

## Exploring The Perception Of Nursing Students Toward Nursing Profession In Jeddah

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**Abstract:** Shortage of nurses worldwide and especially in Saudi Arabia has been a serious issue. There are many factors that cause this shortage which are, culture and values, community image toward nursing, long working hours and marriage issue. It's important to know how the student perceive nursing and the decision to choose the nursing as carrier, it is more affected by relationships with colleagues in health sector, previous experience, also the media and society play main role that influence the image of students may positive or negative toward nursing carrier. This study aim to assess the perception of nursing students toward nursing profession in Jeddah. The study was conducted in King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences, college of sciences and health professions (registered for preparatory courses for nursing college) and the college of nursing Jeddah – Western region. Descriptive cross-sectional design: Newly enrolled nursing students in spring semester 2015 (First, second semester) Senior nursing students (level 7,8) enrolled in the spring semester 2015 were recruited. Non-probability Convenience sampling technique was used for this study. This study included self-administered questionnaire Part 1: demographic data which include general information of study subjects Part 2: It was used to explore nursing image among associate nursing students, it was developed and used by Al Jarrah, I.(2013)<sup>(5)</sup>. It is a Likert scale format that contains 22 statements answered on a 5 point scale of response: strongly agree= 5, agree=4, not sure=3, disagree=2, strongly disagree=1. the mean age of nursing students is 21.57, the majority of the participants (85.6) were single, regarding perception of nursing as profession "Nursing is a prestigious profession" occupied the 1st rank with mean as (4.49). "Nursing is a respectful profession" occupied the last rank with mean as (2.13). the reason for enrollment to the faculty of nursing, for junior students, more than one third (55.2%) enrolled to nursing profession due to desire to help, about (25.9%) joined to nursing profession for financial reason and availability of work. It can be concluded from the study findings that the majority of the students in both junior and senior had positive perception toward nursing profession and they believed that nursing is humanity and respectful job and has good job opportunity.

**Key Words:** perception, nursing students, nursing profession

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### I Introduction

Shortage of nurses worldwide and especially in Saudi Arabia has been a serious issue. In 2004, only 40 nurses from every 10000 of Saudi people as reported by The World Health Organization which is very low number. In 2010, they found that there is massive nursing shortage in Saudi Arabia by 30% because of decampment of the nurses. There are many factors that cause this shortage which are, culture and values, community image toward nursing, long working hours and marriage issue<sup>(1)</sup>.

Nursing in Saudi Arabia started since long years in Prophet Mohammed time, with the leading of Rifaida Al-Asalmiya and other women of Muslims who were caring of injured armies in the war. While nursing is improving in Saudi Arabia, in 1958 the first Health Institute Programme began in Riyadh after collaboration of The Ministry of Health with WHO. Fifteen of Saudi students male with 6 years of elementary school preparation registered to one year programme. Thereafter, two Health Institutes Programme were established in Riyadh and Jeddah that allow registration of all Saudi Female. All of graduated male and female were specified as nurses' aides<sup>(2)</sup>.

The Ministry of Health developed nursing education in Health Institutes, they expanded the years of programme to 3 years instead of 1 year. Also, the health institutes opened more than two, the total were a 16 Health Institutes and 17 Health institutes for female. These Health Institutes enrolled students with 9 years schooling which graduated from intermediate school. In 1965, there was increasing in female students' graduation from 13 to 476 of graduated students, in 1990 number of graduated male students increased also to

reach 915. In 1992, to improve the training level of Saudi nursing students, the Junior Colleges were established for high school students training, after they finish 12 years of schooling. All the students who graduated from these Health institutes or Junior Colleges both of them qualified as Diploma in Nursing and classified as technical nurses. In 1976, Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programme was established by the Ministry of Higher education. After 11 years, King Saud University introduced the Master of Science Nursing in Riyadh. In Jeddah, King Abdulaziz University initiated BSN programmes in 1977. In 1987, BSN were introduced at King Faisal University in Dammam. All of BSN graduated students classified as professional nurse while Master Science of Nursing graduated students classified as specialists. In 1996, Saudi nurses were enabled to study abroad and complete their education after initiation of PhD scholarship programme. For the Saudi nurses who incapable to go for scholarship, the collaboration of Monash University in Australia with King Faisal Specialist Hospital and research Centre offer in-country scholarship of higher degree programme<sup>(2)</sup>.

