

PERCEPTION OF NURSING STUDENTS ABOUT NURSING PROFESSION

ARUNA JOTHISHANMUGAM¹, AMANIABELGADER MOHAMMED², HAWA IBRAHIM ABD ALLA HAMID¹, MAHA ABDALLA ABDELSADIG ALI²

¹Department of Nursing, University College at Aldayr, Jazan University, Jazan, KSA. ²Department of Nursing, Sabia, Jazan University Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Email: arunamsnhod@gmail.com

Received: 25 December 2018, Revised and Accepted: 20 February 2019

ABSTRACT

Objective: The study aims to describe nursing students' changing perception of nursing over 4 years of the nursing program.

Methods: A quantitative study with a cross-sectional design was used to assess the nursing students' perception about nursing profession, with a probability sample of 66 students. Respondents were a random sample of 66 students from four educational cohorts studying baccalaureate nursing program in Jazan University. A questionnaire was administered to assess the demographic information and the perception about nursing profession. The questionnaire was completed by the students voluntarily and anonymously.

Results: In demographic variables, among 66 students, majority 59 (89%) were more than 20 years of age and only 7 (11%) were between the age of 18 and 20 years. Reason for enrollment of nursing (40–60.6%) consider nursing as a trusted profession and 15 (22.7%) enrolled to work as 20 A nurse educators. Regarding their school education, most of the students (54, 81.8%) are from science background, 6 (79.1%) are from mathematics, and the remaining 6 (9.1%) are from other streams. The willingness of the family members' category resulted that 58 (87.9%) students have a positive reaction and 7 (10.6%) has a negative reaction to student enrolment in nursing. Deciding factor for the job preference of 52 students (78.8%) is the influence of others. 8 (12.1%) were influenced by the classmates and 5 (7.6) were self-motivated. One student is not having specific reasons.

Conclusion: The results indicated that the students had a positive attitude toward nursing at the beginning and also during the study. Many students had an unrealistic perception of nursing; their perception is changed under the influence of educational programs and clinical experience. It is expected that, during their study program, student acquires the necessary competence for independent, safe, and quality nursing care and that they develop a professional identity.

Keywords: Nursing, Education, Baccalaureate study, Perceptions.

INTRODUCTION

In health-related areas, it is clear that there are different perceptions of nursing. Perception by itself is merely defined as an idea, belief, or an image you have as a result of how you see or understand something. The perception of nursing may vary depending on age, educational level, and social and professional experience [1].

Nursing is a field that is concerned with taking care of ill or injured persons and providing preventive health care to healthy persons. The basic perception is still remotely the same. but, today, the nursing profession has changed drastically. There are extensive training programs, more diversified staff, and a level of prestige associated with this area of the medical field that was not there before. The knowledge required has become greater with advancing science and technology. Although the drastic change occurred in the nursing profession, the perception of nursing students toward nursing profession remains the same [2].

Attitude of nursing students can be either positive or negative. However, within the basic division of positive and negative, it can be argued that even the positive attitudes toward nursing may have negative connotations [3] which can lead to stress and discomfort during the study period due to a conflict between the ideal image of nursing and nursing what it really is [4,5]. Most of the studies show that students or health professionals do not have a favorable attitude toward nursing. However, it is very necessary to have a positive attitude of the nursing students while taking care of the patients. Hence, the investigator decided to conduct a survey research to assess the perception of B.Sc nursing students about nursing profession. The aim of this study was to determine the perception of the nursing students about nursing profession during the study period.

METHODS

Study design

A quantitative study with a cross-sectional design was used for this study. The study was conducted among nursing students who are studying B.Sc nursing. Sixty-six nursing students were selected using probability sampling technique. Respondents were a random sample of 66 from four educational cohorts studying baccalaureate nursing program in Jazan University. The written consent was obtained from participants after explaining the purpose and the study detail. Student participation in the research was voluntary and anonymous.

Data collection and instrument

Students voluntarily completed the questionnaire. The demographic information collected was related to age, nationality, marital status, reasons for enrolment in nursing, group in higher secondary education, family reaction to student enrolment, and deciding factors for job preference. The student perception about nursing profession was assessed using checklist (four-point Likert scale). The checklist consisted of 21 items. It helps to assess how individuals look at the roles and tasks, values, social stereotypes, professionalism, and performance of nurses.

Data analysis

Data were entered in the Excel spreadsheet and analyzed by the use of SPSS (verion17) software for statistical analysis. All values are expressed as mean ± standard deviation (SD).

