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## **Saudi Secondary School Students ' Perception toward Image of the Nursing as a Profession**

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### **Abstract**

*Despite the great advances in the nursing profession, nurses still face considerable challenges related to its image that impact on status, power and the ability to affect changes in health care. Nursing is one of the fields where marked Image is part of a profession. It is the way a person appears to others, or in the case of a profession, the way that profession appears to other disciplines and to the general public—consumers of health care. Objective: assess Saudi secondary school students ' perception toward Image of the Nursing as a Profession. A exploratory cross-sectional research design was used to conduct the research study. The area of studying was carried out at female and male secondary schools at western region in Jeddah. Non probability convenience sampling technique was utilized for this study. The estimated number of students' was 150 students from previous settings. The study tool was nursing image questionnaire classified into two parts: first part is general information and second part consists of 28-item that classified into four sub scales namely: nursing as a profession, nurses' roles, image of nursing, and context of social value. Results the main finding of this study were that a statistical significance was found between dimensions of nursing image and sources of*

*information of nursing as a profession in terms of context of social value with no differences in perception of nursing as a profession between male and female Saudi secondary school students. Therefore, it is recommended that increase the community awareness through mass media to highlight the advantages of the nursing profession*

## **Introduction**

In the 21st century, the nursing act as a complex, dynamic, and diverse profession, so there is increasing the demand of nurses around the worldwide. (1) In spite of the significant development in the nursing profession, nurses' still face challenges related to their image that have extensive effect on their position, and their 's contribution to positive health care outcomes. (2, 3) Traditionally nursing had been assumed as more appropriate work for women because women are essentially maternal and feminine. (4) A negative image of nursing has a number of negative consequences. It has impacts on the quality and quantity of persons who choose nursing as a profession. The public who are constantly presented with an inaccurate and negative nursing image will view a career in nursing as undesirable. This is especially relevant to the recruitment of men in the field where media portrayals have focused primarily on women while the image of a male nurse is often negative. (5,6,7) Nurses play a central role in delivering health care; they are professionals who are knowledge motivated, technically skilled, and caring for individuals of all ages and cultural background. (8) The image of nursing has developed all over the history. The apparent image of nursing has changed extremely within the past 50 years. The decision to enter nursing, to remain in nursing and to promote nursing, may be the result of nurses' perception of the image of the profession. (9) Images are mental representation that effect how individuals view feature of life, including the providers of health care services. (2) According to Johnson et al (2010) the image of nursing as a profession is affected by several factors that involve the choice of nursing as a career. (10) These factors include: media, public image, social prestige, nurses themselves, having a family member, relative or a friend who is a nurse, role models, physician nurse interaction, nursing educators, nurse preceptors, risk of violence, exposure to health hazards and nursing education programs (10,11) The nursing profession in the Arab world is emergent rapidly and nursing in some Arab countries is considered as one of the respected and recommended professions. (8) The kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a fast development country that has attains great development in all aspects of life. Nursing is one of the fields where clear image is part of a profession. Also, nursing has been considerably making progress towards professionalism in recent decades and has produced a scientific base by academically preparing programs for it. (12,13) A positive nursing image is a clear progress and expansion evident. It is hoped that the findings will indicate how secondary school students compete the nursing and to recruit the best and brightest nursing student into nursing. Also, using the results to market nursing in an approach which will ensure that they have a realistic view of the profession and consider it as a career. (2,14)

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Materials Objective:**

Assess Saudi secondary school students' perception toward image of the Nursing as a Profession.

### **Specific objectives:**

1. Determine knowledge and opinion of Saudi school secondary school students toward image of nursing as a profession.
2. Compare between knowledge and opinion of male and female Saudi school secondary school students toward image of nursing as a profession.

### **Research design:**

An exploratory cross-sectional research design was used to conduct the research study.

### **Settings:**

The area of studying was carried out at female and male secondary schools at western region in Jeddah.

### **Sample:**

Non probability convenience sampling technique was utilized for this study.

The estimated number of students is 150 classified into 75 males and 75 females. They from secondary schools at western region in Jeddah. 25 students will be selected from each levels of secondary school.

Inclusion criteria:

- Female and male students from high secondary schools
- Age of students ranged between 15-22 years
- Willingness to participate in the study

### **Instrument:**

The Nursing Image Questionnaire developed by researcher was used to measure perception of Saudi secondary school students' toward image of the nursing as a Profession.

The study questionnaire was classified into two parts:

The first part: is general information about the sample such as age, sex, and educational levels.

