

Nursing Student's Perception and attitude towards Nursing Profession at the College of Applied Medical Sciences

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to identify the perception of nursing students towards nursing. A purposive sample of 108 students affiliated to the nursing department in AL Dawadmi Faculty of Applied Medical Sciences, female branch, Shaqra University, Saudi Arabia, was included in the study. Students were selected from six different levels. A descriptive cross sectional study, Self-Administered Questionnaire was used for data collection. It comprised three parts. The study was conducted at the beginning of the second semester of the academic year 2013-2014 Students. Study findings indicated that the highest percentage (90%) of the study subjects perceived nursing as a human profession, followed by (83%) of them perceived the nursing profession as a significant profession in patient recovery. the majority (78.7%) of the study subjects felt proud, about (19.4%) were defensive about nursing. While smallest percentages (.9%) of them were, shy. The study recommends conducting further studies on the perception of the student nursing in other different regions in king Saudi Arabia and policy makers in higher education consider other factors such as students' gender and choice for the specialty.

Key words: perception, feelings, nursing profession

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INTRODUCTION

Health care system is encountering enormous challenges today; among them is the poor quality of services considered the most important. One of the significant factors for poor quality of health care services is human agents. Human force plays a significant role in the evolution and progression of health care issues and is enumerated as one of the main components of each organization. (Koushali, Hajiamini and Ebadi 2012)

Fayzi etal (2007) supported that the achievement of the objectives of

organizations is highly dependent on the capacity of human resources. Nurses are the key members and play the major part of service providing system in almost all countries. Nursing is also the largest group of health system, possessing considerable potential power that could be influential on the quality of health care services system. (Banaderakhshan & et al. 2005 and Mirzabeigi & et al. 2009)

Perception plays a principal role in guiding human behavior toward the achievement of goals, awareness of its consequences and effective processing of complex information about living

environment. (Namdar, Arshadi and Sahebi.2008). Cronenwett et al (2009) added that knowledge, skills, and positive perception are the characteristics recommended to develop nursing education and new nursing strategies today.

Safadi, Saleh, Nassar, Amre and Froelicher (2011) mentioned that nursing students come into nursing education with different views about nursing profession. This perception evolved over their years of education, enabling them to socialize into the nursing career.

Furthermore, (Cook et al. 2003; Day et al. 2005 and Papp et al. 2003) added that there are numerous factors act as an important input to the process of nursing students' professional identification. These factors including curriculum, educators, clinical instructors, practicing nurses, family, peers, school, the changing environment from a hospital to a community setting and the cultural setting.

In addition, the international literature shows that early perceptions of students have a profound influence on their decision as to whether continue with their nursing studies, and students frequently make decisions to leave nursing against the wishes or without the support from their school or family. (Spouse.2000)

Perceptions of nursing students are important because they offer strategic clues towards successful recruitment of the next generation of nurses. To attract more individuals to the profession, a positive image of nursing needs to be engendered by nurse education and the general community. So many strategies are needed by nursing organizations, administrators and the government to address the critical issues of this profession with the goal of

reducing the nursing shortage through increased recruitment and retention of practicing nursing. (Achilles.2010)

Al Jarrah (2013) added that an understanding of students' perception can assist nurse educators in evaluating the educational program's strengths and weaknesses. This understanding can enhance curricular development towards a caring and holistic paradigm of nursing. Moreover, it will add to the body of knowledge of nursing education, especially in relation to admission processes, by examining specific personal factors that influence students' perceptions.

Nursing student's perceptions play a significant role in forming the shape of an individual as a person and a professional as well. Perception of nursing students towards nursing profession helps in generating interest in learning and hence in long run committed nursing professionals. Therefore, this study was conducted to assess the perception of nursing students towards nursing .This study will help in generating evidence for nurse educators in planning guidance and counseling for nursing students.

Aim of the Study:

This study aims to identify the nursing students' attitude and perception towards the nursing profession

Research Questions:

1- What are the feelings and attitude of nursing students towards the nursing profession?

2- What are the perceptions of nursing students towards the nursing profession?

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3- What are the main reasons for enrollment to the faculty of nursing?

4- Is there a relationship between the experience of nursing students and their perceptions?

5- Is there a relationship between year level of nursing students and their perception?

