academic Advising

Feminist academic advising follows a set of expectations in relation to approach to practice and interactions with advisees. The three major components of a feminist academic advising practice are building strong and meaningful relationships with students through strategic interactions, paying close attention to the power dynamic between advisor and advisee in both the physical space and the academic realm that is inherent in higher education, and employing a lens of social justice and advocacy to the interactions and conversations with advisees. Feminist academic advising with seven central tenets that guide the approach to practice: the positionality of advisor, relationship-centered, being mindful of power dynamics, intentional about physical space, social justice and advocacy, a holistic understanding of students, and working towards resilience and community building.

The Positionality of the Advisor

For the personal component, advisors participate in “introspective analysis, assessment, and self-observation” (McClellan, 2007, para. 15). Although this aspect is included under “advisor self-awareness” in the informational component, the personal component “transcends mere knowledge of information and requires unique processes and skills in both training and practice” (McClellan, 2007, para. 15). Introspection about oneself and how that translates to

practice requires “an ongoing awareness of self and the application of skills in self-assessment, self-regulation and growth” and includes “one’s values and levels of concentration, stress, emotions, commitment” (McClellan, 2007, para. 15). Thus, to practice effectively and responsibly, advisors must know themselves and the worldview they bring to the advising context very well. This involves a deep understanding of one’s values and levels of concentration, stress, emotions, and commitment. This requires action: a decision must be made to commit to these (oftentimes difficult) exercises that force us to be honest with ourselves. Finally, like all forms of identity construction, the process is iterative and ongoing.

Relationship-Centered Approach

A goal of feminist advising is to empower the advisee to set the pace and expectation of the relationship in the initial encounter with the advisor, which could go in several directions. The student could be very confident and have an expectation that the advisor would be utilized for brief check-ins that are primarily related to academic progress or success. This type of relationship is about meeting the student where they are at while at the same time being flexible as the student’s needs change. A different student may need a much more hands-on approach in which the advisor is involved in a way that focuses on the relationship through mentoring, teaching, and guidance as academic goals are set and achieved. The student in the more involved relationship may need more help or be more intimidated by the collegiate structure and needs a person, in this case the advisor, who can act both as a guide and as a friend of sorts (Rawlins & Rawlins, 2005). The relationship is determined by the student and their needs.

Mindful of Power Dynamics

The first interaction with an advisor can be intimidating for a student (Smith, 2002). There may even be confusion about what advising is and why it is necessary at all. From a

feminist advising perspective, reducing the power dynamic between advisor and student is one of the first goals. To do this, several strategies can be employed. Rather than the first meeting being entirely about setting up an academic schedule, it would instead focus on creating an expectation of what the relationship between the advisor and the student would look like. Feminist advising is clear about the expectation of the advisor and allows for advisees to explore and express their needs. Communication by advisors about how advising is delivered and how the relationship can be modified to suit needs is a continual process. Much of the relationship surrounds collaborative decision-making and advisors' coaching students to help build confidence and a sense of empowerment. Feminist advising is aware of how a power dynamic can influence relationships and impact effectiveness of advising if not properly addressed and continually monitored throughout.

Intentionality in Physical Space

As each student enters into a feminist advising office, they should be greeted by an advisor and welcomed into their office space. Feminist advising offices have been intentionally decorated to be personalized, welcoming, and comfortable for students. This can be accomplished through photos on the wall, posters that show what that particular advisor is interested in, be it art, sports, birds, music, etc. The office could have rugs, special window covered, windchimes, or other items to make it feel less like an office and more like a home. The personalization of an office aligns with the disarm step of appreciative advising (Bloom et al., 2008), which aims to make the student comfortable from the first point of contact. A secondary goal of personalizing an office is to give the student some indication of what the advisor is like, the things they may find important in their life, or the way that they conduct their life. The entire

basis behind this is to attempt to put the student at ease when they first walk into the advisor's office.

The physical space of an advising office may not seem like an important factor of a feminist approach, but one of the most basic frameworks of feminist pedagogy being incorporated in a classroom setting is how the physical space is used (Dore, 1994). Intention of physical space begins from the first student encounter, "the physical environment of an academic advising office influences students the moment they arrive. The furniture, lighting, signage, comfort, and layout of the space impact how students perceive the environment" (Marshall, 2012, para. 5). The intention of the physical space is to make it seem open, inviting, and to reduce figurations in which one person is placed in a position of power over the rest of the class. A feminist learning environment is egalitarian, not hierarchical, in nature. In the setting of an advising office, in addition to making the physical space inviting and comfortable, paying attention to how a power dynamic may be created in an office would be an important factor of a feminist advising approach. Rather than having a desk in which an advisor sits behind and has a large physical barrier between student and advisor, creating an office space in which the student and advisor meet at a round table where the power dynamic is equalized would be more ideal.

Further, paying close attention to how the space creates barriers in general to a student is important as well. This would include making sure a student doesn't feel trapped in an office with the advisor between them and the door or having a chair for the student to sit in that is narrow and does not accommodate for differing body sizes. These seemingly small details can make a big impact in how comfortable a student feels in a space with a figure of authority.

Social Justice and Advocacy

Social justice and equity in higher education are increasingly being incorporated into how institutions cultivate their mission and values (Scott, 2020). Similarly, in feminism, social justice and equity are important underlying values that guide much of how feminism evolves. In a feminist advising space, social justice and equity concern access to education and resources for students who are working through their academic careers. Feminist advising incorporates advocacy to elevate the needs of students for whom they serve and can amplify policies or procedures that are harmful or inequitable for particular students. The continual contact with students makes advisors experts of how students can navigate the policies of a higher education institution and can seemingly identify those that are particularly harmful. When students observe feminist advising engage in the practice of navigating policies, they see ways in which power and privilege can be constructively leveraged, potentially amplifying, or inspiring their own empowerment to effect change for themselves or others. Additionally, the ability to make significant change is much more difficult to achieve and requires advisors to have seats at tables in which policies are being discussed with the intention of addressing those that are inequitable.

