

Nursing students motivations and satisfaction, Do the motivation and satisfaction of nursing students change during their study years?

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Abstract

Background: Study the level of nursing students` motivations and satisfaction may help policy makers to develop training plans to improve graduates skills and commitment. This study was conducted to investigate nursing students' motivations and satisfaction during study years at Ahvaz Jundishapur University of medical sciences.

Methods:It was a cross-sectional study to explore 197 nursing students' viewpoints about their fields. A validated and reliable self-made questionnaire was developed and used. Data analysis was carried out by descriptive statistics, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and t-test using SPSS software (version 16).

Results: The study findings showed that the most crucial motivation factors to select nursing course were “job security” and “interest in medical science” with means 3.94 and 3.68 respectively. The mean satisfaction score of the nursing students was under average (2.75). There was significant difference between mean satisfaction scores of the first and last year students (respectively, 3.69 vs. 2.90 p=0.0001).

Conclusion: Level of nursing students' satisfaction get reduces after university entrance and during study years gradually.

Key words: Nursing student, motivation, satisfaction

1. Introduction

Motivation and interest are essential component of human progress at all life stages particularly for pursuing further education. In Iran, competitive competition for university entrance encourages student with different

level of motivations and sometimes without sufficient knowledge, awareness and interest in the chosen field to get entered to universities (1).

Obviously, this may lead to waste of time and money and even academic failure and frustration ultimately. Lack of attention to this problem may induce students' reluctance to carry on their education or to change the field. This may happen all over the world and is rising even in developed countries like USA (2).

There are complex factors to induce students idea's change after entering to the university and over the study years. Insufficient knowledge about the field, new environment and inadequate knowledge about future career are the major factors for this difficulty (3).

Although motivation is multi-factorial related to learner and environment, there are always strategies to strengthen students' motivation to achieve imperative goals. Studies have shown that 30% nursing students continue their studies with no eager and motivation (4-5).

Student's satisfaction is a good factor to verify their acceptance of the educational environment and conditions and show their believes about discipline and teaching facilities (6-7). The level of students' satisfaction to choose an academic course is a key issue that should be considered in academic education system improvement.

Despite the importance of student' satisfaction, there is a few studies about medical students consent conducted in Iran; it has been reported that the main reason to do nursing course is students` desire for further education which is possible in nursing field and also being interested in nursing field(8-9). Hakim (2013)addressed that the majority of nursing students are not satisfied with their course (10); another study showed that lack of carrier prospective and job security cause student desire reduce for further education in nursing field (11).

Due to the lack of motivation among student and its consequence which is downfall in academic progress, there will be eventually students' failure in their academic course. As there is very limited number of studies which has considered the level and role of student motivation and satisfaction in the process of course selection and academic progress, this study is aimed to investigate nursing students` motivation and satisfaction level for nursing course selection among nursing students of Ahvaz Jundishapur Medical University during their study years.

2. Materials & Methods

It was a cross-sectional study to investigate all nursing students opinion at Jundishapour medical University (academic year 2013–2014) about effective factors to choose their academic course. Sampling method was census and a researchers-made questionnaire included 20 questions was used to collect data. The questionnaire composed of 6 demographic and 14 questions regarding to the effective factors to select academic courses and the level of their satisfaction among nursing students. The questionnaire ordered on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “very low=1” to “very high=5”.

The reliability of questionnaire was established by internal consistency of items. The reliability test yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.897. The questionnaire was content validated by professors in medical University and nursing students. The questionnaires were distributed among all 218 nursing students in the University. In order to care about research ethics, students' participation was voluntary and their anonymity was totally assured. Data were analyzed with SPSS software; to analyze gathered data, descriptive statistics, t-test and ANOVA test were used. The $P < 0.05$ was considered as the significance level.

3. Results

One hundred ninety seven nursing student complete the questionnaires and returned (response rate 90%). Of those surveyed 57.2% were female and 42.8% were male students. The average age of participants was 21.4 ± 2.1 . The mean of students' grade score was 16.45 ± 1.69 . 39 students (19.8%) was in first, 51 students (25.9%) in second, 55 students (27.9 %) in third and 52 (26.4 %) in fourth academic year.

The factors influencing in nursing choice by students were summarized in table 1. Based on the mean scores, factors such as "job market and security" and “interest in medical science” were the main reasons for choosing

nursing field with means 3.94 and 3.68 respectively; the least important factors were "family encouragement to do nursing course" and "social position of nursing job" with means 2.94 and 2.86 respectively (Table 1).

