

Perception of Nursing Students towards their Profession in Morang District

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Received Date 10 October 2023 **Accepted Date** 21 October 2023 **Published Date** 31 October 2023

ABSTRACT

Background: Nursing is indeed considered a noble and essential profession in society because of the core value it promotes in its practice-which is the care of life. Nursing student's perception towards the image of the nursing profession has an apparent impact on their self-concept, self-esteem, recruitment, retention, and performance. Thus, nurses who have positive professional images have good knowledge retention.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study were conducted among nursing students in Purbanchal University School of Health Sciences through self-administration question. Data collection involved assessment of nursing student's perception towards their profession through census method. Chi-square was done to examine associations between perception of profession and its factors.

Results: The 126 participants were included in this study; most of them 60.8% were studying in 1st year. This study mentioned that 51.6% had positive perception and found a significant relationship between perception and the age of the respondents. This suggests that the way respondents perceive the profession is influenced by their age.

KEYWORDS

Nursing, Perception, Profession, Student

INTRODUCTION

Nursing is indeed considered a noble and essential profession in society due to the core value it upholds: the care of life. The profession is built on principles of compassion, empathy, and a commitment to promoting and preserving the health and well-being of individuals and communities (Swarna, 2015).

Perception towards the nursing profession can impact their knowledge retention, self-concept, self-esteem and performance. Positive Perception can guide them to be safe nurses

with an enhanced level of energy to serve humanity and promote the quality of patient care (Browne, Wall, Batt & Bennett, 2021). However, Perception of nursing may vary depending on age, educational level and social and professional experience (Wondwossen, 2011).

The study done in Jordan finds that nursing student's view nursing as a profession that provides self-actualization. Promoting a positive and accurate image of nursing is important for attracting and retaining talent in the field and ensuring the delivery of high-quality healthcare services (Tawfiq & Jarrah, 2013).

Overall, the profession being studied in Western Maharashtra, India, is perceived positively by a majority of the participants. Understanding these perceptions is valuable for shaping policies, educational programs, and public perception of the profession and it can help in promoting and enhancing the profession's image and reputation. A help in promoting and enhancing the profession's image and reputation (Momin, 2016).

A Comparative Study on Knowledge and Attitude towards Nursing Profession between PCL and B.Sc. Nursing Students in a Selected Nursing Institute, Pokhara, Nepal revealed that the majority of the students had a positive Perception towards their profession and the statement that the scope of nursing is very broad and highly demanded. Recognizing that a nurse serves as a professional liaison between physicians and patients is an accurate understanding of the collaborative nature of healthcare. Nurses often play a crucial role in communicating and coordinating patient care.

A descriptive online survey were conducted among B.Sc. Nursing students at Applied Medical Sciences College, Taif University, Saudi Arabia, concluded that the majority of participant students have positive Perceptions about the profession. In addition, the study findings revealed that most of the participants entered nursing courses due to their excellent +2 (higher secondary) education (Emmanuel et al., 2015).

Similarly, the survey questionnaires completed by students of the Universities of Saudi Arabia, showed that they had a positive Perception towards the nursing profession, and the finding of the study indicated that the most common reason to choose to study nursing was their interest (Mutair & Redwan, 2016).

The study conducted among B.Sc. Nursing students in selected Nursing Institutions of Sikkim, found that these students had a positive Perception of their nursing profession. This is a valuable insight into the attitudes and perspectives of nursing students in the region. (Devi et al., 2019).

In summary, the perceptions of nursing students regarding the nursing profession are critical. A positive perception can lead to better self-concept, knowledge retention, recruitment, retention, and academic performance, while a negative perception can result in a lack of interest and reduced productivity. It is essential for educators and institutions to understand and address these perceptions to promote a positive image of the nursing profession and support the success and well-being of nursing students (Swarna, 2015). Therefore, this study aims to assess Nursing Students' Perceptions towards the Profession at Purbanchal University of Morang district.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

A descriptive cross-sectional research design were done to assess the Perceptions of Nursing students toward their Profession.

Study Setting and Population

The study were conducted at Purbanchal University, School of Health Sciences, which is 13 kilometres East part of the Itahari Metropolitan. This university is one of the renowned University established since 1993 A.D and has likely made a considerable impact in the field of education and has contributed to the academic and professional development of a diverse student population.