Material and Methods

Subjects:

A purposive sample of 108 students affiliated to the nursing department in AL Dawadmi Faculty of Applied Medical Sciences, female branch, Shaqra University, Saudi Arabia, was included in the study. were selected from six different levels, 1.9% from the 3rd level, 34.3 % from the 4th level, 6.5% from 5th level, 22.2% from 6th level, 9.3% from 7th level and 25.9% from 8th level. Student's number in each level represents the majority of students enrolled in this level. The study was conducted at the beginning of the second semester of the academic year 2013-2014 Students Inclusion criteria include nursing students affiliated to the nursing department, AL Dawadmi Faculty of Applied Medical Sciences- female branch, Shaqra University, had hospital clinical training experience and willing to participate in the study.

Research design:

Will be utilized in this study a descriptive cross sectional study.

Setting:

The study was conducted at the Faculty of Applied Medical Sciences- Shaqra University.

Tool for data collection:

Self Administered Questionnaire was used for data collection. It comprised three parts:

Part I

This part included questions related to socio demographic characteristics of the study subjects such as age, level, reasons for enrollment to the faculty of nursing, and family's reaction to students' enrollment.

Part II

It contains 28 statements answered on a 5 point Likert scale of response: strongly agree=5, agree= 4, not sure=3, disagree=2, strongly disagree=1 to assess nursing student's perceptions towards nursing profession.

Part III

It includes a question related to nursing student's feelings about nursing as a profession when talking with others.

Methods of data collection

Content validity of the Arabic version of the tools

The tools were modified and translated into Arabic by the researchers then were handed to jury of experts in nursing field to assess the coverage, the relevancy and the clarity of items. Based

on their recommendations, some changes were done.

Pilot study

Once the tools were modified and constructed, a pilot study was carried out to evaluate the research process & applicability and clarity of the tools. The study was tested on 10% of total sample of under graduated nursing student. Time consumed for filling the questionnaire was ranged between 10 – 15 minutes.

Procedures

The study questionnaire was distributed late at the beginning of the second semester of the academic year 2013-2014. All undergraduate nursing students from the participating academic levels were invited by the researchers to

participate during the time of a scheduled class after explanation of the aim of the study.

Ethical considerations

To fulfill the aim of the study an official permission was obtained from the vice dean of the faculty, the students were informed that their participation is voluntary and assured that their responses will be confidential and will not affect them and used only for the research purpose.

Data Analysis

Data was entered and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 15. Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage, measures of mean and standard deviations.

Results

Table(1) Percentage Distribution of the Study Subjects According to Their General Characteristics (n=108)

General Characteristics	Number	Percent
Age (years)		
• <18	1	9
• 18-20	52	48.1
• <20	55	50.9
<u>Total</u>	108	%100
Level		
• Third level	2	1.9
• Fourth	37	34.3
• Fifth	7	6.5
• Sixth level	24	22.2
• Seventh level	10	9.3
• Eighth level	28	25.9
<u>Total</u>	108	%100

Table (1) shows that the highest percentage (50.9%) of the subjects are more than <20 years old. The majority of the sample (34.3%) was in the fourth level,

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Table (2) Percentage Distribution of the Study Subjects According to Reasons for enrollment to the college of nursing (n=108)

Reasons for enrollment to the college of nursing	N=108	100%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary school grade • Desire to help others • Financial reasons(good salary) • Availability of work • Advice from family members • Like the job • Travel opportunities • Family in health care 	<p>6 27 8 17 4 41 3 2</p>	<p>5.6 25.0 7.4 15.7 3.7 38.0 2.8 1.9</p>
Family reactions to students enrollment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive • Negative • Neutral 	<p>90 2 16</p>	<p>83.3 1.9 14.8</p>

Table (2) indicates that the more than one third of the study subjects enrolled to the college according to their families' advice. The desire to help others was the main reason for study subject's enrollment to the nursing college. More than two thirds of the subjects' family reaction to student's enrollment to nursing college (90%) was positive

Table (3) Percentage Distribution of Study Subjects Perceptions Towards Nursing Profession

Nursing profession is:	Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
A respectful position	80	74.1	28	25.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%
A human profession	90	83.3	17	15.7	1	9	-	-	-	-	100%
A significant profession in patient recovery	83	76.9	24	22.2	1	9	-	-	-	-	100%
A women's profession	36	33.3	34	31.5	12	11.1	17	15.7	9	8.3	100%
A dangerous profession	43	39.8	28	25.9	15	13.9	14	13	8	7.4	100%
Away to enjoy economic security	46	42.6	45	41.7	13	4	3.7	-	-	-	100%
A mean to earn blessing	72	66.7	27	25	8	7.4	1	.9	-	-	100%
An opportunity for personal growth	63	58.3	38	35.2	5	4.6	2	1.9	-	-	100%
An extremely hard profession	37	34.3	35	32.4	13	12.0	18	16.7	5	4.6	100%

Table (3) indicates that the highest percentage (83%) of the study subjects perceived nursing as a human profession, followed by (76.9) of them perceived the nursing profession as a significant profession in patient recovery. Also (66.7) of them perceived nursing profession as a mean to earn blessings.