Fostering personal growth and delivering difficult information are aspects of advising that align closely with an advising is teaching approach. Feminist advising sees these kinds of interactions with students as helping to guide them in how to be an adult. Teaching skills like learning where to find and how to use resources, how to stand up for themselves, and how to navigate difficult situations are central to helping students build skills that will be applicable after they graduate. There is an inherent connection to the feminist ideal of helping others move forward, and in the sense of advising, using the advisor skill set combined with feminist mindset to guide students to be confident and independent.

A Holistic Understanding

Feminist advising is motivated by the globalization of feminism and implements it to help students to see a broader world around them. Rather than focusing solely on class selection and academics, an emphasis on carefully cultivated relationships drives the advising interactions. Various aspects of a feminist approach to advising come from other advising approaches but are used in a way that aligns more closely with feminist ideals such as social justice and advocacy. For example, a feminist advisor might be working with health majors and in doing so, might use the advising as teaching approach (Lowenstein, 2005) by casually reminding their students about the increased maternal mortality rate for black women. This topic may be coming up in the student's courses, but because part of the goal of a feminist approach to advising is to create deep and meaningful relationships with advisees, hearing it from an advisor may mean it is heard from a perspective outside of class, and therefore absorbed in a different way.

Feminist advising holds a holistic viewpoint as not only important in their relationships with students, but also in relationships with colleagues and supervisors as well. A collaborative office that is well supported and in which advisors are provided with professional and personal growth opportunities is essential to the continued growth of a feminist advising practice. The collaborative viewpoint makes operating in a feminist advising office more than a singular endeavor and creates a deeper working relationship and a stronger advising community.

Resilience and Community Building

Feminism has a basis in building community and using a collective to create change (Birdsong, 2020). Incorporating feminism into advising can provide advisors a place in which to build community and find strength in addressing issues that create barriers for students (Wilson et al., 2010). Similarly, feminist advising communities can work as a collective to address the

inequities that exist in relation to pay scale for advisors, power or lack thereof, and social justice concerns that affect underserved populations on a college campus or the surrounding community. Within feminism lies a notion that speaks to the deep meaningful friendships that are created through the power of working together to achieve a goal (Birdsong, 2020; Wilson et al., 2010). In the case of academic advising, where advocating for the profession is a common and necessary occurrence, feminist advising is equipped to address the issues that belay academic advisors and as a community to find reasonable and equitable solutions.

Vignette

Having posited a feminist approach to academic advising, I provide a vignette of Holly Gonzales, a dedicated academic advisor at a mid-sized university, known for her commitment to these feminist values. Her encounter with Chad Rogers, a junior business marketing student with a skeptical view of diversity and feminist principles, sets the stage for a deep dive into the practical application of feminist advising. Through their interaction, I explore the challenges and strategies involved in engaging students who may initially resist or misunderstand the essence of feminist advising.

The Scene

Dr. Holly Gonzales is a primary-role academic advisor at a mid-sized university. She is known for her feminist approach to advising, emphasizing relationship-building, advocacy, and empowering students through intentional interactions. She is preparing for her first appointment of the day, Chad Rogers, who is a junior studying business marketing. Chad is a white, male, cisgender student, who has expressed cynicism about the university's diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and has shown resistance to what he thinks of as "touchy feely" aspects of academic life, including any feminist principles.

The Encounter

Chad arrives at Dr. Gonzales' office, which she has intentionally designed to be welcoming and inclusive with art that reflects her Latinx heritage and her Queer identity, comfortable seating with pillows and blankets available for students to use, and a round table instead of a traditional desk to minimize power dynamics. Despite the inviting atmosphere, Chad arrives at the appointment with a guarded demeanor and immediately jumps into his academic concerns, dodging the broader discussions Dr. Gonzales usually initiates about life goals and personal well-being.

Applying Feminist Advising Principles

Recognizing Positionality

Dr. Gonzales acknowledges her own position as a feminist advisor and the potential biases and privileges at play. She understands that Chad's hesitancy could be rooted in a misunderstanding of feminism and its goals, and she is prepared to navigate this carefully, without compromising her values.

Relationship-Centered Approach

Because a meaningful relationship is a goal of the interaction, Dr. Gonzales listens to Chad's academic concerns, validating his feeling and experiences. She gently introduces questions about his long-term goals and interests outside academics, working to connect on a personal level without pushing too hard.

Mindfulness of Power Dynamics

Dr. Gonzales is careful to maintain a neutral atmosphere, asking Chad to share his thoughts and concerns openly. She reassures him that his perspectives are valuable and the advising relationship is collaborative.

Intentionality of Physical Space

The welcoming atmosphere of the office helps to disarm Chad slightly, making him more open to the conversation. Dr. Gonzales makes an effort to sit beside Chad rather than across from him, further reducing perceived power imbalance. She is also careful to ensure that Chad does not feel trapped within the office and has a clear sightline to the door.

Social Justice and Advocacy

Dr. Gonzales finds an opportunity to discuss the diversity that exists in business, framing it in a way that highlights the benefits of diverse perspectives in problem-solving and innovation. She is careful not to lecture, but instead tells stories or examples that can help to illustrate her point.

Holistic Understanding

Throughout the appointment, Dr. Gonzales works to understand Chad's perspective, including his hesitancy to embrace the diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on campus. She recognizes that Chad's resistance could come from feeling excluded from conversations about feminism and diversity. She tries to emphasize that feminism seeks to empower all, not just womxn, and that it values the contributions of diverse voices, including his.

Resilience and Community Building

Dr. Gonzales encourages Chad to spend some time with organizations on campus that help to support social justice, not to change his views, but to expose him to different perspectives. She also offers to connect him with peers or faculty that can share their experiences of how feminism and advocacy have positively impacted the personal and professional lives.

Reflection

As the appointment ends, Chad remains skeptical but appears more open-minded than when he arrived. Dr. Gonzales reflects on the importance of patience and resilience in her feminist advising practice. She recognizes that not all students will be immediately receptive to feminist practices, but she believes in the power of open dialogue and compassionate engagement to gradually build understanding and respect.

