

Research Article

Knowledge and Perception of Higher Secondary School Students Regarding Nursing as a Career (J&K, India)

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24321/2348.2133.202406>

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How to cite this article:

Farooq S, Dar M A, Kaur P, Kachroo M, Falak N, Hamid H, Sharma N, Nazir I, Wani J A, Jaileel B, Hijazi R, Ismail S, Khursheed T. Knowledge and Perception of Higher Secondary School Students Regarding Nursing as a Career (J&K, India). *Ind J Holist Nurs.* 2024;15(2):24-30.

Date of Submission: 2024-04-02

Date of Acceptance: 2024-05-21

A B S T R A C T

Background: To elevate the nursing professions status, it is crucial to foster a positive image through collaborative efforts from nurse educationists and the community. A key strategy involves shifting the societal perception of nursing. Hence, current study was undertaken to elevate the knowledge and perception of higher secondary students towards nursing as a career.

Methodology: A quantitative approach with a descriptive design was used to assess the knowledge and perception regarding nursing as a career among 100 Higher Secondary students using purposive sampling technique at Green Valley Educational Institute, Soura by using self-structured questionnaire and 5-point Likert scale respectively.

Results: Majority of study subjects (56%) had moderately adequate knowledge, whereas (31%) had inadequate knowledge, and (13%) had adequate knowledge regarding Nursing as a career. 40% of study subjects had positive perception, (30%) of the study subjects had neutral perception, and (30%) had negative perception regarding Nursing as a career. There was no statistically significant association between knowledge and perception scores of study subjects with their selected demographic variables.

Keywords: Knowledge, Perception, Higher Secondary Students, Nursing as a Career

nursing is a great career move. While caring for patients fighting for their life can be a challenging experience.

Nursing as a career choice is often perceived as hard work, involving high pressure and stress. One enters the nursing profession at a very tender age; the age which corresponds to long term career development and future orientation therefore perception plays a pivotal role in moulding the shape of an individual as a person and as a professional as well.¹

Nursing, a profession that recalls the name of Florence nightingale is indeed one of the noblest professions in the world. Nursing education is becoming more demanding each day. The poor knowledge and perception towards nursing as a profession which is focused on and hinders its advancement.²

Blur perception towards nursing as a career profession has made nursing a low-profile profession and hinder its advancement. Perception held by the school students about nursing profession greatly influence choosing the nursing as a career profession.³

The time has never been better for nurses to reach out to the public to change certain perceptions about nursing. The nursing work force seems to be an exciting cross road of change, both in recruiting and curriculum. In order to attract and retain bright, capable students in nursing, recently in 2021 by INC changed the pre-nursing curriculum into semester wise to provide an assure, accurate and definitive perception of nursing.⁴

Need for the Study

There is great need for more and more nursing manpower to meet the increasing demand to provide comprehensive and quality health care to the population and to achieve the goal of "Health For All" theme chosen by WHO on 7th April 2023. India was short of two million nurses as per global average on the number of nurses required in comparison to the population ratio.⁵

Chronic and recurrent shortage of nurses, coupled with increasing demand for high quality and motivated nurses and competition for secondary school leavers from other professions, or issues with prompted this investigation of senior student's career choice.⁶

One should understand that bad or good characteristics are owned by a person not by a profession. The fact that high school students are influenced by the society's negative image of nurses and have inadequate knowledge regarding nursing profession which influences student's willingness

to prefer nursing.⁴

Kamar, Sharma, Shaemasshoweta⁷(2018) Conducted a descriptive study on 60 students to assess the perception regarding nursing profession among students of senior secondary schools in Kurali, Punjab. Results of the study showed that 75% of the students had positive perception regarding nursing profession, 20% had a neutral perception and 5% of the students had negative perception. There was no significant relation between the perception of the students regarding nursing profession with socio-demographic variables:

Rajesh, Kumar, Meena³(2017) conducted a descriptive study on 168 randomly selected students from four high school students (2 govt. and 2 private) of Uttarakhand state to assess the perception and identify the factors influencing the perception towards nursing as a career in future. Findings evidenced that high school student's perception about nursing profession is poor as compared to other aspects of nursing i-e education, opportunities and career advancement. 88% students agreed that nursing course need hard study, skill and practice and nurse has important place in health care delivery team. Findings necessitate need of sensitive programme to develop awareness and realistic picture of nursing profession among high school students.

