

## OPINION OF NURSING STUDENTS ON PROFESSIONAL IMAGE OF NURSING

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### ABSTRACT :

*An Image is an essential part of profession. It is the way a person appears to others, or in the case of a profession, the way that profession manifests to other disciplines and to the general public - consumers of health care. Image and the perception of the profession impact recruitment of students, the view of the public, funding for nursing education and research, relationships with healthcare administrators and other healthcare professionals, government agencies and legislators at all levels of government, and ultimately, the profession's self-identity. A descriptive study was undertaken to assess the opinion of nursing students on Professional Image of Nursing in a selected college of nursing, Uttarakhand. Total 60 nursing students were selected by stratified random sampling technique. The pre-test was taken by using structured opinionnaire designed by researcher and validated by the various experts in the field of nursing. The overall mean and Standard deviation out of total score of 150 of pre-test opinion score of nursing students was (111 ± 14.73) whereas mode and median out of total score of 150 were respectively 125 and 112 which reveal that the group was not homogeneous and they had given all responses according to their own understanding against the mentioned statements in the opinionnaire. No significant association was found between pretest opinion scores with their demographic variables. The findings of the study concluded that most of the students had positive opinion about nursing profession, yet some of the students had expressed their opinion on the negative side.*

**Key words:** Image of Nursing, Nursing students, Demographic variables.

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## INTRODUCTION

Nursing is a noble profession and career of day and night service to the public. Nursing existed before Florence Nightingale was a crude form of nursing. Nurses at that time did not have good social branches in society, the way it has now. Image and standard of nursing has improved.<sup>1</sup>

Today nursing has expanded and extended roles in the field of medicine. Nursing profession has grown and has made an impact on all upcoming youngsters to move along to choose nursing as a profession. An individual needs to know about the profession and the image that profession carries. It plays an important role for selecting a correct profession. The public image of a profession decides the financial aspect and also the type of person who will enter the profession. Medicine and engineering are the two widely chosen career options of teenagers. The reasons may be many and one reason could be that practising medicine is a noble profession that gives an opportunity to serve the humanity. The declaration of Alma Atta in 1978 "Health for all by 2000 AD" made a great impact on all professionals in health care. Committed to this statement, there is a great need for more and more nursing professionals to meet the increasing demands to render the quality care to the population.<sup>2</sup>

**Mendez D, Lovis M** (1991) reports in their study that the poor image of nursing has a negative impact on recruitment into the profession.<sup>3</sup> **H.T Dave** (2007) conducted a study to determine the knowledge and attitude towards Nursing profession among male and female students in Gujarat. The result showed that knowledge about nursing profession was low in males than female students, but attitude was positive towards nursing among male and female students. However, the positive attitude was not transmitted into a desire to join Nursing.<sup>4</sup>

**Dodds E.A, Lawrence A.J.** in 1996 had done a survey to identify the nurses' representations of the positive and negative features of nursing, a concept derived from Newell & Simon's (1977) problem-solving model and Lewin's (1935) concept of interacting positive and negative valences. Using a structural equation modelling technique, a network of positive and negative features in nurses' work spaces is described in patterns of response to a questionnaire eliciting nurses' ratings of their professional opportunities and difficulties. The modelling technique revealed the dominance of positive over negative features, and the overall significance of social recognition for encouraging nurses to remain in nursing. The importance of understanding the perceptions of nurses is discussed in relation to changes and development in nursing as a profession.<sup>5</sup>

After reviewing many articles in our review of literature and self-experience about the image of nursing, researchers thought to do a survey on the existing image of nursing among nursing students. Because change always starts from within not from outside, so first nurses need to change themselves and their opinion about professional image of nursing.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A descriptive research design was used in this study. The study was conducted at a selected College of Nursing in Dehradun, Uttarakhand. The sample of 60 nursing students was selected by using stratified random sampling technique. The tool used for the study was the structured opinionnaire designed by the researcher consisting of Section 'A' (Socio- demographic variables such as age, gender, class and choice in nursing profession and Section 'B' (consisting of 30 items related to opinion regarding image of nursing. The content validity of the tool was ensured by giving the tool to experts in the field of Nursing.

