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RESEARCH ARTICLE

PERCEPTION TOWARDS NURSING PROFESSION AMONG FIRST YEAR AND FINAL YEAR NURSING STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Nursing, as a healthcare profession focused on the care of individuals, families and communities. The vision of Novice nursing students towards the Nursing profession plays a significant role in healthcare field. The practical guidance and experience gained, helps nursing students to develop positive attitude towards nursing profession. The aim of the study was to compare the first and final year nursing student's perception on nursing profession. The study was conducted in the Vinayaka Mission's College of Nursing, Puducherry. Convenient sampling technique was used to select 178 students for the study. Results: The first year students perceived better towards nursing profession than final year students with mean 74.05 and 69.46. On comparison, significant difference in perception regarding nursing profession was found between first and final year nursing students at $P < 0.01$. Association between level of perception and selected demographic variables showed a non-significant P-value ($P > 0.05$) for both first and final year students which means that the level of perception regarding nursing profession was not influenced by gender, religion, medium of instruction, Place of residence, marital status, occupation of father and mother and source of information. Conclusion: The perception may alter because of clinical experience, inconsistencies, expectations and realities of profession. Investigation on factors affecting perception warranted to sort the problem.

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INTRODUCTION

Nurses are the backbone of the health care sector and are fundamental unit in the delivery of quality care to the needy. The perception and image of nurses and nursing as a profession are vital in the successful recruitment and retention of staff in the health care industry (International Journal of Medical Science and Public Health, 2016). The study findings suggested that the student's perception of their learning environment has a significant impact on their learning behavior, satisfaction, and academic success (Wayne, 2013). An understanding of student's perception and its involvement during the course of the study can assist the nurse educators in evaluating the educational program's strengths and weaknesses. This understanding enhances curricular development towards a caring and holistic paradigm of nursing and also adds to the body of knowledge in nursing education, especially in relation to admission processes, specific personal factors that influence students' perceptions. (Safadi R.R. *et al*, 2011). Moreover with booming of health care industrialization in India and upcoming of medical tourism, there might be huge shortage for nurses in India in future.

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The vast demand influence the health care delivery directly and indirectly affects patient outcome. In practical view, the positive image of nursing engendered by nurse education and general community attracts more individuals to the profession. Considering the above facts, we conducted a study to explore and compare the perception regarding nursing profession among first and final year nursing students, and to find the relationship existing between selected demographic variables and level of perception towards nursing profession among first and final year nursing students.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A descriptive design was used to compare the first and final year nursing student's perception on nursing profession. The study was conducted in the Vinayaka Mission's College of Nursing, Kirumampakkam, Puducherry. It was situated in AarupadaiVeedu Medical College and Hospital campus. The total strength of student in the college was 405. The number of nursing students in the first year BSc (N) and GNM was 108 and the final year B.Sc (N) and GNM was 105. Convenient sampling technique was used to select the 178 students for the study.

Development of the Tool

The structured questionnaire was formulated and it consists of 2 sections. Section A : Demographic Variables like age, sex,

religion, Presently studying, Medium of instruction in higher secondary, Residence, Marital status, Occupation of father, Occupation of mother, source of awareness about Nursing Profession, Reasons for choosing nursing profession etc. Section B : Perception towards Nursing Profession was a 5 point likert scale which consists of 25 items. The option were strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree and rated as 4, 3, 2, 1,0. The maximum score was 100 and the minimum score was 0. The demographic variables were given with numerical codes. The perception regarding nursing profession scale was interpreted arbitrarily as Very good perception (76-100), Moderate perception (51-75), Fair perception (20-50), Poor perception (<20). The reliability of the constructed tool was carried out using split half method and the 'r' value was 0.78, which shows that the tool was reliable.

Method of Data Collection

The formal written permission was obtained from the Principal, Vinayaka Mission's College of Nursing, Puducherry to conduct the study among first year and final year nursing students. Prior to data collection, information was given to the students about the study and written informed consent was obtained from them. Confidentiality of information was assured. The students were gathered in a class room and the instruction regarding filling up of the questionnaire was given. The data was collected using self report technique. The structured questionnaire on the Perception regarding Nursing profession was distributed to them. The first and final year nursing students took 30 minutes to fill the questionnaire. The completed data sheets were compiled and the data was analyzed using SPSS 16.0 Version for windows.

