

Perceptions of patient attendant about nursing profession at public and private tertiary care hospitals of Karachi, Pakistan

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Objective: To determine patients' attendant perceptions about nursing profession at Karachi, Pakistan.

Methodology: In this cross-sectional study, data were collected from patient attendants at private and tertiary care hospitals from Karachi, Pakistan from June 2014 to March 2015. Purposive sampling strategy was used to enroll 150 participants. Data collection tool was developed to collect data.

Results: Majority of private hospital (96.0%) respondents thought that nursing was a respectable profession compared to government

hospital (64.0%). Almost 80.0% of respondents from both government and private hospital agreed that nursing was an acceptable profession in our society. Large number of respondents from private hospital (73.0%) thought nurse services are very important in our country.

Conclusion: Majority of the participants had positive perception about nursing profession. However, perceptions of patient attendants in private hospital were more positive as compared to those in public hospitals. (Rawal Med J 201;43:341-344).

Keywords: Image, nursing profession, Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

Nursing is an art and science to provide care to needy people based on scientific principles. In developing countries, the enrollment in nursing programs is not with number of seats. The possible reason could be negative stigmatize image of nurses in the society. For successful recruitment and retention of staff in the health care profession, the image of both nurses and nursing profession is fundamental. Reports showed that the nurses are supposed to be the back bone of health care industry and are fundamental in providing quality care.¹ Despite being a strong component of the healthcare system,² the nursing profession is not viewed favorably by the general public. A study from Tanzania showed that personal and public image of nursing had a strong influence on the perceptions held by the public about this profession.³

Public perception about nursing profession appears

to be very closely interlinked with image of nurses.⁴ A study from United States showed that most common negative perceptions about nursing were related to the lack of awareness of general public regarding careers in nursing profession.⁵ The history of nursing also reflects that in the nineteenth century, nursing was thought to be the profession of slaves, widows and nuns.

In the West, public perception about nursing profession has improved as compared to East, like in the last decade a considerable development has been taken place in the role and scope of Australian general practice nursing.⁶ Half of the nurse's intention was influenced by their parents for the choice of nursing to be selected as a career.⁷ Another study from South Africa reported that 83.03% participants responded that Nurses are extremely hardworking.⁸ In another study from Lahore, it was found that the main factor for choosing nursing as a career is the desire to help

and care for others.⁹ However, limited studies have been conducted to determine public perception regarding nursing profession and understand the factors which either facilitate or hinder youngster to build career in nursing profession. The aim of this study was to determine patients' attendant perceptions about nursing profession at Karachi, Pakistan.

METHODOLOGY

This cross sectional collected data from attendants of the patients from two private and public tertiary care hospital at Karachi, Pakistan from June 2014 to March 2015. Purposive sampling strategy was used and final calculated sample size was 150. Seventy five attendants of the patient were enrolled from private hospital and 75 from public hospital. The selection criteria included attendant who stayed at least three days in hospital, having age more than thirty years, and having children or siblings. Ethical Approval of the study was taken from Ethical Review Committee of Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences. Written Informed consent was obtained from the participants. Data were collected using structured questionnaire, which consisted of two parts; demographic data and perceptions of the participants. Data were analyzed in SPSS version 19.

RESULTS

A total of 150 participants were enrolled. Half (n=75) were from government hospital and the other half (n=75) were from a private hospital of Karachi. All were above 30 years of age. There were more males, more married, more muslims and more urdu speaking. Almost one half (46.0%) respondents were living independent life whereas the other half (48.0%) had up to 10 dependents, fewer (6.0%) respondents revealed that they have 11 or above dependents (Table 1).

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents.