Discussion Questions

1. How can academic advisors maintain their commitment to feminist principles while engaging students who may be skeptical or resistant to these ideas?
2. In what ways can academic advisors navigate their own positionality and potential biases when advising students with differing views, particularly those who may express skepticism towards diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives?
3. Discuss the role of the physical space in an advising session. How does Dr. Gonzales' approach to designing a welcoming and inclusive office environment contribute to her feminist advising practice?
4. Reflect on the strategies Dr. Gonzales uses to introduce Chad to feminist principles without alienating him. How can advisors introduce concepts related to social justice and advocacy to students who might not see the relevance of these topics to their personal or academic lives?
5. How can academic advisors foster a relationship-centered approach in their practice, particularly with students who initially present a guarded demeanor? What specific actions or words can help break down barriers and encourage open dialogue?

6. Dr. Gonzales attempts to connect Chad's academic pursuits in business marketing with the value of diverse perspectives. How can advisors tailor their approach to highlight the intersection of students' academic interests with broader social issues?
7. The vignette highlights the importance of resilience and community building in feminist advising. Discuss how academic advisors can encourage students to engage with different perspectives on campus. What are some effective ways to introduce students to organizations or activities that support social justice without making them feel pressured?
8. Reflect on the significance of storytelling and personal examples in communicating feminist principles. How can advisors utilize these tools to make abstract concepts more relatable and impactful for students?
9. Consider the balance between challenging students to think critically about their perspectives and respecting their current viewpoints. How can academic advisors navigate this balance effectively during advising sessions?
10. Dr. Gonzales reflects on the importance of patience in her practice. Discuss the role of patience and long-term engagement in the success of feminist advising. How can advisors measure the impact of their efforts, especially when changes in student attitudes or understandings may be gradual?

This vignette illustrates the complexities of applying a feminist advising approach with students who may initially resist it. It underscores the importance of compassion, patience, and strategic engagement in breaking down barriers and fostering a more inclusive and supportive academic environment. This vignette not only highlights the complexities faced by advisors in adopting a feminist approach but also illustrates the transformative potential of such practices in creating a more inclusive and supportive academic environment. Through Holly's story, we are

invited to reflect on the importance of compassion, patience, and strategic engagement in academic advising, providing a compelling case for the integration of feminist principles in the advisory relationship.

Implications

The adoption of a feminist model in academic advising promises a transformative shift within the educational landscape, poised to redefine interactions between advisors and students, the institutional approach to student support, and the broader scholarly understanding of advising practices. This section outlines the implications of embracing feminist principles in academic advising, suggesting the anticipated impacts and opportunities for advising administrators, institutions, and researchers alike. These perspectives underscore the critical role of feminist advising in enhancing academic advising's responsiveness to evolving student needs, advocating for equity, and contributing to the scholarly discourse on effective advising practices.

For Advising Administrators

As more advisors embrace a feminist approach, administrators can encourage more research to further refine and establish best practices. This would not only enhance an additional approach to advising, which is always needed in a profession that is continually adapting alongside students, but it would also encourage more advisors to participate in research and scholarly activities. Additionally, advising professionals are always in need of new and interesting professional development opportunities. A new approach to advising allows for a cache of new professional development activities that emphasize feminist pedagogies and strategies, reinforcing the alignment of academic advising as teaching and a necessary component of students' academic success.

For Institutions

As the practice of feminist advising grows, institutions must recognize and value the unique contributions of feminist academic advisors. As such, providing resources, training, and platforms that support the incorporation of feminist values into academic advising would behoove institutions that aim to support feminist advising practices. Institutions that support and value the impact feminist advising has on student success and persistence could attract advising talent that would utilize their feminist skill set and values to create a safe space for students to succeed in.

For Researchers

Scholarly researchers can delve deeper into the practices of feminist academic advisors, particularly in understanding how different contexts, student populations, or institutional settings might shape or influence these practices. Feminist advisors who conduct or participate in research can create scholarly works that advance both the profession of advising and the newer approach of feminist advising. Additionally, focus on individual experience related to being a feminist advisor can help to inform other approaches to advising and student success.

Conclusion

Feminist academic advising is spurred by a personal approach to relationships and pedagogy driven by feminism. In practice, a feminist academic advisor is one that cares about their student, pays close attention to how their own power can influence the relationship with their students and works to find ways to reduce that power dynamic through attention to physical space, relationship interactions, and building confidence in advisees. As is the same in feminism, there is not one approach that would constitute a feminist advising protocol, but rather a

grouping of guidelines that create a framework of what feminist academic advising would encompass.

Feminist academic advising is an important contribution to the profession of advising and for advancing advising practice that aligns with personal identity of advisors. Advising holds an inherent component of caring, which can be considered a feminist skill. As student populations shift and change, so do approaches to advising. Feminist advisors not only recognize this change, but have a unique set of skills related to feminism that makes them particularly adept at providing exemplary care to students. Academic advising is less about course selection and four-year progress and so much more about supporting students through exciting and challenging times. With a feminist approach that encompasses an equity minded and social justice-based practice, students will be receiving care that is consistent with student success.

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Chapter 5 - Conclusions

The purpose of this collected papers dissertation was to better understand how feminism and feminist pedagogy intersect with the academic advising profession. Two studies (one structured literature review and one phenomenology) were produced as a part of this research as well as a conceptual paper that outlined the proposed framework of a feminist advising approach. This concluding chapter consists of five sections: (a) summary of paper #1, the structured literature review; (b) summary of paper #2, the feminist phenomenology; (c) summary of paper #3; (d) an overview of findings of the collected papers dissertation; and (e) the overarching implications of this collected papers dissertation for research, and practice.

Summary of Paper #1: “Feminist Pedagogy of an Exemplary Helping Profession: A Structured Literature Review”

Nursing is an exemplary helping profession that incorporates feminist pedagogy (first introduced by Crowley, 1989) in the education and training of nurses, as well as the practice of the profession. Helping professions are “occupations that provide health and education services to individuals and groups” (APA, 2022, para. 1). For the last 30 years, nursing has been ranked as the number one most trusted profession in the nation (Riley et al., 2021). The high level of respect and trust has much to do with the service and care nurses provide the public in vulnerable times. Nurses are held to high ethical standards that “require the openness, sensitivity and knowledge to be able to respond to differences” (Peter & Morgan, 2001, p. 7). The trusting nature of the profession of nursing is what keeps it in a category of respect in the public eye. In addition to trust and care, nurses are expected to be knowledgeable in complicated medical situations (Bono-Neri, 2019). The combination of specialized knowledge and ethical standards makes nursing stand out as an exemplary profession.