RESULTS

While considering the demographic variable, among 66 students, majority 59 (89%) were more than 20 years of age and only 7 (11%) were between the age of 18 and 20 years. By looking into the reason for

enrolling into nursing, most of the students consider nursing as a trusted profession (40–60.6%), 15 (22.7%) consider that nurses are educators, 7 (10.6%) think that nurses have earning power, and only 4 (6.1%) view that nurses rarely have trouble finding jobs. Stream in the secondary school shows that many of the students (54, 81.8%) have science background, 6 (79.1%) of them come from mathematics stream, and the remaining 6 (9.1%) from other streams. Family reactions toward student enrolment reveal that the families of 58 (87.9%) students have a positive reaction and 7 (10.6%) have a negative reaction to student’s enrolment in nursing. Deciding factor for the job preference of 52 students (78.8%) was the influence of others. 8 (12.1%) were influenced by the classmates and 5 (7.6) were self-motivated. One student has no specific reasons.

As shown in Fig. 1, among 66 students, 89% were more than 20 years of age and only 11% were between the age of 18 and 20 years (Fig. 2).

Nearly half (32) of the students agree that nursing is a respectful profession, whereas only 3 students strongly agree that it is a respectful profession (Fig. 3).

Most of the nursing students strongly disagree (20) or disagree (30) for the concept of nursing as an occupation not a profession. Very few of them strongly agree (4) or agree (12) with this.

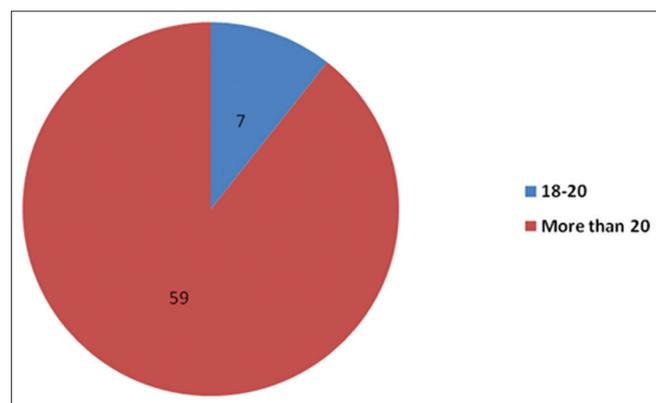


Fig. 1: Age distribution of participants (n=66)

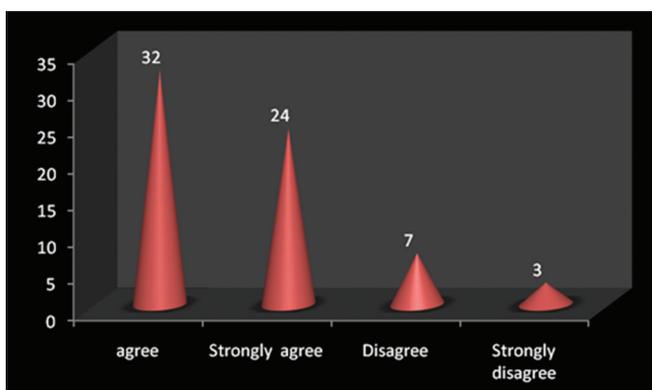


Fig. 2: A respectful profession (n=66)

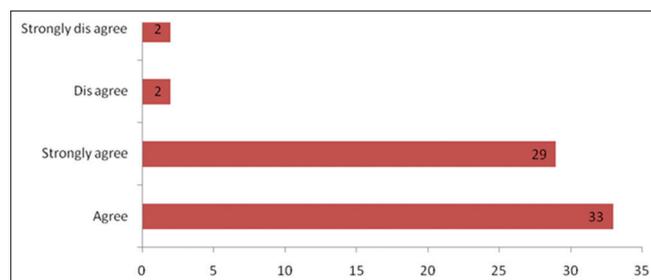


Fig. 3: An occupation and not a profession (n=66)

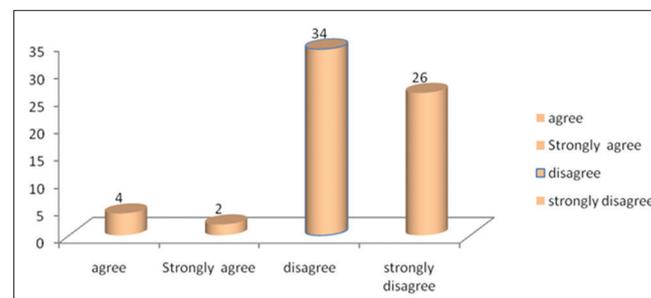
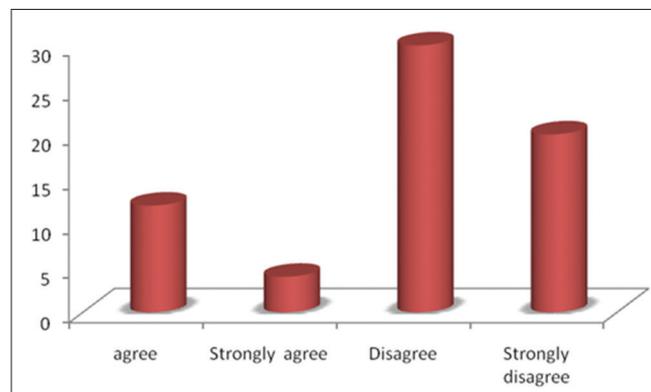