Investigator personally observed in society particularly during her clinical posting that people believe in lot of feckless things. Besides this, a lot of stigma is associated with this profession in present times as well. Education particularly to the adolescents may change their outlook towards nursing as a career. Thus, this study is aimed to generate the data which will help to add the upliftment of this profession in future.

Methodology

The "Descriptive research design" was used to assess the knowledge and perception of higher secondary students by using purposive sampling technique at Green Valley Educational Institute, Soura by using self- structured questionnaire and 5-point Likert scale. After establishing validity and reliability ($r=0.92$) of the tool.

Assessment of knowledge was done using criterion developed by researcher (Kivan uka Achillesin) in his study⁸ If the score was > 75%, it was considered adequate knowledge, if the score was 51-75%, it was considered moderately adequate knowledge, and if the score was </= 50%, it was considered as inadequate knowledge.

Assessment of perception was categorized into three levels

using criterion developed by researcher Asma Gull⁹. If the score was 60-100%, it was considered positive perception, if the score was 51-59%, it was considered neutral perception, and if the score was \leq 50%, it was considered as negative perception.

Results and Discussion

Higher of the study subjects (58%) belonged to age group of 16-17 years whereas 42% belonged to the age group of 18-19 years. Maximum of the study subjects (60%) were male, and 40% of the study subjects were females. Majority of the study subjects (86%) belonged to the urban area where as only 14% belonged to rural area. Fathers of more than 50% of the study subjects (57%) were graduate and above followed by secondary education (25%) and there were almost equal number of study subjects whose fathers were illiterate(5%), had primary (7%) and middle level (6%) of education. More than 50% of study subjects (56%) were government employees followed by private employees (25%) and 19% were Businessman. Mothers of 46% of study subjects had secondary level of education and there were almost equal number of study subjects whose mothers were illiterate (19%), had middle level of education (17%), had primary level of education (9%) and were graduate and above (9%).Maximum mothers of study subjects were Homemakers (61%),21% were private employee and 18% were government employee.40% of study subjects had family income of above Rs.51, 000 followed by 34% with family income of Rs.41, 000-50,000. There were almost equal number of study subjects with family income of Rs.31, 000- Rs.40, 000 (15%) and Rs.20, 000-30,000 (11%).Maximum number of study subjects (73%) reported media as source of information, almost equal number of study participants reported friends (13%) and relatives (11%) as source of information and only 3% of study subjects had other sources of information.

These findings were similar to the results of the studies conducted by Arifullsalam, Shafique, Rajib, ¹⁰(2020), Charingia¹¹ (2024) and Devi, Afemiche, Ajo, Olaniesi¹²(2015)

Maximum of the study subjects (56%) had moderately adequate knowledge, whereas (31%) had inadequate knowledge, and (13%) had adequate knowledge regarding Nursing as a career (Table 3, Figure 1)

The findings of the present study was supported by the study conducted by Mathew¹³(2021)

The data presented in table 5 and Fig. 2 shows that about half of study subjects (40%) had positive perception, (30%) of the study subjects had neutral perception, and (30%) had negative perception regarding Nursing as a career.

The findings of the present study are also endorsed by the study subjects conducted byKaur, Sharma, Shaveta Sharma,⁷ (2018)

There was statistically non- significant association of knowledge score with their selected demographic variables like age, gender, residence, educational status of father, occupation of father, educational status of mother, occupation of mother, monthly family income, source of information at 0.05 level of significance (Table 6).The findings of the study were supported by a study conducted by Devi (2013)¹⁴

There was statistically non significant association of perception score with their selected demographic variables The findings of the study were supported by a study conducted by Kaur, Sharma, Shaveta Sharma³, (2018)

Conclusion

Maximum of study subjects (56%) had moderately adequate

Table I.Frequency and percentage distribution of study subjects according to demographic variables

N=100

Variables	Categories	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age in Years	16-17 years	58	58%
	18-19 years	42	42%
Gender	Male	60	60%
	Female	40	40%
Residence	Urban	86	86%
	Rural	14	14%
EducationStatus of father	Illiterate	5	5%
	Primary	7	7%
	Middle	6	6%
	Secondary	25	25%
	Graduate and above	57	57%
Occupation of father	Government employee	56	56%
	Private employee	25	25%
	Businessman	19	19%
Educational status of mother	Illiterate	19	19%
	Primary	9	9%
	Middle	17	17%
	Secondary	46	46%
	Graduate and above	9	9%