Students answer to the question "do you choose this course again in the university exam entrance?" was positive with average 2.75. And they recommend this course to others with average of 2.98. Nursing students' responses to the question "would you change their field" were moderate with an average of 3.22 (Table 1). Students' satisfaction of the university and its academic status was moderate. Students reply to the question: "Do you change the university if there is possibility" was positive with average of 3.36.

Furthermore, based on the students' responses for the question: "how much effect do you get from others to choose academic course", there is a significant differences between male and female students as the mean scores for male students was significantly higher than female (3.34 verses 2.87, $p=0.013$).

The mean scores of male students replies to the question of "If you could, do you ever choose another university" were significantly higher than female students (3.64 verses 2.99, $p=0.002$).

The rate of satisfaction of students toward study in nursing field were summarized in table 2, Based on the mean scores, Findings to check students' satisfaction about nursing field in different academic years showed that there was a significant difference between the students' opinion; that is, as academic years increase, nursing students' motivation and satisfaction gradually decreases (Table2).

4. Discussion

Essentially, students' success at universities depends on their original knowledge about the course and choosing right course with adequate information. Students' attitude to their field of study and future career are effective factors to make them satisfied and flourished. This study's participants considered the most important motivation of nursing study as "employment and job market". Also, Asadzadeh et al. (2012) and Abediyan et al. (2013) have addressed that future employment and job position are the main motivations for high school and college students to choose nursing career for their academic education in nursing students point of view (9,12). Moreover, Rognstad (13) verified that job security and sufficient carrier income are top priorities for applicant to choose their academic program.

Some studies raised up the issue of graduates' employments as the most imperative health system difficulty in Iran (14-16). Gradually, in recent years, Iran health care system is facing two major challenges: first, mismatch between graduates, job market and country requirements; second, quantitative development policies and high admissions rate at universities. Both Challenges have caused increasing number of unemployed graduates which leads to lack of carrier success and good job market; this situation might be the main reason for unenthusiastic and unwillingness of students for further study. Furthermore, according to this study's results, students think further education cannot guarantee better job market and employment.

Interest to nursing field and medical area, social needs and the nature of nursing job to help people are the main reasons to select nursing course. Findings of this study are consistent with former researches (17-20). It seems that nature of nursing care to minimize people pain and support patient have the major role to apply for nursing course. This has also been addressed by the study conducted by Mooney and colleagues in Ireland (19); they declared that people assistance and support was the most important factor to choose nursing course by first year nursing students (21). Thus, we need to design theory and practical curriculum to stimulate interest and enthusiasm of new entry student toward nursing profession. Otherwise, as some studies have shown, we may face low level of motivation and satisfaction by students during next academic years (22-23).

Factors such as nurses' social status, family and friends encouragement, and income level have less effect to choose nursing program which is consistent with the findings of other studies (12, 19); however, there is controversy between our findings and other investigations (20, 24). This might be due to students' social and cultural condition variety, level of wages and profession position disparity.

The result of this study also showed that nurse's social level has the least effect to opt nursing course; this might be because of negative cultural-social attitude toward nursing job. In the study conducted by Lin, 50% of nursing students' negative opinion about nursing field has been due to low level of nurses' social position in the community (25). Social context and people thought about this field might be formed based on the image that media reflects about nursing job; consequently, this may affect the attitudes of nursing students about their prospect profession.

In this study, nursing students did not have positive motivation and their satisfaction was almost low. Similar to the result of our study, Dalir et al. (2011) reported average level of nursing students' motivation (17). On the other hand, some studies revealed hard work and heavy workloads for nurses as factors to create negative attitude towards this profession (26).

The research participants expressed their strong desire to change their study field; it was revealed that if there is the possibility of choosing their course again, they wouldn't select nursing programs for the second time. According to the study carried out by Joolae (22), about 64% of nursing students at Tehran University of Medical Sciences made the decision to change their course due to these reasons: lack of positive social view toward nursing job, differences between student dreams and reality before and after university entrance and negative attitudes of medical team members toward nurses (22).

This level of current motivation and satisfaction in nursing students who have the responsibility of a critical job in upcoming years does not seem desirable. Health systems' policy makers and stakeholders should identify the causes of student discontent and resolve shortcomings through providing the appropriate facilities and then create positive atmosphere for nursing student satisfaction.