The purpose of this structured literature review (Rocco et al., 2023) was to examine how the scholarly literature of feminist pedagogy is used in an exemplary helping profession, nursing. This review was guided by the following research questions: How does the literature describe the use of feminist pedagogy in the nursing profession? As nursing is an exemplary helping profession and one that is respected for the high levels of ethical standards (Riley et al., 2021), exploring the scholarly work available can help to gain an understanding of how it is being employed and can be applied to other caring professions, such as academic advising. This paper is structured by three sections: method, findings, and discussion and implications.

Structured literature reviews intend to explore the available literature concerning a specific research question or questions (Rocco et al., 2023). Once the question(s) is/are identified, parameters are established to guide the continuation of the review. The parameters can include date ranges, specific databases, types of kind of scholarly work, and a variety of others. It is generally up to the reviewer/researcher to create the parameters, but once established, they must strictly adhere to them. Accepted works are organized using analysis (analysis can be completed through several methods depending on the intention of the review) and then organized into a scholarly manuscript.

Data was collected for a one-week period and consisted of five phases:

- Phase 1: Initial Search using Allied Health Nursing
- Phase 2: Initial Search Using Google Scholar
- Phase 3: Secondary Consultation with Librarian
- Phase 4: First Read Through
- Phase 5: Second Read Through

The final sample consisted of 12 publications (conceptual, empirical studies, literature reviews), book chapters, and practitioner pieces.

Records including citation information (article title, author, year, journal); the type of article (e.g., empirical, book chapter); and the way the article became a part of the sample (Phase 1 or Phase 2) were kept both in an Excel file and in Zotero. In Zotero, notes were kept in the notes function attached to each article. Articles were read first via printouts with highlighted sections and then online and were highlighted using Adobe Acrobat tools function and were then copied over to the notes function in Zotero.

Thematic analysis is “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). The intention of thematic analysis is to find “repeated meaning across a data set” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 86). For this study, thematic analysis was used to identify similarities in the articles selected for review. Reading through each article and using basic descriptive questions such as “what is happening in this article?” “What were the author or authors aiming to explore in this article?” “What key points are being made in this article?” (Lochmiller, 2021, p. 2035) as starting points, I pulled important or interesting portions. These items were copied over into a notes section in Zotero with the intention of sorting them into similar groupings. From this point, I began coding the data.

Data was categorized using the 6-step analysis protocol (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Articles were first read to familiarize myself with the information within (step 1). After articles were thoroughly reviewed for content, I pulled out sections or ideas that were interesting and begin to group them by relevancy (step 2). Next, using coding software, I pulled together interesting ideas and placed them in larger coding groups and with the help of the software, themes began to emerge (step 3). As the themes emerged, I explored them further to determine if there was

enough significance to continue with them (step 4). Significance was determined through saturation or through connection to feminist pedagogical guidelines. If there was enough significance, the themes that remained were explained so that others can understand both where they emerged, and how they are significant (step 5). Lastly, these finalized themes will be wrapped up into a findings section (step 6).

Three themes emerged: classroom climate, curriculum design, and care vs. cure. Each of the themes highlighted how womxn within the nursing field faced obstacles that were both inherent to the medical fields and to being womxn in general. Additionally, there were also significant areas of celebration of the power of womxn within nursing and medical fields, both as practitioners and as people.

Classroom climate in nursing education encompasses both physical arrangements and pedagogical approaches that foster cooperation, mutual respect, and trust among students and instructors. Recognizing the impact of physical space on student participation, feminist pedagogy emphasizes the instructor's positioning and engagement to encourage active involvement. Moreover, nurturing connections through care and interest in nursing courses can enhance the student-instructor dynamic, promoting a safe environment for exploration of beliefs and values. Curriculum design in nursing education often reflects a masculine and Eurocentric bias, perpetuating patriarchal structures that marginalize women's perspectives. Shifting towards a more balanced and womxn-centered curriculum aims to dismantle patriarchal norms, legitimizing womxn's experiences and contributions in the nursing field. Embracing feminist pedagogy in nursing education elevates the importance of care alongside technical skills, empowering students to become agents of transformation in healthcare, where caring is valued on par with curing. Through this approach, nursing students are encouraged to see themselves as

professionals who embody both technical expertise and compassionate care, thus reshaping the paradigm of nursing education and practice.

Summary of Paper #2: “The Lived Experiences of Primary-role Advisors Who Identify as Feminists”

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore how primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and feminists describe the role feminism plays in their advising practice. This study was guided by the following research question: How do primary-role advisors who identify as womxn and as feminists describe the role feminism plays in their advising practice? While much of the advising literature focuses on the perspective of the student in relation to academic advising, very little takes on the perspective of the advisor and how their individual values influence their advising practice.

To capture the experiences of female primary role academic advisors who are feminists, I employed a phenomenological approach. A feminist phenomenology highlights womxn voices as a unique and equally relevant and important perspective (Simms & Starwarska, 2013) and provides a logical approach to both protecting and celebrating the female participants and their unique views as womxn. The study provides a space to explore how the participants navigate their personal and professional spaces. The basis of this study was a description of how personal identity of academic advisors informs their advising practice, as described by the 22 womxn who participated in the study.

The interviews were focused around Seidman’s (2006) three categories of interviews: contextualization (the world in which the participant lives and experiences/the institution), apprehending the phenomenon (identifying how feminism plays into both work life and personal life for the participants/the womxn), and clarifying the phenomenon (description of the

phenomenon according to the participant/the practice). Accordingly, the three interviews revolved around the womxn (first interview), their practice (second interview), and their institution (third interview).

Data was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify and categorize themes within a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In feminist phenomenology, the researcher is enveloped in the research, including their own perspective alongside their participants. To analyze the data, I began by reading through the transcripts of each interview. Once I had a better understanding of the participants' responses, I moved onto first cycle coding (Saldaña, 2015) by “identifying meaningful and potentially relevant passages that will be analyzed further” (Lochmiller, 2021, p. 2035). Next, I looked for frequency of patterns within the first cycle coding. If frequencies were identified, these patterns were labeled as a potential theme and grouped together based on similarity. The identified potential themes were analyzed to “identify disconnections” (Lochmiller, 2021, p. 2036) among patterns. These disconnections were coded as potential themes, then reviewed and further defined.