In 2005 King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences (KSAU-HS) was established in Riyadh offered by National Guard Health Affairs (NGHA) since after the positive feedback of postgraduate students, the university initiated its branches in Jeddah and Al Ahsa. KSAU-HS includes fourteen colleges in these three cities. The main campus in Riyadh that includes seven colleges, the campus of Jeddah hosts four college and Al Ahsa's campus includes three Colleges. NGHA provides all the access needed and training under supervision of highly qualified health provider in King Abdulaziz Medical Cities in Riyadh, Jeddah and Al-Ahsa for all KSAU-HS students to enhance the best students and faculty. The admission in KSAU-HS depends on the comparison between the students and the competition for available seats annually, according to the admission criteria<sup>(3)</sup>.

Image and perception of nursing students toward nursing profession has a great impact in their self-concept, self-esteem, recruitment, retention and performance. Negative image has negative effect in nursing students relation with other, while the positive image made strong relation with patient, health sector and community as a whole. (Clara B., (2007), Chauke M E., (2014)<sup>(24)</sup> <sup>(25)</sup>. Concerning the image of nursing profession among nursing students Al Jarrah, I. (2013), conducted a study at Balqa Applied University. The study showed high rate of students joined to nursing for financial and accessibility of work reasons. Greater parts of the students feel glad when chatting with others about nursing career. The association with medicinal individuals and the family member opinion has the greatest impact in changing the image of nursing profession<sup>(5)</sup>.

Grainger P. et al (2006), found that both groups nursing beginning and graduating of students had a positive view toward nursing profession. However, there were a noteworthy contrasts between the groups in their orientation to nursing and their perspectives on nursing instruction parts, political issues, and the estimation of nursing as profession.<sup>(6)</sup>

While Eley, R. et al (2009), investigates the reasons of choosing nursing using quantitative cross sectional cohort study in regional public health service district and regional university nursing school of Australia among nurses. Large portions of (45.3%) of the students were 30 years of age or more seasoned and 44.1% of all students were going about as nursing assistants or enrolled nurses whilst studying. 32.5% of students had been nursing in more than five years. The main factors that affect both students and nurses were self interest, livelihood and benevolence were recognized by both understudies and medical attendants as the principle purposes behind entering nursing<sup>(7)</sup>. Crick, P. et al (2014), found that there were a similarity in demographic characteristic between degree students and diploma students. Reasons that found for entering the nursing profession were desire to help, and they view that the nursing is caring rather than a technical profession<sup>(8)</sup>.

In Saudi Arabia, there are two studies done to assess the perception of Saudi students toward nursing. Miligi, E (2014), found that the students had very positive perception about nursing with the were so excited to be a health professional worker. The statement that the Saudi community view nursing negatively as a low job had strong agreement from many participants. The heavy workload facing students was considered by some of the students, the major contributing factor was the difficulty of studying in English language. Al-Mahmoud, S. (2013), found that the perception of Saudi nursing students inclined to be positive towards nursing profession. Furthermore, the minority of the students had negative attitudes towards nursing profession related to lack of knowledge and young age<sup>(1,4)</sup>.

It's important to know how the student perceive nursing and the decision to choose the nursing as carrier, it is more affected by relationships with colleagues in health sector, previous experience, also the media and society play main role that influence the image of students may positive or negative toward nursing carrier. The majority of nursing students choose the nursing for many reason which are recruitment opportunities, working condition, family opinion, high salary, and personal growth<sup>(9)</sup>. As Tan-Kuick, C. et al (2010), found that there are four main factors affect nursing student's choice toward nursing profession. First, education and career aspirations (includes student's belief that nursing is the choice of career or education, Second factor is personal ability (includes stress management, motivation, perseverance and self confidence). Third factor, socio-

economic status (includes job security, images, sexual stereotypes and monetary reward). The last factor is parental and peer encouragement (parental and peer perceptions and support<sup>(10)</sup>).