Research Population

Bachelor of Science in nursing students of first year to fourth year.

Sampling

All Bachelor nursing students of first year to fourth year were invited to participate in this study. The census survey in the quantitative arm of the study since there were only 127 in number.

Data Collection Method and Tools

A structured self-administered questionnaire were utilized consisting of two sections. A socio-demographic section included the independent variables: age, gender, religion, marital status, home area, year of study, entry scheme, father's level of education, and source of funding for the academic program. The second section of this study involved a comprehensive literature review and consultation with research advisors. This was done to assess the ranking of student's Perception of nursing profession. The measurement of these perception was carried out using a 5-point Likert scale of 30 score were 15 were positive and 15 were negative statements.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data were cleaned and entered into an Excel sheet, which were exported to Stata version 15 statistical software for analysis. Univariate findings were measured by; using frequency, proportions, and measures of central tendency. The association between the attitudes of participants were assessed by using the chi-square. A p-value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Ethics statement

Ethical clearance had obtained from the Purbanchal University Institutional Review Committee IRB approval number 015-079/80. The administrative clearance were obtained from the Director of Purbanchal University School of Health Sciences to conduct the study on the University. The respondents provided written informed consent after giving information. The participants were assured of confidentiality of the study.

RESULTS

One hundred twenty-six questionnaires were distributed to participants one of the respondents were absent during data collection so, the response rate was 99%.

**Table 1 (a) Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents
n=126**

Characteristics	Number	Percentage (%)
Age (in completed years)		
< 21	34	27
≥ 21	92	73
Mean age (± SD)=21.19years (± 1.185);Min=19, Max=23		
Religion		
Hinduism	112	88.9
Buddhism	14	11.1
Ethnicity		
Dalit	8	6.4
Disadvantaged janajatis	11	8.7
Religious minorities	3	2.4
Relatively advantaged janajatis	32	25.4
Upper caste group	72	57.1
Permanent Residence		
Urban	100	79.4
Rural	26	20.6
Father's Education		
Literate	121	96
Illiterate	5	4
If literate		
Only read and write	4	3.4
Basic education (up to 8)	13	10.7
Secondary level (9-12)	67	55.4
Bachelor level	31	25.6
Master level	6	4.9
Mother's Education		
Literate	119	94.4
Illiterate	7	5.6
If literate		
Only read and write	7	5.9
Basic education (up to 8)	26	21.8
Secondary level (9-12)	64	53.8
Bachelor level	20	16.8
Master level	2	1.7

Out of 126 respondents, 73% belong to the 21-23 years age group with a mean age of 21.19 ± 1.185 . The majority of respondents: 88.9% belong to Hinduism. More than half of the respondents (57.1%) belong to Upper Caste groups.

The majority of the respondents (79.4%) lived in urban areas. Most of the parents of respondents were literate i.e., 96% and 94% respectively.

Table 1(b): Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	n=126	
	Number	Percentage (%)
Father's Occupation		
Employed	120	95.2
Unemployed	6	4.8
If employed the nature of employment		
Government service	26	21.7
Non-government service	25	20.8
Business	42	35
Farmer	11	9.2
Daily labor	1	0.8
Others (abroad)	15	12.5
Mother's Occupation		
Employed	72	57.1
Unemployed	54	42.9
If employed the nature of employment		
Government service	8	11.1
Non-government service	9	12.5
Business	11	15.3
Farmer	13	18.1
Homemaker	30	41.7
Others (abroad)	1	1.3
Monthly Family Income		
10,000 (low income)	3	2.4
10,000-36,000 (medium income)	48	38.1
36,000-1,11,000 (upper medium income)	70	55.5
More than 1,11,000 (high income)	5	4

Table 1b shows that regarding the occupation, almost all respondents' fathers (95.2%) were literate whereas less than one-third (21.7%) were involved in business. More; than half of the respondent's mothers (57.1%) were employed whereas less than half (41.7%) were homemakers. More than half (55.5%) respondent's monthly family income belongs to upper medium income groups.