Occupation of mother	Government employee	18	18%
	Private employee	21	21%
	Homemaker	61	61%
	Rs.20,000-30,000	11	11%
	Rs. 31000-40,000	15	15%
Monthly family income	Rs.41,000-50,000	34	34%
	Above Rs.51,000	40	40%
Source of Information	Media	73	73%
	Friends	13	13%
	Relatives	11	11%
	Others (specify)	3	3%

Table 2.Frequency and percentage distribution of study subjects according to their knowledge scores
N=100

Knowledge level	Score	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Inadequate	(0-13)	31	31%
Moderately Adequate	(14-19)	56	56%
Adequate	(20-26)	13	13%

Table 3.Frequency and percentage distribution of study subjects according to their perception scores.
N=100

Perception level	Perception score	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Negative perception	1-75	30	30%
Neutral perception	76-89	30	30%
Positive perception	90-150	40	40%

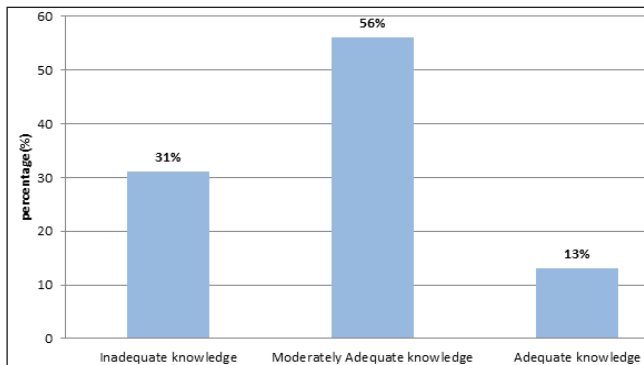


Figure 1.Bar diagram showing the percentage distribution of study subjects according to their knowledge scores regarding nursing as a career

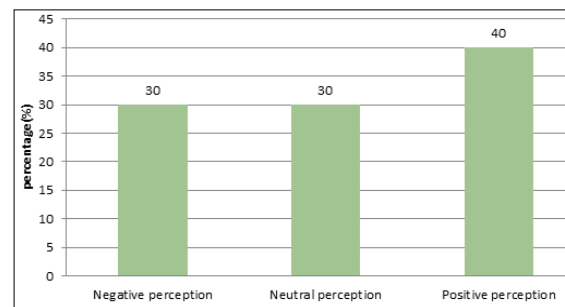


Figure 2.Bar diagram showing percentage distribution of study subjects according to perception scores regarding Nursing as a career.

Table 4.Association of knowledge scores of study subjects with their selected demographic variables
N=100

Variables	categories	Inadequate knowledge		Moderately Adequate knowledge		Adequate knowledge		Chi test	df	P Value Result
		f	%	f	%	f	%			
Age in Years	16-17	17	29.3%	34	58.6%	7	12.1%	0.389	2	0.823 NS
	18-19	14	33.3%	22	52.4%	6	14.3%			
Gender	Male	17	28.8%	37	61.0%	6	10.2%	2.851	4	0.583 NS
	Female	14	35.0%	19	47.5%	7	17.5%			
Residence	Urban	26	30.2%	48	55.8%	12	14.0%	0.55	2	0.760 NS
	Rural	5	35.7%	8	57.1%	1	7.1%			