**RESULTS****3.1 Related to Socio-Demographic Profile of nursing students:****Table No.1: Socio-Demographic Profile of nursing students****(n = 60)**

| Sample Characteristics       | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| AGE IN YEARS                 |               |                |
| 17-21years                   | 37            | 62             |
| 22-27years                   | 23            | 38             |
| GENDER                       |               |                |
| Male                         | 09            | 15             |
| Female                       | 51            | 85             |
| CLASS                        |               |                |
| GNM                          | 19            | <b>32</b>      |
| BSc                          | 41            | 68             |
| CHOICE OF NURSING PROFESSION |               |                |
| By own choice                | 30            | <b>50</b>      |
| By force of relative/family  | 21            | 35             |
| By advice of friends         | 09            | 15             |
|                              |               |                |

Data presented in Table No-1; depicts the percentage and frequency of characteristics which shows that most 37 (62%) from the age group of 17-21 years only 23(38%) of the nursing students were in the age group of 22-27 years.

Regarding the gender majority 51 (85%) were female nursing students and only 9 (15%) were male nursing students. Regarding the class most of 41 (68%) students were enrolled in BSc Nursing course and only 19 (31%) were from the GNM course.

Regarding choice of nursing most of the 30 (50%) subjects came to the nursing profession by their own choice and 21 (35%) were by force of relative/ family and only 9 (15%) were enrolled in the nursing profession because of advice from their friends.

**3.2 Opinionnaire regarding image of nursing among nursing students:****Table No.2: Opinionnaire regarding image of nursing among nursing students**

| Opinionnaire | Range score | Mean $\pm$ SD   | Mode | Median |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------|------|--------|
|              | 75-140      | 111 $\pm$ 14.73 | 125  | 112    |

Table No. 2 it can be inferred that group was not homogeneous and they had given all responses according to their own understanding against the statements mentioned in the opinionnaire.

### 3.3 Opinion of Nursing students according to the each positive statement

**Table No.3: Opinion of nursing student according to the positive statements**

| Sl. No. | Positive Statements  | Agree | Disagree |
|---------|--|-------|----------|
| 1.      | Good nursing image helps me to show my professionalism   | 95%   | 3%       |
| 2.      | Positive attitude is main asset to be a good nurse.  | 93%   | 2%       |
| 3.      | I am doing a good job by serving the society/ humanity/ needy person.  | 93%   | 5%       |
| 4.      | Being specialised nurse will improve the image of nursing profession   | 92%   | 3%       |
| 5.      | Nursing is a noble profession.   | 90%   | 3%       |
| 6.      | Making image good or bad depends on a nurse.   | 88%   | 7%       |
| 7.      | There is a job security in nursing profession.   | 85%   | 5%       |
| 8.      | Nursing profession should encourage the entry of more male candidates.   | 78%   | 15%      |
| 9.      | The image of nursing profession has been improved as compared to earlier time.                                 | 77%   | 18%      |
| 10.     | I am proud to be a nurse.  | 75%   | 15%      |
| 11.     | Nurses are competent in their work.  | 73%   | 10%      |
| 12.     | All of my expectations regarding nursing carrier will be fulfilled after joining this profession.              | 70%   | 13%      |
| 13.     | People have bad image about nurses.  | 67%   | 23%      |
| 14.     | Nurses are 'change agents' of society.   | 67%   | 15%      |
| 15.     | I can explore my knowledge with in nursing profession more as compare to other profession                      | 63%   | 18%      |
| 16.     | Nurses are compassionate towards patient.  | 60%   | 20%      |
| 17.     | Medical and other health care professional's gives equal respect to nursing profession as they give to others. | 60%   | 32%      |
| 18.     | Media plays an important role to make nurses image bad.  | 53%   | 27%      |

Table No. 3 shows that 95% of students felt that good nursing image helped them to show their professionalism, 93% student felt that positive attitude is main asset for being a good nurse, 93% of students felt that they were doing good job by serving the society/ humanity/ needy person, 92% of students felt that being specialised nurse will have improved the image of nursing profession, 90% of students felt that nursing is a noble profession, 88% of students felt that making an image good or bad depends on a nurse, 85% of students felt that there is job security in nursing profession, 78% of students felt that nursing profession should encourage the entry of more male candidates, 77% of students felt that the image of nursing profession had improved as compared to earlier times, 75% of students felt that they were proud to be nurses, again 75% of students felt that nurses are competent in their work, 70% of students felt that all of their expectations regarding nursing career would be fulfilled after joining the profession, 67% of students felt that nurses are 'change agents' of society, and again 67% of students felt that people have bad image about nurses, 63% of students felt that they could explore their knowledge within nursing profession more than in other professions, 60% of students felt that nurses are compassionate towards patients and the same 60% felt that medical and other health care professionals gave equal respect to nursing profession as they would give to other professions and 53% of students felt that media played an important role to make nurses image bad.