Three themes emerged from the aspect of advising practice of feminist advisors. First, being mindful of physical space is essential to creating comfort for interacting with students. These spaces are meant to convey comfort, safety, and personalization of the advisor themselves. Some advisors used their physical spaces to showcase their love of art or their alma mater, others chose to use their physical space to create a space that could feel like a home to students. Feminist advisors are aware of how the physical space can be limiting to some and organize their space in a way to be accommodating to all. This includes laying out their space to help the student feel safe and not trapped when meeting with them.

Second was communication creates connection and relationships. For feminist academic advisors, cultivating and nurturing relationships was a pillar of the essence of their advising practice. Much of the relationship building began with rapport creation by using simple questions to understand more about the student and their particular needs. There was an emphasis on the student being the one that set the pace of the relationship and determined the need. Many advisors emulated positive relationships they had with their own academic advisors as undergraduate or, conversely, were devoted to creating an advising relationship with their students that they did not have with their own advisor.

Third was the aspect of providing care and nurturing to students. Similar to nursing, caring is an aspect of advising that is not necessarily highlighted as a part of the profession but is clearly an important aspect. For feminist advisors, providing care and being a helper to students is an essential element to their practice. Some described this as being a big sister or a cheerleader and found it to be one of the most fulfilling parts of their profession and their practice. Most also spoke of their desire to use their positions as advisors to help students to make informed and intelligent decisions.

Implications for the field are related to additional areas of potential research and the need for more research on the experiences of advisors. So much of the research in the advising field is related to the perspective of the students and there is significant need for more research to be done that highlights how advisors themselves interact with students, with colleagues, with scholarly work, and with their own identity.

Summary of Paper #3: “Feminist Academic Advising: A New Paradigm for Equity and Inclusion”

The purpose of this conceptual paper was to introduce a model of feminist academic advising and to demonstrate the tenets of this model that differ from other existing models. By incorporating the information gleaned from the structured literature review and how feminist pedagogy has been incorporated into the exemplary helping profession of nursing as well as information gleaned from primary role advisors who identify as feminists, this paper puts forth seven tenets that embody the practice of feminist advising.

The first tenet is the positionality of the advisor and how their own personal values, understanding of self, and commitment to continued growth. Positionality of the advisor signifies how they enter into the field, regardless of training, theory, or professional development influences their practice as they mature as an advisor. The second tenet is a relationship centered approach led by the needs and pace of the student. The feminist advisor pays close attention to how a student approaches the advising relationship and adjusts accordingly to ensure that the student remains in control. The third tenet is being mindful of power dynamics and how they can influence the relationship and comfort level of students, as well as how advisors hold power simply due to their status as an authority figure. This can include having a better understanding of how a student might approach an advising interaction and may be hesitant because of the inherent power that exists between an advisor and student. The fourth tenet is an intentionality paid towards the physical space in which advising interactions are being held. Feminist advisors are aware of how their physical space is set up to create a welcoming and warm space. The fifth tenet is a focus on social justice and advocacy and what role it plays both in advising relationships and in how advisors can influence the institutions they work for. This can be

demonstrated through using the position as an advisor to help inform students about social justice related topics that may otherwise not be discussed. The sixth tenet is a holistic understanding in relation to the work that advisors do stretches well beyond class selection and four-year planning. This may include advising students out of college or helping them through difficult situations outside of academics. Lastly, the seventh tenet is a commitment to resilience and community building through bringing other feminist advisors together to bring about change. Feminism has long had a relationship with community building, and it should be no different for feminist academic advisors.

Implications stemming from feminist advising practices can be categorized into three key areas: advising administrators, institutions, and researchers. Administrators can incorporate the use of feminist advising by encouraging research to define best practices, adding to the advising profession and incentivizing advisors' engagement in scholarly activities. Institutions must acknowledge and appreciate the unique contributions of feminist advisors, offering support, training, and platforms to integrate feminist values into academic advising, increasing student success and attracting new advisors aligned with feminist principles. Researchers are encouraged to delve into the intricacies of feminist advising practices across various contexts and student populations, allowing for a deeper understanding of their impact and potential to inform broader approaches to advising and student success. By prioritizing feminist perspectives in advising, administrators, institutions, and researchers collectively contribute to the growth and effectiveness of academic advising practices.

Overview of the Findings of the Collected Papers

The collected papers dissertation provides a comprehensive exploration of feminist pedagogy and its application in nursing education and academic advising. The overarching

findings from these studies underscore the transformative potential of feminist pedagogy in creating inclusive, equitable, and empowering educational environments. The scholarly work of academic advising has explored many aspects of the field, including how advisors can best support students, how advisors can incorporate advising theory and approaches into their practice, and the impact advising has on institutions. From the papers in this dissertation emerged four overarching findings: emphasis on inclusive and welcoming environments, challenging traditional power dynamics, integrating personal experiences and social justice, and a holistic approach to education and advising.

Emphasis on Inclusive and Welcoming Environments

The findings in this dissertation illuminate the critical importance of crafting environments that are not only physically welcoming but also emotionally supportive and inclusive. This is demonstrated by KK, a participant in paper #2,

I tried to make it comfortable for students when they enter so it feels welcoming and not like a kind of a medical space or like, bare. And I think that does help defuse kind of the atmosphere when students walk in and are like, well, this is nice.

This is evident in the transformation of physical spaces within academic advising and nursing education to promote comfort and a sense of belonging. By minimizing physical barriers and creating a climate of mutual respect and understanding, educators and advisors can foster a more inclusive atmosphere that caters to diverse student needs and backgrounds.