There are studies investigate different nursing students perception. In study conducted by SAFADI R. et al (2011), showed difference in nursing students' perception regarding the gender, students with a past associate degree in nursing and a need decision to study nursing. There is also changing in perception regarding lay altruistic beliefs toward nursing to theoretical medical technological perspectives of the profession<sup>(11)</sup>. Patidar A. et al (2011) concluded in his study that the majority of nursing student's perception toward nursing profession is changing to the positive side and students realized that the recognition of society play role in providing bright future of nursing profession<sup>(12)</sup>. While Koushali, A.(2012) viewd that the students had positive attitude toward their profession, and high percentage of the clinical nurses' positive outlook<sup>(13)</sup>.

Tseng, H. (2012) found thirty of senior nursing students who participated in the study their age between 21-23 years with mean (21.12 -0.59 ). Prevailing categories were distributing into three themes : in depth recognition of nursing, recognition of the meaning and value of life, and decision conflicts for being a nurse<sup>(14)</sup>.

Mooney, M (2007) found females higher than male in attendance at interviews. Because of limited number of males in the program, the researchers agreed not to detect the exact number of males in attendance in effort to maximize their anonymity, while the findings are presented under two headings.<sup>(15)</sup>

There are some researches conducted in various countries that study factors, attitude and Image toward nursing profession. Therefore perception play main role in individual choices. Swarna, S.(2015)<sup>(17)</sup>. This study will attempt to explore the nursing student's perception toward nursing profession in different level of nursing education.

## **II Aim Of The Study:**

This study aim to assess the perception of nursing students toward nursing profession in Jeddah .

### **Specific Objectives:**

1. To explore the perception of nursing students toward nursing profession in Jeddah
- 2- To Identify the difference of perception based on sociodemographic variables including level of education

### **Research questions:**

What is the perception of nursing students toward nursing profession in Jeddah?

What is the difference of perception of nursing students related to sociodemographic variables ?

### **Material And Methods**

#### **Study Area/Setting:**

King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences, college of sciences and health professions (registered for preparatory courses for nursing college) and the college of nursing Jeddah – Western region.

The admission criteria in KSAU-HS :

- 1-The Cumulative Percentage of High School (natural sciences) of the current year by 90% and above.
- 2-Educational Attainment Test and General Aptitude Test.
- 3-Pass a personal interview and medical examination.

As for Medical and nursing programs after Bachelor:

- 1-The applicant should be Saudi nationality.
- 2-Hold Bachelor of Science,.
- 3-Recently graduated from bachelor degree for no more than three years with grade no less than Good.
- 4-Pass the admission exam, Pass a personal interview and medical examination.

#### **Study Subjects:**

Newly enrolled nursing students in spring semester 2017 (First, second semester )

Senior nursing students (level 7,8) enrolled in the spring semester 2017

#### **Study Design**

Descriptive cross-sectional design .The benefit of a cross-sectional study design is that it allows researchers to compare many different variables at the same time. This means that researchers record information about their subjects without manipulating the study environment

#### **Sample Size**

First and fourth year at King Saud Bin Abdulaziz University For Health Sciences In National Guard, College of Sciences and Health Professions and nursing college. The approximate number

The total number of students in first year( first and second semester) is 127 and the total number of students in fourth year(seventh and eighth semester) is 76 students .

Non-probability Convenience sampling technique used for this study

**Data Collection methods, instruments used, measurements.**

This study included self-administered questionnaire. Once the students were recruited and agree to participate and sign the consent form, the students filled the study questionnaire.

The tool consisted of two part :

Part 1: demographic data which include general information of study subjects subjects such as age, marital status, children, father's education, father's occupation, academic level, stream, reasons for enrollment to the faculty of nursing, and family's reaction to students' enrollment.