In contrast with our findings, Fatahi et al. (7) revealed fairly good level of satisfactions among nursing student which also was supported by Sanaei Nasab et al. (11) and Rajaei et al. (1) in which they addressed more than 90% of students satisfaction with positive motivation. However, this was for the first year student and the level of satisfactions decreases over the study yeas gradually. These findings were confirmed by Brodie and Vanhanen (23, 27) which showed nursing students perception decline from first to fourth study years significantly. Nursing students' attitude drop over the study years was also reported by Grainger (28).

Abbaszadeh (18), through investigation on student motivation for nursing course over a four-year period in Kerman, revealed decreasing trend of nursing students' motivation in following study years steadily (18); according to Kosgeroglu's study(29) it is due to more awareness about the field difficulties and their maturity about their carrier life in future.

Moreover, Shakibaei (30) demonstrated the causes of nursing students' motivation decrease as their study year increase; it was verified that negative attitude of nursing students is the main cause of this collapse and it gets illuminated slowly over the time from first to last study years(30). Thus, it needs to be strongly noted that staffs of nursing and other medical carrier who serve patients and vulnerable people should have high level of motivation at the course selection phase, study years, after graduation and even during carrier life. It is highly essential that university applicant choose the course based on different parameters particularly according to their motivation; also policy makers and authorities try their best to keep up the level of staffs' inspiration. Otherwise, we will not have energetic and well motivated personnel and immense amount of cost and work load impose to the health care system.

Obviously, investigation of the reasons of low motivation and satisfaction among nursing students by the time of entering into university is very important issues that should be explored in detail by further researchers. Certainly, the findings of these studies can help educational authorities in proper planning to prevent student's motivation drop.

Being conducted at only one university and in a restricted region are the most essential study limitations; therefore, the results cannot be generalized to the nursing students of the whole country. It is proposed to carry out similar study in other universities and academic centers in order to clarify different dimensions of the issue.

5. Conclusion

The results showed that students' interest in nursing discipline is in the average level. The main motivations to choose nursing course were good job market and students' interest in medical sciences. Nursing students' satisfaction gradually decline after university entrance and during the study years.

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Table 1. Frequency and mean of viewpoints' nursing students toward factors influencing choice

Titels	Very low	low	moderate	high	Very high	Mean
1- job security and economy	4.1	6.6	15.2	39.1	35.0	3.94
2-interest in medical science	6.7	9.2	21.0	35.9	27.2	3.68
3- Talent and Academic ability	7.1	5.1	28.4	41.1	18.3	3.58
4-Serve to the needs of society	8.1	11.2	19.8	39.1	21.8	3.55
5-interest in biology in high school	8.2	10.7	27.6	28.1	25.5	3.52
6-Income and economic status	6.6	14.3	31.1	35.7	12.2	3.33
7- Knowledge and personal decision	7.1	16.3	29.1	34.7	12.8	3.30
8- advice of friends and Relatives	15.7	16.8	31.5	25.4	10.7	2.98
9- advice of family	16.4	16.4	32.8	25.6	8.7	2.94
10- social status of the nursing profession	13.7	21.3	37.1	20.8	7.1	2.86
11-Amount of your satisfaction in nursing	22.3	7.1	29.4	28.4	12.7	3.02
12- Did you recommend this course to your friend?	23.4	6.6	29.4	29.9	10.7	2.98
13-If you choose nursing re-exam?	29.4	11.7	25.4	21.8	11.7	2.75
14- Are you willing to change your field?	19.8	11.2	23.4	18.8	26.9	3.22

Table 2. Comparison of the nurses' satisfaction per years after entering University

Title	year1	year2	year3	year4	F	P
Do you have satisfaction of studying at this course.	3.69±1.13	3.44±1.06	1.98±1.3	2.90±1.09	22.20	0.0001
Do you advice friends and relatives for choosing nursing course.	3.75±0.81	3.15±1.22	2.10±1.31	2.87±1.32	17.43	0.0001
If you choose nursing re-exam.	3.40±1.27	3.02±1.39	1.86±1.18	2.64±1.18	13.84	0.0001
Are you willing to change your field.	2.88±1.46	2.98±1.32	3.67±1.5	3.41±1.44	3.33	0.02

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