The second part: consists of 28-item that classified into four sub scales namely:

Nursing as a profession (n=6), Nurses roles (n=9), Image of nursing (n=4), Context of social value (n =9). Responses was measure on a 5- point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree

## Methods

Data collection method:

- ☐ After obtaining the official agreement from the authorized persons and heads of secondary schools at western region – Jeddah.
- ☐ The study questionnaires were submitted to three experts' panel in the field of the study from the College of Nursing- Jeddah, College of Nursing-Jeddah King Saud Bin Abdul-Aziz University for Health Science for its content validity. Accordingly the necessary modification was done.
- ☐ Crombach Alpha coefficient was used to test internal consistency of the items to test reliability of the nursing image questionnaire (0.803)
- ☐ Consequently, pilot study was carried out on 15 (10%) of Saudi secondary students affiliated to different academic levels , they were excluded from the study subjects, in order to ensure applicability, and clarity of questionnaires and estimating time spending for fulfill the questionnaires. Accordingly, based on their opinions few statements were rephrased.
- ☐ The study was include a self administrated questionnaire once the students are recruited from the previous settings and agree to participate in the study
- ☐ They sign the consent form, and they were filling the attached study questionnaire.
- ☐ The researcher was distributed the questionnaire to the participants
- ☐ After gathering all completed questionnaire, data was coded and prepared for analysis instruments
- ☐ The time taken to complete the questionnaires ranged from 15-20 minutes and covered a period of two weeks, from 22/12/2012 to 4/1/2013.
- ☐ Data analysis: SPSS version 17 was used to analyze the study result

## **Ethical Considerations:**

The students were sign an informed consent to participate in the study; there is no risk in dealing with human subjects. Students' identifications was coded and kept in locked files. Data was presented in aggregated format so, students' identifications were secured. The study is presented to "College of Nursing Research Committee "for approval. The study will be conducted after receiving CON-HRC approval.

## **Discussion**

Nursing has been considerably progressing towards professionalism in recent decades and has produced a scientific base by academically preparing programs. The aim of this study was assess Saudi secondary school students' perception toward image of the Nursing as a Profession. Of great concern, perception of the Saudi secondary school students for image of nursing as a profession in the present study revealed that a statistically difference was recorded only between mean scores of sources of information about nursing as a profession and nursing image dimensions in term of context of social value. Moreover, the overall dimensions of nursing image mean score ranged from 1.94 to 5 with a mean of  $3.51 \pm 0.44$ . Context of social value dimension mean score was slightly higher means score ( $3.65 \pm 0.58$ ), while the lowest mean score was nurses roles  $3.20 \pm 0.51$ . These findings can be explained by the impact of society and influence of culture and tradition is strongly reflected in the perceptions of nursing as a career. According to Tawash et al (2012) suggested that the strong and positive perception of nursing as caring and helping may serve as a driving force in developing a strategy to reinforce the public views about nursing in society. (15)

Moreover, this finding could be attributed to indicate that the society changes, health care emphasis and lifestyle also change requiring nurses themselves to change. Despite this progress, both the profession and mainstream press have given increased attention to the growing nursing shortage. In this issue, Valizadeh and Ali,(2008) supported this finding and identified that in order to attract more individuals to the profession, a positive image of nursing needs to be engendered by nurse education and general community.(16)

Also the present study proved that the barriers to impact on recruitment of males to nursing in Saudi Arabia n is suggested as a positive action in terms of improving the perception of males in nursing. This point was raised by Al Kandari and Lew (2005) who suggested that encouraging more males to join nursing will help provide more male nurses to care for male clients, thus solve some of the socio-cultural problems encountered by female nurses. (17)

Regarding Saudi secondary school students' perception of nursing image dimensions and sources of information about nursing as a profession as compared by their gender, it is interesting to notice that gender had no significant reflection on nursing images dimensions and their sources

about ideas of nursing as a profession. One explanation of this finding could be related to cultural values in Arab countries where males assume great responsibilities and it was expected to be the main reason for entering the nursing profession since the graduates are automatically hired and have the opportunities to work abroad whether in Arab or western countries. This results was supported by the findings of Buerhaus et al., (2005) had conducted a study in the United States of America (U.S. A). He reported that slightly more than three quarters of his subjects joined nursing because of availability of work. (18) Also, AbdIKarim et al., (2004), they found that around two-thirds of their subject's haven chosen nursing as it represented a good opportunity for them to work. (19)

## **Conclusion:**

The present study concluded that a marked statistically significant improvement towards society's value perception of nursing as a profession. With no differences in perception of nursing as a profession between male and female Saudi secondary school students.

Also, the results shows there is no significant difference of ideas of nursing as a profession between male and female Saudi secondary school students, so male students discover their ideas about nursing from mass media (T.V and Radio ) followed by past experience with nurses while female students take their ideas about nursing from internet followed by social meeting

Moreover, the study confirmed that socio-demographic characteristics as age , marital status and residence place Saudi secondary school students have an effect on their ideas of nursing as a profession.

## **Recommendation:**

1. Improving the image of nurses would be a fundamental remedy for recruiting students who have their own strong desire to nursing and to care for others.
2. Regular visiting of secondary schools to talk with students about the broad role of the nurse , multiple job opportunities and diverse profession to improve the image of the nursing profession.
3. Initiate a future nursing Club for students who interested in nursing and gives them lectures, discussions and work on field trips to introduce the nursing as a profession to the community.

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