Table (4) Frequency Distribution of Study Subjects Perception towards Nurse's Role within Nursing Profession

Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Nurses obey doctor orders without questioning them	23	21.3	26	24.1	18	16.7	28	25.9	13	12.0
Nurses are highly trained and skilled professionals	72	66.7	32	29.6	3	2.8	1	.9	-	-
Nurses provide important and valuable service	82	75.9	24	22.2	1	.9	1	.9	-	-
Nurses are given chance to use their own initiative in their work	41	38.0	42	38.9	22	20.4	2	1.9	1	.9
Nurses work long, inflexible working hours	23	21.3	34	31.5	22	20.4	21	19.4	7	6.5
Nurses waste a lot of time being busy doing nothing	6	5.6	11	10.2	10	9.3	32	29.6	48	44.4
An occupation and not a profession	18	16.7	20	18.5	17	15.7	32	29.6	21	19.4
An essential profession in any society	68	63	29	26.9	7	6.5	3	2.8	1	.9

It is clear from table (3) that the majority (75.9%) of study participants perceived nurses role as providing an important and valuable services followed by (66.7%) perceived nurses as trained and skilled professionals, and finally (63%) perceived nursing as an essential profession in any society.

Table (5) Percentage Distribution of Study Subjects feelings about nursing profession when talking with others

Feeling of nursing students	Number	Percent
Proud	85	78.7
Shy	1	.9
Defensive	21	19.4
Total	107	99.1

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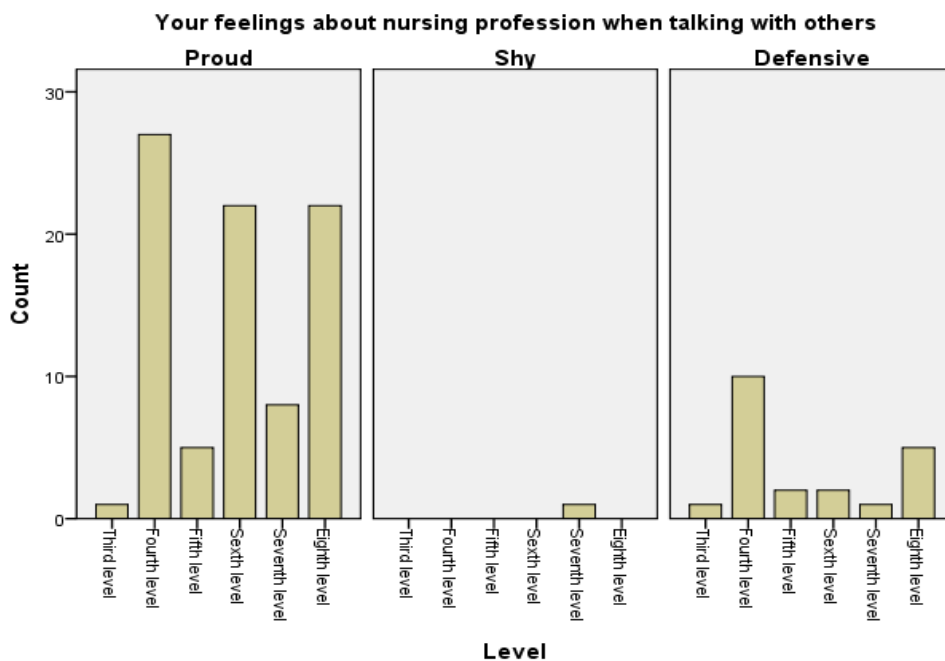


Table (5) revealed that the majority (78.7%) of the fourth level felt proud, about (19.4%) fourth level were defensive about nursing. While smallest percentages of the seventh (.9%) of them were shy.