This approach is not limited to the physical arrangement of spaces but extends to the pedagogical practices that encourage active participation and recognize the varied experiences of students. For instance, the findings from paper #1 suggest that to engage all students and embrace a feminist approach to teaching, nursing instructors must reject passive teaching and

instead partake in active teaching with efforts to engage students with the content through participation (Lamont, 2013). The environment in a feminist classroom itself must feel supportive and safe in order for students to be willing to contribute (McAllister & Ryan, 1995). The focus on inclusivity and safety underscores a broader commitment to creating educational spaces where all students, particularly those from marginalized groups, can thrive without the fear of discrimination or exclusion.

Challenging Traditional Power Dynamics

A central finding across the studies is the concerted effort to challenge and redefine the traditional power dynamics that have historically characterized the helper-helped, educator-student, and advisor-advisee relationships. Feminist pedagogy advocates for a shift towards more egalitarian and collaborative models of interaction, where the voices of students are given equal importance, and learning is a shared responsibility. Lynn, a participant from paper #2, shared how she incorporates this into her advising practice:

Sometimes we're a place where students who are making big decisions just aren't quite ready to make that decision all by themselves [and] are very nervous about the experience of making [it]. And they just want to say it out loud and bounce it off somebody who's not their parent, who's not their best friend who's they've already had the conversation with, and they just want to see how someone else responds to what and part of it is also helping them realize these experiences are all very normal.

This approach involves not only a reevaluation of the roles of educators and advisors but also a deliberate effort to empower students to take an active role in their learning and decision-making processes.

From paper #1, the scholarly work of feminist pedagogy in nursing emphasized empowerment being based on how womxn can be empowered and how instructors can mitigate the imbalance of power within a classroom (Tedesco-Schneck, 2018). However, this notion assumes that power is to be given or taken, and instead of this being the standard, a feminist classroom should assume that power belongs to all within that community and should be shared and distributed as a flowing energy (Beck, 1995; Weyenberg, 1998). By dismantling hierarchical structures, feminist pedagogy aims to cultivate an environment where students feel valued and empowered to contribute their perspectives, thereby fostering a more dynamic and engaging learning experience.

Integrating Personal Experiences and Social Justice

The integration of personal experiences and a focus on social justice emerge as critical elements in both nursing education (Paper #1) and academic advising (Paper #2). There should be a focus on social justice and an intention to increase awareness of political issues that will affect their eventual professional roles as nurses (Falk-Rafael et al., 2004). This involves acknowledging the unique contributions and perspectives that students bring to their education and recognizing the importance of these experiences in shaping their professional and personal identities. The curriculum design and advising practices that prioritize these aspects reflect a commitment to valuing diversity and promoting equity. By incorporating feminist scholarship and principles of social justice, educators and advisors can challenge traditional narratives and highlight the role of women and other marginalized groups in their fields. Carol, a participant from paper #2, describes her feminist pedagogy in advising influencing how she approaches her professional practice:

I think it makes me very aware that it gives me a lens at my job for seeing the ways that sort of systemic patriarchal, white supremacist, like kind of cis normative heteronormative social structures really benefit some students. And disadvantage other students.

This approach not only enriches the learning experience but also aligns educational practices with broader societal goals of achieving equity and representation.

The multifaceted nature of feminist academic advising, offering theoretical insights and practical implications for theory, research, and practice, opens a new avenue for advisors to incorporate their own values and professional skills related to their personal identity into their practice. As observed in paper #1, the use of feminist pedagogy as a strategy to empower new nurses can be emulated in how academic advisors utilize feminist pedagogy in working with students to help them build efficacy as professionals. In addition, the use of feminist pedagogy in nursing shows that building advocacy and social justice in students comes from how students are given space to question knowledge and build their own relationships with what they are learning. Similarly, feminist academic advisors can help students build the ability to question knowledge and build confidence in how their own experiences have helped them to understand what they are learning.

Holistic Approach to Education and Advising

Fourth, the findings underscore the significance of adopting a holistic approach that extends beyond the confines of academic achievement to encompass personal growth, resilience, and community engagement. This comprehensive perspective recognizes the multifaceted nature of students' lives and the various factors that influence their educational journey. By fostering a supportive and nurturing environment, educators and advisors can help students navigate

challenges, build resilience, and develop a sense of community and belonging. Ellenne, a participant from paper #2, described this: “It's really important for me to kind of help them advocate and know that wherever they are on campus, they have somebody in their corner.” This holistic approach is instrumental in preparing students not just for professional success but also for meaningful participation in their communities and society at large, embodying the transformative potential of feminist pedagogy in fostering well-rounded and empowered individuals.

Feminist pedagogy has been incorporated into the professional education and practice of several helping professions and has been successful in providing a platform for empowerment and advocacy. Incorporating the values and advocacy that aligns with feminist pedagogy into academic advising and subsequently into higher education would provide both academic advisors with a deeper understanding of how their professional practice can influence and support students. Aliya Candella, a participant from paper #2 described this as

I'm trying to be a collaborative partner not just telling them what to do. I think that just builds better skills for after university when they will not have a set person that they can go to for all of their questions. And often they know the answers to so they'll build confidence in that they can manage it on their own.

For students, the incorporation of a feminist pedagogical lens to their academic advising experience would increase their efficacy in learning how to advocate for themselves, how to build and curate meaningful relationships, and how to take these skills and apply them to their academic life as well as their personal life.

Finally, from an institutional and larger educational standpoint, having advisors incorporating feminist pedagogy into advising would increase care for students, potentially

leading to higher rates of retention and persistence as well as happier and more fulfilled students. As institutions change missions to integrate learning outcomes that include and celebrate differing viewpoints and cultural efficacies, a feminist pedagogical approach from advising can help lead students into understanding, accepting, and embracing new and sometimes difficult information. Students who have feminist advisors assisting in the dissection of new information, providing them with a space to safely explore their feelings, can only benefit from being given the resources and capacity to make decisions and move forward with the backing of a caring professional.

Overarching Implications of the Collected Papers

Findings from this dissertation are expected to inform the field of academic advising, to give professional academic advisors a new approach for their advising practice, and to add to the body of literature related to how advisor personal identity influences their practice as an advisor. These findings have important implications for the profession of academic advising in the available research that advisors and institutions can use as a basis for new advising approaches and for ways to increase social justice, advocacy, and to use other helping professions as examples of how to incorporate new and potentially innovative ideas into advising practice.