Part 2: It was used to explore nursing image among associate nursing students, it was developed and used by Al Jarrah, I.(2013)<sup>(6)</sup>. It is a Likert scale format that contains 22 statements answered on a 5 point scale of response: strongly agree= 5, agree=4, not sure=3, disagree=2, strongly disagree=1

Part 3: include two short answer question which are , If the time return back , will you choose the nursing as profession?"Do you will give one of your family advice to entire the nursing college?

**Data Management and Analysis Plan:**

Data coded, analyzed using SPSS version 20 , and descriptive and inferential statistics was done including : mean and standard deviation (normal distributed) or median and interquartile (if not).

- Appropriate inferentials statistical test used to assess the difference between the junior and senior studentsby chi-square and independent sample t-test.
- Validity of the tool was tested by a group of experts in nursing field
- Pilot study was conducted on 10 students to ensure the clarity of the tool
- Reliability of the tool was tested Cronbach's Alpha and the result was 0.7

**ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Informed consent written form was obtained from the participant. The information in this research was handled confidentially. All identifying information obtained was coded and kept in a locked file. Upon completion of the data analysis, the research information was destroyed. No one had access to the data except the investigator. Identifying information will be used in any report. Data presented in aggregated format so, participant identification secured. No other ethical issue were of a concern. The study was presented to college of nursing research committee for approval. The study was conducted after receiving CON-JRC approval.

### III Result

**Table 1:** Socio demographic of nursing students

	N	%
<b>Age</b>	<b>Mean= 21.57±2.3</b>	
<b>Marital status</b>		
- single	114	85.7
- married	19	14.3
<b>Father education</b>		
- Illiterate	5	3.8
-Elementary school	46	34.6
-Secondary school	48	36.1
-University education	29	21.8
-Postgraduate	5	3.8
<b>Father occupation</b>		
-professional	55	41.4
-Non professional	78	58.6
<b>Academic level</b>		
-First	15	11.3
-Second	43	32.3
-Seventh	44	33.1
-Eighth	31	23.3
<b>Stream</b>		
- one	118	88.7
- two	15	4.3
<b>Nurse in the family</b>		
-Yes	66	49.6
-No	67	50.4

**Table 1** showed that the mean age of nursing students is 21.57, the majority of the participants (85.7) were single. Regarding father occupation 78 subjects their father was non professional.48 of participants their father was secondary school (36.1%),About the academic level 44 of The participant werein level seventh (33.1%), the majority of the student were Stream (I) by 118 students(88.7%) while 15 students only were Stream(II) (4.3%

**Table 2:** perception of nursing as profession

	Mean	Std.deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
A respectful profession	4.33	.86	58.13	.000
An occupation and not a profession	2.60	1.24	24.02	.000
A Women's profession	3.78	1.16	37.28	.000
Similar to that of the servants' job.	2.45	1.61	20.75	.000
A well appreciated profession in the society	3.56	1.22	33.66	.000
A prestigious profession	3.48	1.07	37.26	.000
A dangerous profession	3.48	1.18	33.89	.000
An extremely hard profession that does not receive enough appreciation	3.94	1.03	44.10	.000
An essential profession in any society	4.34	.80	62.06	.000
Nursing is a human profession	4.49	.65	78.73	.000
An independent profession by which nurses make decisions for themselves	3.64	1.06	39.66	.000
A significant in patient's recovery	4.27	.78	52.39	.000
Helping in promotion of health and prevention of diseases	4.34	.72	68.78	.000
Provide self-actualization	3.99	.98	46.57	.000
Nurses are given a chance to use their own initiative in their work	3.97	1.02	44.71	.000
Nurses obey doctors' orders without questioning them	2.57	1.37	21.61	.000
Nurses waste a lot of time being busy doing nothing	2.27	1.34	19.41	.000
I would like my child to become a nurse	3.42	1.20	32.84	.000
Anyone could be a nurse easy	2.13	1.14	21.47	.000
opportunity for personal growth	4.12	.82	57.38	.000
Caring profession in which ethical standards of care is maintained	4.27	.82	59.56	.000
Actually equal to other professions	3.28	1.34	28.27	.000

**Table 2** showed that the majority of the students had positive perception toward nursing profession and they believed that nursing is humanity, respectful job, a significant in patient's recovery, an essential profession in society and profession that helps in promotion of health and prevention of diseases. "Nursing is a prestigious profession" occupied the 1st rank with mean as (4.49). "Nursing is a respectful profession" occupied the last rank with mean as (2.13).