Table (6) the relationship between year levels and perception of nursing students toward nursing profession

Nursing profession is:	Year levels(n=108)								X ²	P
	Second year		Third year		Fourth year		Total			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
A respectful position	39	36.2	31	28.7	36	33.3	106	98.	26.0 1	.004
• Agree	-	-	-	-	2	1.8	2	2		
• Uncertain	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.8		
• Disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Total	39	36.2	31	28.7	38	35.1	108	100		
A human profession	39	36.2	30	27.7	38	35.2	107	99.	21.9 5	0.01 5
• Agree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		
• Uncertain	-	-	1	.9	-	-	1	-		
• Disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.9		
Total	39	36.2	31	28.6	38	35.2	108	100		
A significant profession in patient recovery									21.7 7	0.01 6
• Agree	39	36.2	31	28.6	37	34.3	107	99.		
• Uncertain	-	-	-	-	1	.9	1	1		
• Disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.9		
Total	39	36.2	31	28.6	38	35.2	108	100		
A women's profession	25	23.2	31	28.6	16	14.8	72	66.	45.7 5	.001
• Agree	4	3.7	1	.9	7	6.5	12	7		
• Uncertain	10	9.3	1	.9	13	12.1	24	11.		
• Disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 22. 2		
Total	39	36.2	33	30.4	36	33.4	108	100		

Table (6) show that about third of the nursing student(36%) perceived the nursing profession as a respectful position, a human profession, a significant profession in patient recovery and followed by a women' profession (23.2%) and there are a statistically significant deference(.004,0.015,0.016and .001)

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Cont. Table (6) the relationship between year levels and perception of nursing students toward nursing profession

Nursing profession is:	Year levels(n=108)								X ²	P
	Second year		Third year		Fourth year		Total			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
A dangerous profession									24.53	.220
• Agree	25	23.2	26	24	20	18.5				
• Uncertain	8	7.04	3	2.7	4	13.7				
• Disagree	6	5.55	2	1.85	14	12.9				
Total	39	35.79	31	28.6	38	35.2	108	100%		
Away to enjoy economic security									13.61	.555
• Agree	34	31.5	28	25.9	29	26.8	91	84.2		
• Uncertain	5	4.6	2	1.9	6	5.6	13	12.1		
• Disagree	-	-	1	.9	3	2.8	4	3.7		
Total	39	36.1	31	28.7	38	35.2	108	100		
A mean to earn Blessing									10.35	.797
• Agree	35	32.4	29	26.8	35	32.4				
• Uncertain	2	1.9	3	2.8	2	1.9				
• Disagree	-	-	-	-	1	.9				
Total	37	34.3	32	27.6	38	35.2	108	100%		
An opportunity for personal growth									12.48	.642
• Agree	37	34.2	30	27.7	34	31.5	101	93.5		
• Uncertain	2	1.9	1	.9	2	1.9	5	4.6		
• Disagree	-	-	-	-	2	1.9	2	1.9		
Total	39	36.1	31	29.6	38	35.3	108	100		
An extremely hard profession									27.43	.116
• Agree	24	22.2	27	25	21	19.4				
• Uncertain	4	3.7	2	1.9	7	6.48				
• Disagree	11	10.18	2	1.9	10	9.25				
Total	39	36.0	31	28.8	38	35.2	108	100		

Also the table indicated that about third (36%) of the sample perceived the nursing profession as (dangerous profession, a way to enjoy economic security, A mean to earn blessing an opportunity for personal growth and followed by an extremely hard profession (22.2) and there is no statistically differences

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify the nursing students' perception towards the nursing profession at the college of applied medical sciences- shaqra university. The current study indicated that more than one third (38%) of the study subjects enrolled to the college according to their families' advice. These finding agreed with **Tawfiq, in Jordan, 2013 (Ali Tawfiq, 2013)** who reported that (20.6%) of the subjects joined to the faculty of nursing according to their families' advice. Also the study finding revealed that more than two thirds of the subjects' family reaction to student's enrollment to nursing college (90%) was positive. These finding agreed with (Ali, etal 2013) who reported that 72.6% of the subject's family reaction to student's enrollment to nursing college was positive.