	Government Hospital (n=75)	Private Hospital (n=75)	Total (n=150)
Age (years)			
30 to 40	65.3%	80.0%	72.7%
41 to 50	25.3%	14.7%	20.0%
51 and above	9.4%	5.3%	7.3%
Gender			
Male	80.0%	37.3%	58.7%
Female	20.0%	62.7%	41.3%
Marital status			
Married	72.1%	86.6%	72.7%
Unmarried	26.2%	11.7%	16.7%
Widowed	1.6%	1.3%	1.3%
Religion			
Muslim	91.5%	100.0%	96.0%
Christian	4.2%	0.0%	2.0%
Hindu	1.3%	0.0%	0.6%
Any other	2.8%	0.0%	1.3%
Ethnicity			
Punjabi	18.6%	13.0%	16.0%
Sindhi	15.6%	14.3%	15.3%
Pakhtoon	16.9%	68.0%	12.6%
Balochi	11.7%	3.9%	8.0%
Urdu speaking	24.0%	58.3%	41.3%
Any other	11.7%	1.3%	6.6%
Relation with patient			
Brother	25.3%	25.3%	25.3%
Sister	10.6%	20.0%	15.3%
Father	6.5%	13.0%	10.0%
Aunt/Uncle	18.6%	17.9%	17.3%
Husband	2.6%	6.5%	4.6%
Wife	6.5%	3.9%	5.3%
Daughter	5.2%	5.2%	5.3%
Son	17.9%	9.1%	12.6%
Other	8.0%	0.0%	4.0%
Family type			
Joint	20.0%	44.0%	32.0%
Nuclear	80.0%	56.0%	68.0%
Dependents			
None	44.0%	48.0%	46.0%
1-5	22.6%	29.3%	26.0%
6-10	25.3%	18.6%	22.0%
11 or above	8.0%	3.9%	6.0%
Education			
Illiterate	29.3%	8.0%	18.6%
Under matriculation	32.0%	10.4%	21.3%
Matriculation	22.6%	22.6%	22.6%
Intermediate	12.0%	34.7%	23.3%
Graduate or above	3.9%	22.6%	13.3%
Profession			
Lawyer, judge, doctor, engineer	17.3%	18.6%	18.0%
Technical profession	8.0%	5.2%	6.6%
Business/private job	40.0%	25.3%	32.6%
Government service/army	8.0%	5.2%	6.6%
House wife/job less	26.7%	45.3%	36.0%
Department			
Government	16.0%	29.3%	16.0%
Semi government	5.2%	1.3%	3.3%
Private	25.3%	13.0%	19.3%
Non-government organization	20.0%	14.3%	17.3%
Business	25.3%	33.3%	29.3%
Others	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%
Monthly income (Rs.)			
< 10000	33.3%	14.3%	24.0%
10000 to 20000	30.7%	22.6%	32.0%
21000 to 30000	20.0%	14.3%	17.3%
31000 to 40000	1.3%	33.3%	17.3%
> 40000	3.9%	14.3%	9.3%

Table 2. Perception regarding nursing profession.