Table 2: Respondents' Information; Related to Personal Factors

n=126		
Characteristics	Number	Percentage (%)
Obtained percentage in 10+2		
< 75%	37	29.4
≥ 75%	89	70.6
Year of the course		
1 st Year	40	31.8
2 nd Year	8	6.4
3 rd Year	39	30.9
4 th Year	39	30.9
Reason to join nursing		
Self-Wish	86	68.3
Parents pressure	16	12.7
Relatives influence	10	7.9
Friends influence	8	6.3
Social media	6	4.8

Table 2 reveals that less than two third of respondents (70.6%) obtained ≥ 75% in 10+2. One-third of the respondents (31.8%) were first-year nursing students. The two-thirds of the respondents (68.3%) stated that their own interest was the reason for choosing to pursue nursing.

Table 3: Respondent's Response to Positive Perception towards the Profession
n= 126

Statements	Strongly agree No (%)	Agree No (%)	Neutral No (%)	Disagree No (%)	Strongly disagree No (%)
Nursing is a noble profession	75(59.5)	47(37.3)	4(3.2)	0(0)	0(0)
Nursing is an opportunity to serve humanity	84(66.7)	39(30.9)	3(2.4)	0(0)	0(0)
Opportunity for personal growth					
A way to have bright prospects at abroad	63(50)	44(34.9)	15(11.9)	4(3.2)	0(0)
A nurse is a professional liaison between the physician and the patient	47(37.3)	54(42.8)	18(14.3)	4(3.2)	3(2.4)
Nursing is a way to enjoy economic security	18(14.3)	66(52.4)	33(26.2)	5(4)	4(3.2)
A caring profession in which ethical standards of care are maintained	3(2.4)	21(16.7)	47(37.3)	43(34.1)	12(9.5)
An opportunity to get due recognition in society	35(27.8)	61(48.4)	19(15.1)	5(4)	6(4.8)

A means to earn a blessing					
Provide self-actualization	20(15.9)	55(43.7)	43(34.1)	6(4.8)	2(1.6)
The Nursing professions is equal to all other health profession	51(40.5)	54(42.9)	16(12.7)	3(2.4)	2(1.6)
Requires compassion, patience & strength	42(33.3)	67(53.2)	14(11.1)	1(0.8)	2(1.6)
Good pay and good job security offer positive view about the choice of Nursing	40(31.7)	36(28.6)	14(11.1)	22(17.5)	14(11.1)
Nurses feel good about what they do	80(63.5)	39(31)	3(2.4)	2(1.6)	2(1.6)
Has a good career ladder/ advancement	47(37.3)	46(36.5)	18(14.3)	7(5.6)	8(6.3)
	37(29.4)	49(38.9)	28(22.2)	11(8.7)	1(0.8)
	34(27)	61(48.4)	28(22.2)	1(0.8)	2(1.6)

Table 3 illustrates that half of the respondents (50%) strongly agreed with the statement about nursing being an opportunity for personal growth. Two-thirds of the respondents (66.7%) strongly agreed that nursing is an opportunity to serve humanity.

Less than half of the respondents (42.8%) agreed that nursing is a way to have bright prospects in a foreign country. More than half of the respondents (52.4%) agreed that a nurse is a professional liaison between the physician and the patient. one-third of the respondents (37.3%) were neutral regarding the statement that nursing is a way to enjoy economic security. Nearly half of the respondents (48.4%) agreed that nursing is a caring profession in which ethical standards of care are maintained. Less than half of the respondents (43.7%) agreed that nursing is an opportunity to get due recognition in society, and less than half (42.9%) agreed that it is a means to earn blessings. More than half of the respondents (53.2%) agreed that nursing provides self-actualization, indicating that they see nursing as a path to personal and professional fulfillment. More than two-thirds of respondents (63.5%) strongly agreed that nursing requires compassion, patience, and strength, emphasizing the importance of these qualities in the profession. More than one-third of the respondents (37.3%) strongly agreed that good pay and good job security positively influence their view of nursing and 38.9% of respondents agreed that nurses feel good about what they do, and nearly half (48.4%) agreed that nursing has a good career ladder/advancement.