RESULTS

In table 1, it was found that among first year nursing students, majority 88 (94.62) students were between 17-19 years, whereas in final year 82 (96.47%) of the students were in the age group of 20-22 years.

As nursing is female oriented profession, majority of students in both first 92 (98.92%) and final year, 78 (91.76%) were females.

In both first and final year, 83 (89.24%) and 80 (94.11%) of them belong to hindu, 52 (45.16%) of them were in B.Sc nursing I year, 41 (54.83%) of them in GNM I year, 50 (58.82%) of them were in B.Sc final year and 35 (41.17%) of them were in GNM final year. Regarding medium of institution, in both first and final year, majority 55 (59.13%) and 52 (61.17%) of them were from tamil medium.

The present study found that (table 2) out of 93 first year nursing students 55 (59.13%) of them were from rural area and 38 (40.86%) of them were from urban area. Similarly among final year nursing students, 44 (51.76%) of them were from rural area and 41(48.23%) of them were from urban area. Very few, 2 (2.15%) in the first year and 9 (10.58%) in the final year were married. Among first year students, 48 (51.61%) of their father were daily wages and only 28 (30.10%) of them were employed whereas in final year nursing students, majority 30 (35.29%) of their father were daily wages, and only 22 (25.88%) of them were employed.

Table 3, sources of information , 39 (41.93%) students of first year nursing gathered information on their own. Whereas 33 (38.82%) students of final year nursing received information from their parents. Among first year students 52 (55.9%) of them selected the nursing profession by self interest in health care, 24 (25.80%) of them reported to have more job opportunities. Whereas among final year students, 43 (50.58%) of them reported as more job openings and 23 (27.05%) of them had self interest. Majority 36 (38.20%) of first year nursing students and 50 (58.82%) of final year nursing students preferred to go as bedside nurse, 20 (21.50%) and 15 (17.64%) preferred to become nurse administrator. Whereas 29 (31.18%) of first year 14 (16.47%) of final year students interest towards higher education. Moreover it was found that, majority 87 (93.5%) of first year and 56 (65.88%) of final year students were not for change of profession. Whereas 29 (34.11%) of final year students and a very few 6 (6.45%) of first year students responded for change of profession in future.

Table 1 Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables like age, gender, religion, presently studying and medium of instruction of first year and final year nursing students.

(N=178)

S.no	Demographic Variable	First year (N=93)		Final year (N=85)	
		Frequency (No)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (No)	Percentage (%)
Age					
1	a)17-19 Years	88	94.62	1	1.176
	b)20-22 Years	2	2.150	82	96.47
	c)>22 Years	3	3.225	2	2.352
Gender					
2	a)Male	1	1.075	7	8.235
	b)Female	92	98.92	78	91.76
Religion					
3	a)Hindu	83	89.24	80	94.11
	b)Muslim	1	1.075	0	0.00
	c)Christian	9	9.677	5	5.882
Presently studying					
4	a)GNM 1 st year	42	54.83	0	0.00
	b)B.Sc 1 st year	52	45.16	0	0.00
	c)GNM final year	0	0	35	41.17
	d)B.Sc final year	0	0	50	58.82
Medium of instruction					
5	a)Tamil	55	59.13	52	61.17
	b)English	38	40.86	33	38.82

had very good perception for service to humanity,55(59.13) and 47(50.53%) had moderately perceived the societal

Table 2 Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables like residence, marital status, occupation of father, occupation of mother of first year and final year nursing students. reasons sources, plan after completion of your programme,change the profession

(N=178)

S.no	Demographic Variable	First year (N=93)		Final year (N=85)	
		Frequency No	Percentage %	Frequency No	Percentage %
Residence					
1	a)Urban	38	40.86	41	48.23
	b)Rural	55	59.13	44	51.76
Marital status					
2	a)Unmarried	91	97.84	76	89.41
	b)Married	2	2.150	9	10.58
Occupation – Father					
3	a)Employed	28	30.10	22	25.88
	b)Unemployed	11	11.82	13	15.29
	c)Self employed	6	6.451	20	23.52
	d)Daily wages	48	51.61	30	35.29
Occupation- Mother					
4	a)Employed	19	20.43	11	12.94
	b)Unemployed	32	34.40	31	34.64
	c)Self employed	3	3.225	18	21.17
	d)Daily wages	39	41.93	25	28.23