**Table 3:** Mean total perception in relation to some socio demographic .

	N	Mean	Std.Devition	Sig.
Nursein family				
-Yes	66	3.77	0.36	.34
-No	67	3.7	0.39	
Marital				
-Single	114	3.75	.37	.33
Married	19	3.66	.39	
Stream				
-One	118	3.74	.36	.5
-two	15	3.67	.45	
Education level				
-Junior	118	3.76	.33	.67
-Senior	15	3.71	.4	

**Table 3** : showed that the students who had nurse in the family , stream one , junior , and single had positive perception toward nursing profession more than senior, stream two and married students.

**Table 4:** Reason for enrollment to the faculty of nursing

	Junior student		Senior student	
	N	%	N	%
Secondary school grade	11	19.0	10	13.3
Desire to help	32	55.2	27	36.0
Financial reason /Availability of work	15	25.9	29	38.7
Advice from family	6	10.3	16	21.3

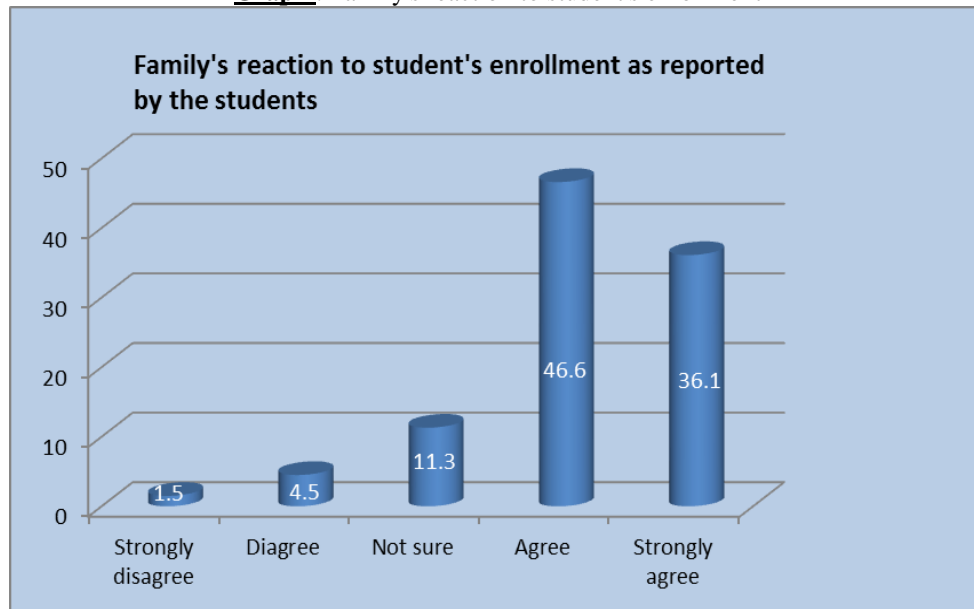
**Table (4):** showed that the majority of junior students enrolled to the nursing for desire of help , while the majority of senior students enrolled to the faculty of nursing for financial reason / availability of job . And less of both group join to the college because of advice of their family.

**Table 5:** Plan to join after graduation

	Junior student		Senior student	
	N	%	N	%
Teaching institution	9	15.5	15	20.0
Bedside nursing	9	15.5	11	14.7
Nursing administration	13	22.4	12	16.0
Post graduate education	21	36.2	26	34.7
Change the profession	6	10.3	11	14.7

**Table (5):** shows job prospective for nursing students after graduation. High percentage of students junior and senior had plan to continue post graduated education , and low percentage of student both junior and senior preferred to work as bedside nurse , also low percentage of them had plan to change the profession.