**Table 4: Respondent's Response to Negative Perception towards the Profession
n= 126**

Statements	Strongly agree No (%)	Agree No (%)	Neutral No (%)	Disagree No (%)	Strongly disagree No (%)
The Nursing profession is an extremely tough profession that does not receive enough appreciation	44(34.9)	43(34.1)	19(15.1)	18(14.3)	2(1.6)
The Nursing is a female job	1(0.8)	7(5.6)	13(10.3)	59(46.8)	46(36.5)
Nurses waste a lot of time being busy doing nothing	8(6.3)	7(5.6)	21(16.7)	55(43.7)	35(27.8)
Nurses' work is just giving injections & care to a patient	2(1.6)	1(0.8)	5(4)	59(46.8)	59(46.8)
Nurses only do what the doctor tells them to do without questioning them	6(4.8)	14(11.1)	20(15.9)	45(35.7)	41(32.5)
Nurses have limited voices with administrators	20(15.9)	41(32.5)	30(23.8)	29(23)	6(4.8)
The Nursing Profession is for low academic achievers and dull students	1(0.8)	3(2.4)	3(2.4)	35(27.8)	84(66.7)
Anyone could be nurse easily	3(2.4)	8(6.3)	16(12.7)	64(50.8)	35(27.8)
The Nursing is just an opportunity to get marriage offers	0(0)	5(4)	11(8.7)	32(25.4)	78(61.9)
The Nursing profession is similar to the Housemaid	1(0.8)	0(0)	6(4.8)	28(22.2)	91(72.2)
Nursing is not a prestigious job	3(2.4)	9(7.1)	13(10.3)	43(34.1)	58(46)
The view of people about nursing does not affect the reality of nursing	19(15.1)	35(27.8)	37(29.4)	28(22.2)	7(5.6)
The Nursing is an occupation and not a profession	2(1.6)	3(2.4)	19(15.1)	52(41.3)	50(39.7)
One of the professions I will not encourage my children to join it	8(6.3)	16(12.7)	26(20.6)	44(34.9)	32(25.4)
Not an important profession in patient care	5(4)	2(1.6)	5(4)	39(31)	75(59.5)

Table 4 reveals that more than one-third of respondents (34.9%) strongly agreed that nursing profession is extremely hard profession that does not receive enough appreciation.

Less than half of the respondents (46.7%) disagreed that nursing is a female job. Less than half of the respondents (43.7%) disagreed that nurse's waste a lot of time being busy doing nothing. 46.8% of the respondents disagreed that nurses' work is just giving the injection & care to a patient. More than one-third of the respondents (35.7%) disagreed that nurses only

do what doctor tells them to do without questioning them. Less than one-third of the respondents (32.5%) agreed that nurses have limited voices with administrators. Two-thirds of the respondent's (66.7%) strongly disagreed that the nursing profession is for low academic achievers and dull students. Half of the respondents (50.8%) disagreed with the statement that anyone could be a nurse easily. Less than two-thirds of respondents (61.9%) strongly disagreed that nursing is just an opportunity to get marriage offers. The majority of respondents (72.2%) strongly disagreed with the statement nursing profession is similar to Housemaid. The 46% of respondents disagreed that the nursing is not a prestigious job. Under one-third of the respondents (29.4%) were neutral on statement the view of people about nursing does not affect reality about nursing. Less than half of the respondents (41.3%) disagreed that nursing is an occupation and not a profession. Over than one-third of the respondents (34.9%) strongly disagreed with statement one of the professions I will not encourage my children to join. Over than half of the respondents (59.5%) strongly disagreed with the statement that it is not an important profession in patient care.

Table 5: Level of Perception towards the Profession

n=126

Variables	Total Possible Score	Mean (±S.D)	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Overall score of nursing students' Perception towards the profession	150	117.37 (±9.150)	117	86	135
Percentage score of nursing students' Perception towards the profession	100	78.25 (±61)	78	57.33	90

Table 5 shows the statistics of the overall score of Perception towards the profession among 126 nursing students. A mean score of Perception were 117.37(78.25%), median score were 117(78%) with minimum score of 86(57.33%) and maximum score of 135(90%).

Table 6: Level of Perception of Respondents towards the Profession

Level of Perception	Number	Percentage (%)
Positive Perception (\geq mean score)	65	51.6
Negative Perception ($<$ mean score)	61	48.4

Table 6 illustrates that more than half of the respondents (51.6%) had a positive Perception, whereas 48.4% had a negative Perception.