Fig. 4: A women’s profession (n=66)

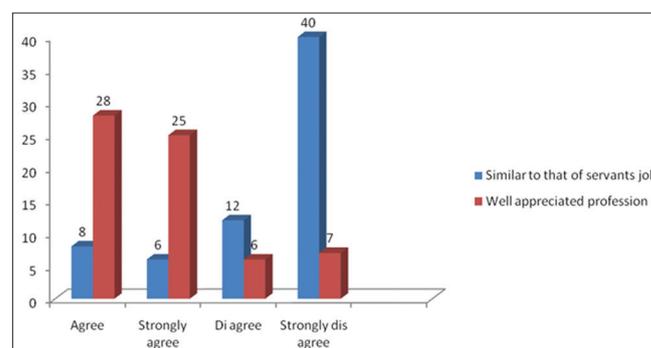


Fig. 5: Nursing is an appreciated profession (n=66)

Table 1: Perception of students regarding different aspects of nursing (n=66)

S. No.	Items	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
1	Helping in the promotion of health and prevention of diseases	20	44	0	2	66
2	Provide self-actualization	28	34	2	2	66
3	Nurses are given a chance to use their own initiative in their work	29	21	10	6	66
4	Nurses obey doctors’ orders without questioning them	17	9	13	27	66
5	Nurses waste a lot of time being busy doing nothing	10	17	13	25	66
6	I would like to be a nurse	24	16	15	11	66
7	Opportunity for personal growth	29	16	12	9	66

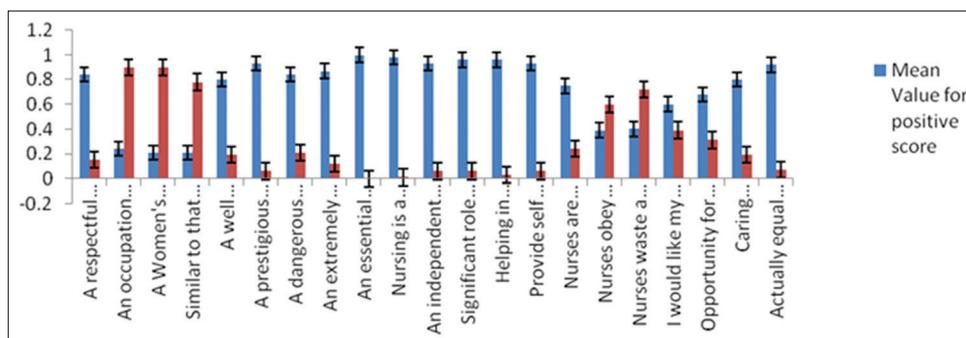


Fig. 6: Mean and standard deviation of perception regarding nursing profession (n=66)

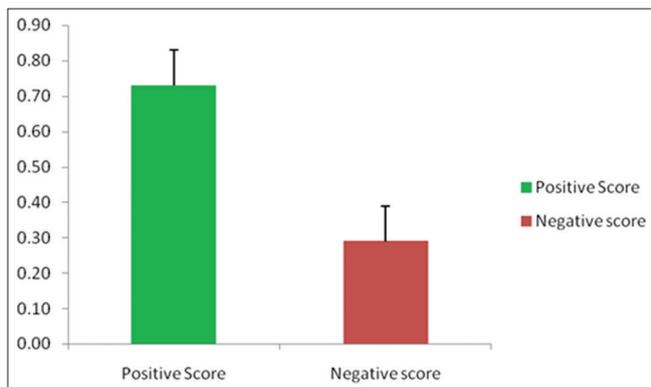


Fig. 7: Overall mean and standard deviation for positive and negative perception toward nursing (n=66)

Fig. 4 displays that very few students (5) think that it is a women's profession (Fig. 5).

Majority of the students, 62, strongly disagree that the concept of nursing is like a servant's job, whereas they strongly believe that it is a well-appreciated profession.

Table 1 shows that the large number of students believes that nurses help in the promotion of health and prevention of illness as well as it provides self-actualization for the nurses. Nearly half of them think that nurses get a chance to use their initiative in work and they are not blindly following doctors without questioning them. They do not think that nurses are wasting their time and less than half of them like to send their child for nursing. Students think that they have an opportunity for personal growth in this field.