### 3.4 Opinion of nursing student according to the each negative statement

Table No.4 Opinion of nursing student according to the negative statement

| Sl. No. | Negative Statement   | Agree | Disagree |
|---------|--|-------|----------|
| 1.      | Nursing profession is meant to be for female only.                                     | 83%   | 10%      |
| 2.      | Nurses are not creative in their work.   | 78%   | 17%      |
| 3.      | Nursing profession is only to assist the doctor.                                       | 77%   | 12%      |
| 4.      | I have much less knowledge about nursing profession.                                   | 72%   | 18%      |
| 5.      | Nurses don't have caring attitude.   | 70%   | 20%      |
| 6.      | In front of the society I feel ashamed to tell about my profession.                    | 68%   | 30%      |
| 7.      | I don't have bright future as a nurse.   | 65%   | 22%      |
| 8.      | Nurses are not committed towards their work.   | 58%   | 25%      |
| 9.      | I would like to change my profession.  | 45%   | 48%      |
| 10.     | Most of the nurses are rude.   | 43%   | 45%      |
| 11.     | Student nurses have to perform various non professional tasks during their duty hours. | 40%   | 52%      |
| 12.     | Patients and their relatives take me as assistant of doctors.                          | 27%   | 55%      |

Table No. 4 shows that 55% of students felt that patients and their relatives take nurses as assistants to doctors, 52 % students felt that student nurses have to perform various non professional tasks during their duty hours, 48% of students felt that given a chance they would like to change their profession, 45% of students felt that most of the nurses are rude, 30% of students felt that in front of society they would feel ashamed to tell about their profession, 25% of students felt that nurses are not committed towards their work, 22% of students felt that they did not have bright future as a nurse, 20% of students felt that nurses do not have caring attitude, 18% of students felt that they have much less knowledge about nursing profession, 17% of students felt that nurses are not creative in their work, 12% of students felt that nursing profession is only to assist the doctor, 10% of students felt that nursing profession is meant to be for females only.

### 3.5 Association between Opinionnaire and demographic variables

Table No-5: Association between demographic variables with opinionnaire of nursing students

(n =62)

| Demographic Variables | Below Median | At and Above Median | $\chi^2$ cal value |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Age</b>            |              |                     |                    |
| 17-21                 | 21           | 16                  | <b>0.45</b>        |
| 22-27                 | 11           | 12                  |                    |
| <b>Gender</b>         |              |                     |                    |
| Male                  | 03           | 06                  | 0.88#              |
| Female                | 29           | 22                  |                    |
| <b>Class</b>          |              |                     |                    |
| BSc                   | 20           | 21                  | 1.07               |
| GNM                   | 12           | 07                  |                    |

df1=3.84 at the level of 95% confidence interval.

# Yates correction

Table No 5 depicts that no demographic variable and personal information i.e. Age, Gender and enrolled class had any association with their opinion score. From the data it could be inferred that age, gender and the nature of course do not have any impact on the opinion of the nursing students regarding image of nursing.

## **Nursing Implications:**

Nursing is a noble profession and a career of day and night service to the public. The nursing that existed before Florence Nightingale was a crude form of nursing. The nurses at that time were not having good social standing in society, but at present the conditions have changed a lot. It has now obtained a better status in the society. Definitely the standard of candidates coming to the profession has improved.

The findings of the study have implications for Nursing Practice, Nursing Education, Nursing Administration and Nursing Research.

## **Nursing Practice:**

Nurses are often praised for their strength in helping other people. Needed now is the courage of truth to help themselves. Nurses must be for nursing, supporting advances in every conceivable manner. If they do this, they will uphold the right of the sick and troubled in mind to be regarded as members of the human society; they will uphold the dignity of their patients, profession and the health service to the Nation and self.

## **Nursing Education:**

Opinion regarding the image of nursing should be applied to Nursing education and thus providing interventions accordingly and create an awareness about the nursing profession among public through various methods.

## **Nursing Administration:**

Nursing administrators should take more initiatives in improving the image of our profession by taking some necessary decisions.

## **Nursing Research:**

Finding of the present study suggests that there is a need to change negative aspect about professional image of nursing among nursing students. A comparative study can be conducted to assess the opinion regarding image of nursing among male and female students.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that most of the students had positive opinion about nursing profession yet some of the students had expressed their opinion on the negative side.

The following conclusions were drawn on the basis of the study

- From the findings of the study and obtained mean, mode, and median, it can be inferred that the group was not homogeneous and they had given all responses according to their own understanding vis a vis the Opinionnaire.
- From the finding of the study it can be concluded that the selected variables viz. age, gender and class have no significant association between Opinionnaire and selected demographic variables.

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