Educational status of father	Illiterate	2	40.0%	3	60.0%	0	.0%	14.59	8	0.067 NS
	Primary	1	14.3%	5	71.4%	1	14.3%			
	Middle	5	83.3%	0	.0%	1	16.7%			
	Secondary	6	24.0%	18	72.0%	1	4.0%			
	Graduate and above	17	29.8%	30	52.6%	10	17.5%			
Occupation of father	Govt. employee	16	28.6%	30	53.6%	10	17.9%	6.66	4	0.155 NS
	Private employee	6	24.0%	18	72.0%	1	4.0%			
	Businessman	9	47.4%	8	42.1%	2	10.5%			
Educational status of mother	Illiterate	9	47.4%	8	42.1%	2	10.5%	12.60	8	0.126 NS
	Primary	1	11.1%	7	77.8%	1	11.1%			
	Middle	5	29.4%	12	70.6%	0	.0%			
	Secondary	14	30.4%	22	47.8%	10	21.7%			
	Graduate and above	2	22.2%	7	77.8%	0	.0%			
Occupation of mother	Govt. employee	5	27.8%	11	61.1%	2	11.1%	1.04	4	0.903 NS
	private employee	6	28.6%	11	52.4%	4	19.0%			
	Home maker	20	32.8%	34	55.7%	7	11.5%			
Monthly family income	Rs. 20,000- 30,000	3	27.3%	7	63.6%	1	9.1%	6.014	6	0.422 NS
	Rs. 31,000- 40,000	8	53.3%	5	33.3%	2	13.3%			
	Rs. 41,000- 50,000	9	26.5%	22	64.7%	3	8.8%			
	Above Rs. 51,000	11	27.5%	22	55.0%	7	17.5%			
Source of Information	Media	24	32.9%	37	50.7%	12	16.4%	7.96	6	0.240 NS
	Friends	2	15.4%	10	76.9%	1	7.7%			
	Relatives	5	45.5%	6	54.5%	0	.0%			
	Other (specify)	0	.0%	3	100.0%	0	.0%			

Table 5. Association of perception score of study subjects with their selected demographic variables

N=100

Parameters	Categories	Negative perception		Neutral perception		Positive perception		X ²	df	P Value Result
		f	%	f	%	f	%			
Age in Years	16-17	20	34.50%	13	22.40%	25	43.10%	3.90	2	0.142 NS
	18-19	10	23.80%	17	40.50%	15	35.70%			
Gender	Male	18	30.50%	17	28.80%	25	40.70%	1.68	4	0.793 NS
	Female	12	30.00%	13	32.50%	15	37.50%			
Residence	Urban	26	30.20%	24	27.90%	36	41.90%	1.44	2	0.487 NS
	Rural	4	28.60%	6	42.90%	4	28.60%			
Educational status of father	Illiterate	1	20.00%	3	60.00%	1	20.00%	6.60	8	0.580 NS
	Primary	2	28.60%	1	14.30%	4	57.10%			
	Middle	3	50.00%	2	33.30%	1	16.70%			
	Secondary	5	20.00%	9	36.00%	11	44.00%			
	Graduate and above	19	33.30%	15	26.30%	23	40.40%			

Occupation of father	Govt. job	18	32.10%	15	26.80%	23	41.10%	2.177	4	0.703 NS
	Private job	5	20.00%	9	36.00%	11	44.00%			
	Businessman	7	36.80%	6	31.60%	6	31.60%			
Educational status of mother	Illiterate	7	36.80%	6	31.60%	6	31.60%	10.50	8	0.231 NS
	Primary	2	22.20%	3	33.30%	4	44.40%			
	Middle	3	17.60%	6	35.30%	8	47.10%			
	Secondary	17	37.00%	9	19.60%	20	43.50%			
	Graduate and above	1	11.10%	6	66.70%	2	22.20%			
Occupation of mother	Govt. employee	6	33.30%	7	38.90%	5	27.80%	1.80	4	0.772 NS
	private employee	7	33.30%	5	23.80%	9	42.90%			
	Home maker	17	27.90%	18	29.50%	26	42.60%			
Monthly family income	Rs. 20,000- 30,000	3	27.30%	4	36.40%	4	36.40%	2.30	6	0.889 NS
	Rs. 31,000- 40,000	4	26.70%	5	33.30%	6	40.00%			
	Rs. 41,000- 50,000	8	23.50%	10	29.40%	16	47.10%			
	Above Rs. 51,000	15	37.50%	11	27.50%	14	35.00%			
Source of Information	Media	23	31.50%	22	30.10%	28	38.40%	4.44	6	0.616 NS
	Friends	2	15.40%	4	30.80%	7	53.80%			
	Relatives	5	45.50%	3	27.30%	3	27.30%			
	Other (specify)	0	0.00%	1	33.30%	2	66.70%			

knowledge, whereas (31%) had inadequate knowledge, and (13%) had adequate knowledge regarding nursing as a career. Half of study subjects (40%) had positive perception, (30%) of the study subjects had neutral perception, and (30%) had negative perception regarding Nursing as a career. Hence, it can be concluded that knowledge and perception of study subjects regarding Nursing as a career was moderately adequate knowledge and positive perception

Sources of Funding: None

Conflicts of Interest: None

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