Statement	Government Hospital (n=75)	Private Hospital (n=75)	Total (n=150)
Nursing is acceptable profession in our society?			
Agree	80.2%	78.4%	79.3%
Neutral	10.1%	20.0%	15.3%
Not agreed	9.3%	1.3%	5.3%
Nurse services are very important in health department of Pakistan			
Agree	57.3%	73.2%	65.3%
Neutral	18.7%	5.2%	12.0%
Not agreed	23.9%	24.0%	23.9%
Nurses don't need decision power, they just obey doctors			
Agree	55.9%	70.6%	63.3%
Neutral	24.0%	22.6%	23.3%
Not agreed	19.7%	5 (6.5%)	13.3%
Nurses need complete knowledge of instruments like BP apparatus and stethoscope			
Agree	63.9%	85.6%	78.6%
Neutral	20.0%	0.0%	10.0%
Not agreed	15.7%	5.4%	10.6%
Nurses are very trained and experienced professionals			
Agree	66.6%	72.0%	69.2%
Neutral	13.0%	5.2%	9.3%
Not agreed	19.5%	22.6%	21.3%
Nurses' future are safe and stable			
Agree	56.0%	58.6%	57.3%
Neutral	18.7%	16.0%	17.3%
Not agreed	25.3%	25.2%	25.3%
Nurses receive good salaries			
Agree	46.6%	25.2%	36.0%
Neutral	24.0%	33.3%	28.6%
Not agreed	29.3%	41.3%	35.3%
Nurses have good career development opportunities			
Agree	51.9%	59.9%	56.0%
Neutral	32.0%	30.6%	31.3%
Not agreed	15.8%	9.1%	12.6%
Nursing is a respectable profession in Pakistan			
Agree	50.6%	46.6%	48.6%
Neutral	24.0%	22.6%	23.3%
Not agreed	25.3%	27.5%	27.9%
Nurses have to work long and stringent duty hours?			
Agree	61.3%	68.0%	64.6%
Neutral	24.0%	2.6%	13.3%
Not agreed	14.3%	27.9%	21.2%
Nursing is a physically exhausting profession?			
Agree	50.6%	66.6%	58.6%
Neutral	21.3%	6.5%	14.0%
Not agreed	27.3%	26.6%	27.2%
Nursing is a female oriented job, not for males?			
Agree	37.3%	24.0%	30.6%
Neutral	18.7%	33.3%	26.0%
Not agreed	43.9%	42.6%	43.2%
For caring patients female nurses are better than male nurses?			
Agree	49.2%	37.3%	43.3%
Neutral	26.6%	39.1%	31.3%
Not agreed	23.6%	26.6%	25.3%

Perception of respondents was measured on Likert scale from 1 to 3, 1 for agree 2 neutral and 3 for disagree. Majority of private hospital (96.0%) respondents thought that nursing is a respectable profession compared to government hospital (64.0%). Comparatively, large number of

respondents from private hospital (73.0%) thought nurse services are very important in health departments of our country than government hospital (57.0%) (Table 2).

DISCUSSION

Overall patients' attendant had positive perceptions about nursing profession. The perceptions attendants in private hospitals were more positive than patient attendants in public hospital. The reason could be more roles and responsibilities of nurses in patient care in private hospitals. The findings are comparable with a study from India.¹⁰ Our findings also suggest that only 30.0% respondents had a relative or known person in nursing profession and same is the case of family income as the economic situation of both India and Pakistan is comparable.

Negative image, undesirable working hours, disappointing career and lack of respect were some factors which hinder enrollment in nursing programs.¹¹ Despite all the negative perceptions, a reasonable number of women and men join this profession in Pakistan. Consumers generally view nurses as good profession caring for others. For the 11th consecutive year, the annual Gallup Poll listed nursing as number one in the annual list of occupations rated for honesty and ethical standards, with 81% of respondents agreeing.¹²

Although nurses comprise the majority of healthcare professionals, they are largely invisible. Their competence, skill, knowledge, and judgment are as the word 'image' and suggests only a reflection, not reality.¹³ The public views of nursing and nurses are typically based on personal experiences with nurses, which can lead to a narrow view of a nurse often based only on a brief personal experience. In our study, majority of participants thought that nurses don't need power to do decision. There is no doubt that nursing is a profession with the essential ingredients of autonomy and accountability. It is true that the profession demands responsibilities than the past when the principle of a nurse was just to provide care and comfort.¹⁴ Today, a nurse is a client advocate, educator and manager. But little attention has been drawn to assess the real public perception about nurses. Although the

patients seem to know better (than the past) about health care and demand more knowledge on their treatment options.¹⁵

On basis of findings it is recommended that nurses should take the responsibility of patient complex care to further improve the image of nursing profession. The nurses should improve their communication with patient through active listening and emphithitically involvement in patients' care. Nurses should extend their services from mere monitoring of patient condition to patient education, and show the accountability towards patient care.

CONCLUSION

Majority of the study participants had positive perception about nursing profession. However, perceptions of patient attendants in private hospital were more positive as compared to those in public hospitals. Nurses need to take the responsibility of advance patient care to further improve the image of nursing profession.

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