Research

Introducing new professional approaches into an existing field takes time and patience, as well as a willing body of the field to incorporate the new approach into their personal practice. Within the field of academic advising, adaptation and innovation are not new concepts (Himes, 2014). Rather, changing to meet the needs of students and of the institution's advisors are embedded within is a constant norm of the profession. Advisors have adapted through the changes of advising moving from a job responsibility primarily of faculty (Kuhn, 2008) to a

professional position with a focus based chiefly on helping student succeed in a secondary academic setting (Schulenberg & Lindhorst, 2008). Advising has evolved through theory from a position that largely assisted in class selection to providing students with strategies for success well beyond collegiate years (Drake, 2011).

First, the research presented highlights a significant area for further inquiry into the application of feminist pedagogy across a broader spectrum of disciplines and professional fields. This necessitates a multidisciplinary approach to research that examines how feminist principles can be integrated into various educational contexts, from STEM fields to the humanities. Exploring the adaptability and impact of feminist pedagogy in different settings can reveal valuable insights into how these principles can be tailored to meet the unique challenges and opportunities within each discipline. Such research could not only expand the scope of feminist pedagogy but also contribute to a more nuanced understanding of its potential to foster inclusivity, equity, and empowerment in education. This exploration is crucial for developing more comprehensive strategies that support diverse learning environments and prepare students to engage critically with the world around them.

Second, the call for research into the long-term outcomes of feminist pedagogical approaches presents an exciting opportunity to assess the enduring impact of these educational practices on students' lives. This includes examining how feminist pedagogy influences students' professional trajectories, personal development, and their capacity to contribute to social change. Longitudinal studies could provide valuable data on the effectiveness of feminist pedagogy in equipping students with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions necessary to navigate and transform their personal and professional worlds. Investigating these long-term outcomes can offer compelling evidence of the transformative power of feminist education, shedding light on

its role in shaping future leaders, innovators, and change-makers committed to social justice and equity.

Third, comparative studies between traditional and feminist pedagogical approaches opens a pathway for critical evaluation and reflection on educational practices. By contrasting the outcomes of these different approaches, researchers can identify the specific components of feminist pedagogy that contribute to more equitable and empowering educational experiences. Such comparative analysis can also reveal areas where traditional pedagogical methods may fall short in addressing the needs of a diverse student body. This research is essential for articulating the value of feminist pedagogy in concrete terms and providing evidence-based recommendations for educators and institutions seeking to adopt more inclusive and effective teaching strategies. Ultimately, comparative studies can play a pivotal role in advancing educational practices that honor diversity, promote equity, and empower learners to become active agents in their own education and in broader societal transformation.

The evolution of advising and the commitment of the scholars within the field to identify and name the complex nature of the work that advisors are doing has resulted in a large and diverse body of work. From strengths based (Schreiner & Anderson, 2005), to appreciative (Bloom et al., 2015), to proactive advising (Glennen, 1975) and beyond, academic advising as a profession and the advisors as professionals have consistently adapted to address the unique needs of the students who are attending higher education institutions. None of these approaches, however, truly addresses the unique values that advisors bring with them into the profession. Theory can inform the practice of advisors and should, but it will not be the only thing that advisors use to hone their craft. Instead, advisors are using intuition, their own experiences as advisees, their understanding of the world and the ways that students will be experiencing the

world upon graduation, and all of the experiences they bring from their own lives into their practice. When asked what informs their practice as an advisor, many participants in study #2 had not really considered that prior to being asked this question. As a professional field, many assume that advisors are using specific theories or scholarly work to inform their own practice, and while that may be true for some, many are doing their work based on what they know, the experiences they have had as an advisor working with students and seeing what works and why it works.

The field of advising needs more research on why advisors craft their own practice in the way they do, regardless of the theory that may be present. While scholarly work or bodies of research may be present in advising practice in an underlying sense, the participants in study #2 made it clear that much of their professional practice was guided by intuition and experience. There must be more scholarly work that explores this aspect of academic advising and the role that experience of advisors plays in how practice is formed. Study #1, exploring the use of feminist pedagogy in nursing, only looked at how feminist pedagogy is used in the education of nurses because the use of feminist pedagogy in nursing practice is nearly nonexistent in the available literature. The same seems to be true in advising literature, where there is plenty of research that informs advisors on how to craft their practice, but very little on what that actually looks like in their day-to-day work life.

Practice

The role of academic advisors has never been more critical. The participants from study #2, embodying a broad spectrum of advisors applying both theory and deeply-held personal values, exemplify a progressive approach towards student advising. Emphasizing the significance of feminist academic advising, this approach aims not only to navigate the

multifaceted needs of students but also to celebrate and leverage the unique skills advisors bring to their practice. This paradigm shift underscores the necessity of a more profound exploration into what motivates advisors personally, how their values and experiences shape their work, and the crucial role their voices play in the broader educational field.

The participants from study #2 are no different than the thousands of other advisors who are using theory and personal values to help guide their advising practice. However, feminist advisors, both those that participated in this study and those that exist in the profession but were not participants in the study, are unique in that their personal values promote care, kindness, advocacy, and a willingness to meet students where their needs are. As students who are entering college are experiencing more complex needs, the ability of academic advisors to meet and address those needs becomes more important to the success of students. Feminist academic advising aims to address not only the complex needs of students, but to also highlight and celebrate the unique skills of advisors that they bring to practice beyond theory.

There is so little scholarly work available that explores what drives advisors personally, how they approach work based on their own values and experiences, and why they continue to stay within the field. More needs to be done to understand why advisors are in this field and how their personal identity and background informs both their practice and how they interact and support students. Moreover, the experiences advisors had as advisees should also be explored as it can inform how they have crafted their practice and why they have chosen to develop certain skills or approaches to work with students. Theory and research that looks at the technical side of advising and how it is performed is essential to the field, but so is the understanding of the advisors themselves.

The hesitancy of the field to highlight the voices of the advisors and why they are in the profession is likely somewhat due to the misunderstanding of advisors that their voice matters, regardless of their rank as a professional. Many primary-role advisors are not aware of how important their voices are within the field and the accompanying body of scholarly work truly is. There is a growing group of scholars within the field that are producing unique and interesting work beyond the student perception of advising and theoretical basis for advising. However, this area of advising literature needs significantly more contributions and continued work to advance the profession even further. Those advisors who are not sure if their voices matter need to be reassured that it does matter and is essential to the growth of the field.