Table 3 Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables like source of information, reasons for choosing nursing, plan after completion of nursing and Profession change later among first year and final year nursing students

N =178

S.no	Demographic Variable	First year(N=93)		Final year(N=85)	
		Frequency No	Percentage %	Frequency No	Percentage %
SOURCES					
1	a) Parents	30	32.25	33	38.82
	b)Relatives	3	3.225	4	4.705
	c)Friends	11	11.82	10	11.76
	d)Media	7	7.526	2	2.352
	e)Teachers	0	-	2	2.352
	f)Self	39	41.93	23	27.05
	Others	3	3.225	11	12.94
REASONS					
2	a)More job opportunities	24	25.80	43	50.58
	b)Self interest in health care	52	55.91	23	27.05
	c)Serve community				
	d)Job statifaction	5	5.376	3	3.52
	e)Due to parents same profession	9	9.677	5	5.882
	f)Good income	0	0.00	2	2.352
	g)No other better available options	3	3.225	7	8.235
		0	0.00	2	2.352
Plan after graduation					
3	a)Teaching in institution	8	8.602	6	7.058
	b)Bedside nursing	36	38.70	50	58.82
	c)Nursing administration	20	21.50	15	17.64
	d)Higher education	29	31.18	14	16.47
Profession change later					
4	a)Yes	6	6.45	29	34.11
	b)No	87	93.5	56	65.88

Table 4 Comparison of mean perception regarding nursing profession among first year and final year nursing students

(N=178)

Variables	First year(N=93)		Final year(N=85)		T-test	P-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Professional Aspect	14.4	2.91	13.81	3.31	1.34	0.18 (NS)
Service to humanity	20.06	2.78	18.54	3.32	3.33	0.001 (S)
Societal aspect	38.13	5.42	26.42	4.21	2.329	0.021 (S)
Self development and job oriented	12.09	2.58	10.73	2.52	3.54	0.001 (S)
Overall perception	74.05	10.55	69.46	9.94	2.98	0.003 (S)

Among 93 first year students, 10(10.75%) of them fairly perceived the professional aspect and 37(39.78) of them had very good perception. Majority of the students 69 (74.19%)

concepts and self development. Overall most of the students 54(58.06) had moderate perception regarding nursing profession and only 39(41.93%) of them perceived very good. None of them had fair on poor perception towardsnursing profession.

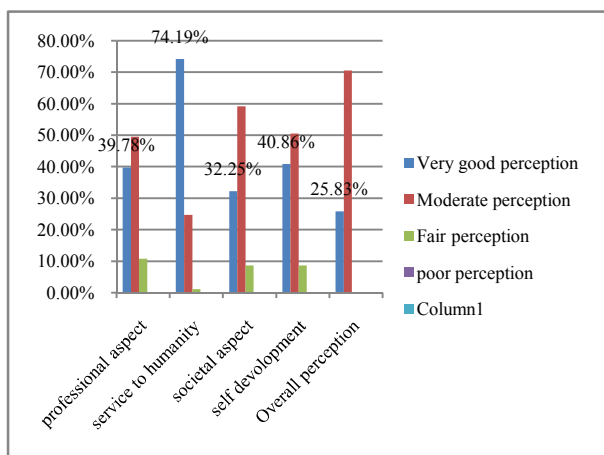


Fig 1 Bar diagram on percentage distribution of level of perception regarding nursing profession among first year nursing students.

From figure, 2 shows that among 85 final year nursing students, most of them had moderately perceived the professional aspect 51(60%), service to humanity 37(43.52%), Societal aspect 70(82.35%) and self development 58(68.23%). Though in the final year, few students perceived fairly regarding professional aspect 10(11.76%), service to humanity 7(8.2%), societal aspect 5(5.88%) and self development 11(12.94%). Overall 60(70.58%) of them had moderate perception, 22(25.88%) of them had very good perception and only 3(3.53%) showed fair perception towards nursing profession.