Table 7: Association between Level of Perception and Selected Variable

n = 126

Variables	Level of Perception		χ^2	p-value
	Positive Perception	Negative Perception		
Age (in completed years)				
< 21	23(69.7%)	10(30.3%)	5.87	0.01*
\geq 21	42(45.2%)	51(54.8%)		
Religion				
Hinduism	59(52.7%)	53(47.3%)	0.48	0.48
Buddhism	6(42.9%)	8(57.1%)		
Ethnicity				
Upper caste group	32(44.4%)	40(55.6%)	3.43	0.06
Others	33(61.7%)	21(38.9%)		
Permanent Residence				
Urban	52(52%)	48(48%)	0.03	0.85
Rural	13(50%)	13(50%)		
Father's Occupation				
Employed	62(51.7%)	58(48.3%)	0.26	0.60
Unemployed	2(40%)	3(60%)		
Mother's Occupation				
Employed	38(52.8%)	34(47.2%)	0.09	0.75
Unemployed	27(50%)	27(50%)		
Monthly Family income				
< 36,000	24(47.1%)	27(52.9%)	0.70	0.46
36,000 - >1,11,000	41(54.7%)	34(45.3%)		
Obtained percentage in 10+2				
< 75%	18(48.6%)	19(51.4%)	0.18	0.67
\geq 75%	47(52.8%)	42(47.2%)		
Year of the course				
1 st Year & 2 nd Year	30(62.5%)	18(37.5%)	0.33	0.56
3 rd Year & 4 th Year	52(66.7%)	25(33.3%)		
Reason to join nursing				
Self-Wish	48(55.8%)	38(44.2%)	1.93	0.16
Others	17(42.5%)	23(57.5%)		

Significant level of p-value at 0.05(*=significant)

Table 7 illustrates that there was a significant association between level of perception with the age of the respondents ($p= 0.01$).

DISCUSSION

This study shows that more than half of respondents had a positive Perception towards the profession. A Similar study conducted by Koirala et al, (2021) in Chitwan Medical College showed the significant positive perception towards the nursing profession.

The present study shows that more than half of respondents (51.6%) had a positive Perception, and nearly half of the respondents (48.4%) had negative Perception towards their profession, which finding is similar to the study conducted by Kathreena et al, (2015) in a selected nursing college at Mangaluru which showed (43.33%) had positive Perception and (52.67%) had negative Perception towards their nursing profession.

The current study shows that more than half of the respondents (53.2%) agreed that the statement provides self-actualization. More than half of the respondents (59.5%) strongly disagreed with the statement that nursing is not an important profession in patient care. This finding was in consistent with the study conducted in Pakistan by Khalil et al, (2017), which showed that 55.8% agreed with the statement providing self-actualization, and 59.2% strongly disagreed with the statement that it is not important profession in patient care.

The findings of the study show that there were a statistically significant between the level of perception with age of respondents ($p= 0.015$). This findings are consistent twith the study conducted by Kathreena et al, (2015) in a selected nursing college at Mangaluru, which showed that there were the association between the age of respondents with a level of Perception towards the profession ($p=0.024$).

A current study show that there is no significant association of level of Perception with religion, ethnicity, permanent residence, fathers' employment, mothers' employment, family income, obtained percentage in +2, year of course and reason to join nursing ($p > 0.05$). This result were supported by the study conducted by Devi et al, (2019) in Sikkim Manipal University, which showed that there is no association of level of Perception with religion, ethnicity, permanent residence, father's employment, mother's employment, family income, obtained percentage in +2, year of course and reason to join nursing ($p >0.001$).

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study concluded that more than half of the nursing students had a positive perception towards their profession. There was a statistically significant association between the levels of perception with age of the respondents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Over than half of the respondents had a negative Perception. Therefore, the concerned authorities should enlighten the importance of the nursing profession by outlining clearly the nursing scope of practice. A similar type of study can be conducted in a large scale in large population so that it can be generalized.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge support from the Department of Health Sciences of Purbanchal University, the Department of Nursing of Purbanchal University and our dear participants who gave us honest views about the nursing profession.

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