**Graph :** Family's reaction to student's enrollment



Regarding the previous graph the family's reaction to student's enrollment showed that the students reported that most of the families agree and strongly agree for their enrollment to the nursing faculty with high mean (4.11 ± 0.88) while less of them reported that their family disagree for their enrollment.

**Table 6:** student feeling about nursing when talking with other

	Junior student		Senior student	
	N	%	N	%
Proud	44	75.9	52	69.3
Shy	3	5.2	1	1.3
Change topic	4	6.9	3	4.0
Defensive	5	8.6	8	10.7
Attack nursing profession	2	3.4	11	14.7

Regarding the research question “ what is the feeling of the students about nursing when talking with other?, **Table (6)** shows the feelings of nursing students toward nursing as profession. Most of the students feel proud both junior (75.9) and senior (69.3).

Regarding the **short answer questions**, which are " If the time returns back, will you choose the nursing as profession?"we found the majority of students answers positively because of nursing have wide specialties, desire to help people and availability of job, furthermore the students who respond negatively because of nursing is hard profession, desire to be doctor and there is no respect for nurses in Saudi Arabia. And " Do you will give one of your family advice to entire the nursing college? "most of student answers positively because of nursing have different experience and opportunity to find work, on other hand who respond negatively because not all people can tolerate with requirement of the job.

#### IV Discussion

Perception play an important role in molding the shape the individual as a person and a professional .Perception of nursing students influence their further career path selection which is of significant interest to educators and professional institutions.<sup>(17)</sup>.

This study was conducted to explore the nursing students' perception toward nursing profession. 133 of nursing and pre-nursing students from King Saud bin Abdulaziz university for health sciences in national guard participated in this study. The majority of both nursing students participated in the study had positive perception, Kaur, M. (2007)<sup>(20)</sup>. reported that more than 90% of nursing students had positive perception toward nursing profession. Also, the majority of nursing students (94%) in Qatar had positive image about nursing profession related to Okasha MS, Ziady HH (2001)<sup>(21)</sup>. A high percentage of both junior and senior nursing

students (75%) are proud of nursing and feeling positively about it, also 70% of both group in UK are proudly addresses themselves in nursing profession as reported by Brodie OA, et al .(2004)<sup>(22)</sup>.

According to present study (55.2%) of junior students enrolled to nursing according to their desire to help people, while (38.7%) of senior students enrolled to nursing college for financial reason, but other study reported that 80% of students are join to nursing for availability of job Swarms. (2015)<sup>(17)</sup>.related to Domidus,M et al<sup>(16)</sup>.reported that (84.8%) choosing nursing for easy employment.

This study showed that there are some factors that affect nursing students' choice in joining to nursing profession. The low income, good salary, high job opportunity, and respectful profession are the most reasons for nursing students to enrolling to nursing faculty. In the other hand, the study also showed some reasons that influence nursing students who want to change nursing profession especially senior students who experience nursing in clinical area, they said that nursing is very difficult and hard job, overloading profession, stressful job and most of them want to study medicine and it was first choice for them. High percentage of both junior and senior student interested to continue higher education , related to Manpreet,K et al.(2007)<sup>(19)</sup>. and Rognstad et al, (2004)<sup>(18)</sup>. found that majority of students had plan of post graduated education .

The result of current study showed positive image of students' perception toward nursing profession, majority of students both group junior and senior perceived that nursing is humanity job, essential job in society and significant in patient's recovery, and has opportunity for self-actualization and personal growth.

## **V Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study was conducted to explore Saudi nursing students' perception toward nursing as profession in Jeddah. It can be concluded from the study findings that the majority of the students in both junior and senior had positive perception toward nursing profession and they believed that nursing is humanity and respectful job and has good job opportunity. While the high percentage of both groups of nursing students interested to complete their education and few of them are intersted to work as bedside nurse.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Based on the findings, the study recommends the following:

- to replicate this study on the perception toward nursing profession in different area of Saudi Arabia and on students after internship program.
- The image of the nursing profession should be integrated in the nursing curricula.
- Planning and implementing orientation training programs about nursing career and profession for students before admission
- Carrer counselling to nursing students during the internship programs

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