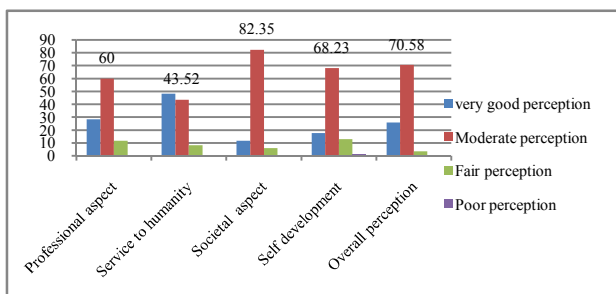


Fig 2 Bar diagram on percentage distribution of level of perception regarding nursing profession among final year nursing students

Table 4, while comparing the different aspects of perception regarding nursing profession between first and final year nursing students, it was evident from table 4 that perception towards service to humanity and self development/Job orientation was highly significant ($P < 0.001$), and Perception towards societal aspect showed a marked significance ($P < 0.05$). Overall the perception towards nursing profession between first year (Mean- 74.05, SD-10.55) and final year (Mean- 69.46, SD- 2.98) nursing students showed a statistically pronounced different at $P < 0.01$ level of significance. This infer that the way the first year nursing students perceived the profession was different from the final year nursing students.

Table 5, association between level of perception regarding nursing profession of first year and final year students with selected demographic variables showed a non-significant P-value ($P > 0.05$) which means that the level of perception regarding nursing profession was not influenced by variables like gender, religion, medium of instruction, Place of residence, marital status, occupation of father and mother, and source of information.

Table 5 Association of selected demographic variables with level of perception regarding nursing profession among first year and final year nursing students

(N=178)

S.no	Demographic variable	First year (93)		Final year (85)	
		Chi-square value	'p' value	Chi-square value	'p' value
1	Gender	1.40	0.237 (NS)	0.913	0.63 (NS)
2	Religion	4.739	0.09 (NS)	0.681	0.711 (NS)
3	Medium	0.685	0.41 (NS)	1.79	0.41 (NS)
4	Residence	0.21	0.65 (NS)	1.79	0.459 (NS)
5	Marital status	2.830	0.09 (NS)	0.593	0.14 (NS)
6	Occupation of Father	3.66	0.30 (NS)	0.624	0.357 (NS)
7	Occupation of Mother	1.92	0.59 (NS)	10.398	0.238 (NS)

DISCUSSION

The present study was carried out to explore and compare the perception regarding nursing profession among first and final year nursing students. The findings of the study was interpreted based on the objectives.

We found that most of the first year students 54(58.06) had moderate perception regarding nursing profession and only 39(41.93%) of them perceived very good. None of them had fair on poor perception towards nursing profession. The mean overall perception was 74.05 with standard deviation of 10.55 which means that the perception of first year nursing students regarding nursing profession was moderately better.

However 60(70.58%) of the final year students had moderate perception, 22(25.88%) of them had very good perception and only 3(3.53%) showed fair perception towards nursing profession with the mean value of 69.46 and standard deviation 9.94 which means that they perceived the nursing moderately. Similar findings were reported by Swarna.S (2015), showed that the perception of final year student regarding nursing profession was good. The findings of Getu . *et al.*, (2015) also, reported 54(52.4%) of students had good perception towards nursing.

Overall, the first year students had better perception towards nursing profession than final year students. On comparison statistical significance was found at $P < 0.01$ which infers that there is significant difference in perception regarding nursing profession between first year and final year nursing students.

Kaur. M, Kaur. K and Sharma S.K (2007) findings were consistent with the present findings. They reported that majority of the students in first and final year believed nursing profession is to serve the humanity 72 % of just admitted and 86.4% of outgoing students reported that nursing profession provides opportunity for personal growth. Two third of students in both group believed that nursing profession provides economic security. Cheri M.S *et al.*, in their study reported that 54.01% of freshman and 23.5 % of senior nursing students had a positive attribute toward their discipline and showed significant difference at $P < 0.001$

Recommendation

- A study can be done using mixed method research.
- A study can be undertaken on a large sample for making a more valuable generalization.
- A study can done to explore the factors affecting perception of the nursing students

Implication of the Study

The study helps the nurse educators and the nurse administrators to view the students perception towards the nursing profession and motivate them to develop good perception towards the nursing profession.

CONCLUSION

The present study findings revealed that though both groups had moderate perception regarding nursing profession, the first year nursing students perceived the nursing profession better than the final year students. Hence the factors affecting perception need to be studied at entry, during and at the end of the course in order to improve the nursing education and enrollment in nursing profession.

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