First, the findings from the research underscore a pressing need for reform in both curriculum design and advising practices to better reflect feminist pedagogical principles. By embedding feminist principles more deeply into these aspects, educators and advisors can create inclusive, equitable, and empowering learning environments. This reform process involves a critical examination of existing practices to identify and eliminate biases, ensure representation of diverse perspectives, and foster a learning atmosphere that values and uplifts all voices. For advising, this means adopting approaches that respect student autonomy, acknowledge the whole person, and support students in navigating both academic and personal challenges in a manner that is informed by an understanding of the systemic inequalities they may face.

Second, educators and advisors need access to ongoing training and resources that equip them with the knowledge and skills to implement feminist pedagogy effectively. This includes understanding how to create inclusive and welcoming spaces, recognizing, and addressing power dynamics in educational settings, and adopting a holistic approach that considers students' emotional, psychological, and social well-being alongside their academic development.

Professional development programs should focus on practical strategies for applying feminist principles in diverse educational contexts, including how to facilitate discussions around sensitive topics, integrate social justice into curriculum planning, and support students' personal growth and resilience.

Institutions and advising administrators can help move this part of the profession forward by encouraging advising staff to participate in scholarly work, both through formal and informal means. Participation in conferences as presenters or attendees is important to increase the awareness of the interesting and innovative work advising professionals are doing across the field. Creation of scholarly work in the form of journal articles, book chapters, and conference proceedings can highlight new theory and ways of professional practice that other advising professionals can incorporate into their own practice. Additionally, as an added benefit and motivation for institutions, those that highlight the work that their advising professionals are doing will be seen as institutional leaders within higher education and the field of academic advising.

Third, to sustain and expand the impact of feminist pedagogy, institutional support and policy changes are essential. Educational institutions must commit to supporting equitable and empowering practices at all levels, from classroom interactions to broader institutional policies. Implementing policy changes that facilitate a more inclusive and supportive educational environment requires a commitment from leadership to prioritize equity and justice. This could include allocating resources for the professional development of staff, revising assessment and evaluation criteria to reflect feminist principles, and ensuring that institutional policies do not inadvertently reinforce existing inequalities.

Finally, the emphasis on community building and resilience within feminist pedagogy highlights the importance of fostering strong, supportive networks among students, educators, and advisors. Educational institutions should actively work to create spaces where individuals can come together to share experiences, offer support, and collaborate on initiatives that challenge systemic barriers to equity in education. This involves not just individual efforts but also institutional commitments to promoting a culture of solidarity, mutual support, and collective empowerment. By investing in community-building activities and resources, institutions can help cultivate environments where students feel valued, understood, and capable of overcoming challenges, thereby enhancing their academic success and personal development.

Conclusion

Feminist academic advising is an important contribution to the profession of advising and for advancing advising practice that aligns with personal identity of advisors. Advising holds an inherent component of caring, which can be considered a feminist skill. As student populations shift and change, so do approaches to advising. Feminist advisors not only recognize this change, but have a unique set of skills related to feminism that makes them particularly adept at providing exemplary care to students. Academic advising is less about course selection and four-year progress and so much more about supporting students through exciting and challenging times. With a feminist approach that encompasses an equity minded and social justice-based practice, students will be receiving care that is consistent with student success.

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Interview Questions

Interview One: The Institution

1. Describe your institution: size, general location (region), student demographic, types of educational programs.
2. Have you been at different institutions in the past? Can you describe the size, general location, and types of educational programs of those institutions as well?
3. What is your office space like? Do you work in a cubicle farm or are you in a private office?
4. What kind of program(s) are you advising for?
5. What is your advising load like? Does it fluctuate at all?
6. Tell me about your supervisor. Are they supportive of you and your work?
7. What about your colleagues, are they supportive of your work? What is the demographic makeup of your colleagues?
8. Do you feel appreciated as an advisor within your institution? Is advising prioritized?
9. What do you think the general perception of advisors are on your campus?
10. Is there a network in place for advisors on your campus? Do you feel a sense of community among your fellow advisors?
11. Is there anything else you would like to share about your institution and your experience as a primary role advisor there?

Follow up questions will be noted throughout the interview, but not used during the first interview. Upon conclusion of the first interview, participants will be given a transcript of the interview within 48 hours and asked to provide any changes or clarifications they would like to include. In addition to the transcript, I will also schedule the next interview (second interviews

should be done within two weeks of the initial interview). Otter ai will be used to transcribe the interviews for clarity and time management.

Interview Two: The Womxn

1. What brought you to advising? Tell me about your background and your education.
Please include your interactions with your advisors as an undergraduate.
2. How do you define your feminism?
3. Did you experience a growth in your feminism? Can you identify the steps of your feminism?
4. In what ways does being a feminist intersect with your everyday life?
5. What about with your work life?
6. Do you feel like feminism is a good vessel for including an aspect of caring into your life?
7. Does your feminism affect how you approach ethical situations?
8. Does your feminism make you a better advisor?
9. Is there anything else about your feminism you would like to share with me?

Journaling Prompt (secondary data source):

Between interview 2 and 3, participants will be sent a journal prompt outlining the stages of feminist identity development and asked to use the stages to identify where they are in their own development and how they think this impacts their personal and professional identity, as well as their relationship to their work.

Interview Three: The Practice

1. Tell me about a typical advising interaction. How do you start each interaction?
2. What is the basis of your advising practice?

3. How do you communicate your advising practice and how you interact with students?
4. What do you consider the most important aspect of advising? Why?
5. As a feminist, how do you see your feminism influencing your general work interactions?
6. Do you think that being a feminist in higher education is difficult? Do you think that being an advisor in higher education is difficult? Can you talk about the similarities and differences between the two things?

Follow Up Questions

In the event that additional questions need to be posed, participants will be asked to continue to engage. However, questions that come up from interview one will be covered in interview two, questions from interview two will be covered in interview three, and if there are any questions from interview three, participants will be informed and asked to complete a brief follow up interview if needed.