Table 2 shows that the overall positive perception mean was 0.73 with the SD of 0.2 and the overall mean value of negative perception was 0.29 with the standard deviation of 0.009. It shows that the students are having a positive perception about their profession. It can motivate them to go for higher education and also they will work effectively in the clinical setting and also provide quality care for patients in hospitals.

DISCUSSION

The study was conducted among nursing student to find out changing perception of nursing over 4 years period. There was a positive perception in the majority (n=66) of items, and at the end of the study, they expressed a negative attitude in only four items. In the other nine items, there was no statistically significant difference between the two measurements. At the beginning of the study, many students had an idealistic perception of nursing, and the perception changed under the influence of nursing theory, science, and clinical experience. It is expected that, during their study program, students acquire the necessary competence for independent safe and quality nursing care

Table 2: The overall mean and SD value for positive and negative perception of nursing profession (n=66)

S. no.	Types of perception	Mean±SD
1	Positive score	0.73±0.2
2	Negative score	0.29±0.009

SD: Standard deviation

and that they develop a professional identity. The finding of the study was as similar as the findings of the study done by Merlin Mary James and Anju Hooda [6] (Figs. 6 and 7).

During their educational programs, students' perceptions of caring changed and they developed a stronger professional self-concept, including satisfaction, skill, leadership, flexibility, communication, and the ability to cope with the role of being a nurse [5,6].

Nursing students' perception of nursing I largely based on discussions and dialogues between students and teachers at school, and on real observations made in clinical settings [7-9]. Students with experience in clinical settings were more focused on aspects of the professional nursing role [10,11]. Similar studies done by Safadi *et al.* and Day [11,12] showed that students' perceptions of nursing changed as a result of classroom experiences.

CONCLUSION

The study was conducted among nursing students. There existed a positive attitude in majority of items. Many students had an idealistic perception of nursing at the beginning of the study, and the perception can be changed through educational programs and clinical experience. It is expected that, during their study program, students acquire the necessary competence for independent, safe, and quality nursing care and that they develop a professional identity.

The overall atmosphere of nurses working environment, their professional relationship with other health professionals and the issues surrounding their work satisfaction, and consequently their perception toward their profession is not a one-factor problem. Therefore, improving nurses' professional satisfaction requires a multifaceted approach.

REFERENCES

1. DayGebrezgabher ZT, Abera GB. Assessment of nurses' knowledge and attitude towards nursing profession at public hospitals in Mekelle town, Tigray, Ethiopia. *Glob J Med Res* 2017;17:9-14.
2. Čukljek S, Jureša V, Bile CG, Režek B. Changes in nursing students' attitudes towards nursing during undergraduates study. *Acta Clin Croat* 2017;56:36-43.
3. Kathreena MU, D'Silva JJ, Lobo JM, Sequera SK. A Study to assess the attitude towards nursing profession among the nursing students in the selected college at Mangalore. *Int J Health Sci Res* 2015;5:217-20.
4. Day RA, Field PA, Campbell IE, Reutter L. Student's evolving beliefs about nursing: From entry to graduation in a four year baccalaureate programme. *Nurs Educ Today* 2005;25:636-43.

5. Watson R, Deary IJ, Lea A. A longitudinal study into the perceptions of caring and nursing among student nurses. *J Adv Nurs* 1999;29:28-37.
6. James MM, Hooda A. A study to assess the opinion regarding pursuing jobs in nursing profession among outgoing student nurses in a selected college of nursing in New Delhi. *Int J Nurs Midwife Res* 2017;4:2.
7. Grainge P, Bolan C. Perceptions of nursing as a career choice of students in the baccalaureate nursing program. *Nurse Educ Today* 2006;26:38-44.
8. Manninen E. Changes in nursing students' perceptions of nursing as they progress through their education. *J Adv Nurs* 1998;27:1365-2648.
9. San-jecklin K, Schaffer A. Nursing students perceptions of their chosen profession. *Nurs Educ Perspect* 2006;27:130-35.
10. Cowin LS, Johnson M. Many paths lead to nursing: Factors influencing students' perceptions of nursing. *Int Nurs Rev* 2011;58:413-9.
11. Safadi R, Saleh M, Nassar O, Amre H, Froeliche E. Nursing students perceptions of nursing: A descriptive study of four cohort. *Int Nurs Rev* 2011;58:420.
12. Day RA. Students' evolving beliefs about nursing: From entry to graduation in a four-year baccalaureate programme. *Nurse Educ Today* 2005;25:636-43.