In addition, these results are supported by (**El Sharkawy and El Hadad, 1996**) who studied the factors affecting students' choice of nursing as a career in Egypt and Syria. They found that the family members had a significant impact on the choice of nursing as a career. The study of (**Kelly et al., 1996**) in Chicago reported that family members were the most encouraging forces to their entering nursing and was the main source of moral support during the years of schooling. These findings were confirmed, as the positive family reaction to join to the faculty of nursing represents (83%) of the subjects in this study. The results of this study is consistent to the results of many studies (**Williams, et al 1997**),(**Tawash Eman et al 2004**) that showed that parents and friends were very powerful motivators for students to join nursing college.

The desire to help others was the one of the reasons for (25%) the subjects

enrollment and for financial reasons was reported by only (15%) of the subjects. Which agreed with Ali Tawfiq (**Ali Tawfiq, 2013**) who reported that the desire to help others was one the reasons for (7.4 %) of the subjects. About (15%) of the study subjects joined to the faculty of nursing due to financial reasons/availability of work. This finding agreed with (**Abeer, 2013**) who reported that 18.4% perceived nursing profession as an opportunity to improve their financial situation. The current finding contradicting with Poreddi (2012) who reported that 43 (33.3%) of the students enrolled in nursing out of their own interest and to improve their financial situations.

Which were not consistent with the study of Streubert, 1994 in Pennsylvania, which revealed that nursing was attractive because of job opportunities, security and availability. This is also supported by **AbdlKarim et al., 2004** in Egypt. They found that around two-thirds of their subjects have chosen nursing as it represented a good opportunity for them to work. **Buerhaus et al., 2005**, (U.S.A) reported that slightly more than three quarters of the subjects joined nursing because of availability of work. **Sand-Jecklin and Schaffer,2006** in added that students most frequently reported choosing nursing because of the availability of career opportunities, jobs security, salary, and interest in nursing.

Another study showed that students choose to study nursing because it offered work abroad and opportunities for further professional development (**Williams B et al 1997**) abroad and opportunities for further professional development

According to enrolled to the college due to secondary school grades and a

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family member or a friend in the nursing profession reported by 5% and 2% of the study subjects. This finding not consistent with Tawfiq(**Ali Tawfiq, 2013**) finding which indicated that (30.9%) did so due to their average in the secondary school. The majority of the subjects (80.9%) had a family member or a friend in the nursing profession.

The current study revealed that more than two thirds of the student's participant perception (90%) considering the nursing as a human profession, followed by (83%) considering the nursing profession as a significant profession in patient recovery which nearly the same who seeing nursing profession as a helping profession in promoting health and preventing disease (80%).

These result agreed with Okasha (**Okasha and Ziady, 2001**) in Qatar who reported that student believed that nursing profession provides an opportunity to serve the humanity and nursing services are essential and vital to human and social welfare. Also these result supported by **Anurag(2011)** who reported that overall majority of students perceived that nursing is a profession to serve humanity, earn blessing of the people. Which also may provide an opportunity for personal growth

The current study showed that (80%) of the study subjects strongly agree that nursing profession is a respectful profession and is an extremely hard profession. These result supported by Tawash (**Tawash Eman, 2012**) The majority of respondents in this study perceived nursing as a caring profession and in essence helping people, also recognized nursing as hard work and stressful, which was also identified in previous studies.

The majority (82%) of student' participant perception toward nurses role is providing important and valuable services followed by (72%)nurses are trained and skilled professionals, and finally (68%) nursing an essential profession in any society. These result consistent with Lyckhage (**Lyckhage E, Pilhammmar E 2008**) who reported that the respondents claimed that nursing is not very well accepted socially; however, it was suggested that the strong and positive perception of nursing as caring and helping may serve as a driving force in developing a strategy to reinforce the public views about nursing in society

The majority of the study subjects (78.7) feel proud, about (19.4%) were defensive about nursing. While smallest percentages (.9%)of them were shy reveals these results agreed with Tawfiq(Tawfiq Majority of the students (80.9%) feel proud, about (15%) were defensive about nursing. While small percentages of them were either shy or change the topic (2.9% and 1.5%) respectively, no one of them attacked the profession.

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the findings of the study that students had fairly positive perception towards nursing profession. Majority of the nursing students believed that nursing profession provides an opportunity to serve the humanity and nursing services are essential and vital to human and social welfare, which also may provide an opportunity for personal growth.

Recommendations

1- The study recommends conducting further studies on the

perception of the student nursing in other different regions in king Saudi Arabia.

2- Integrate the opinions of family members about nursing have influenced career decision making of their children, and so it is necessary to plan recruitment.

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