
STUDENTS REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE PROFESSION OF REGISTERED NURSE

Snezhana Dragusheva

Department of Nursing, Faculty of Public Health, Medical University – Plovdiv, Plovdiv, Bulgaria
sdragusheva68@gmail.com

Biyanka Torniyova

Department of Health Care Management, Faculty of Public Health, Medical University – Plovdiv,
Plovdiv, Bulgaria btorniova@abv.bg

Desislava Bakova

Department of Health Care Management, Faculty of Public Health, Medical University – Plovdiv,
Plovdiv, Bulgaria desislavabakova@abv.bg

Penka Petleshkova

Medical University - Plovdiv, Medical Faculty, Department Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Bulgaria
ppetleshkova@abv.bg

Lachezara Nasteva

Department of 'Nursing', Faculty of Public Health, Medical University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria
nasteva3006@abv.bg

Neslihan Duran

Department of 'Nursing', Faculty of Public Health, Medical University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria
nesliduran@abv.bg

Abstract: The importance of motivation in the medical profession is directly connected with the quality of the provided health care and the respective job satisfaction. The ranking of the reasons for choosing the said career path evidences the humanist essence of the motivation of students in their choice. To a great extent, it is indicative of the students' ability to measure their own inner needs, objectives in life and conduct to the highly humane nature of the chosen profession. The nursing profession is connected with protecting, enhancing and restoring people's health and life, even though it fails to achieve its rightful status, respect and recognition in society.

Objective: This study is aimed at researching students' reasons in opting for this profession and their desire to practice it after graduation.

Materials and methods: The subjects of the study are 283 trainee-nurses from the Medical University of Plovdiv, 'Trakia' University of Stara Zagora, Haskovo Branch, 'Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov' University of Burgas. The survey was conducted in 2015 and 2016 on condition of anonymity. The following methods were employed for the analysis and assessment of the results: individual anonymous survey /questionnaire/; interview.

Results : It is a worrying fact that almost half of the surveyed students have chosen this profession because it will give them the opportunity to work abroad. The level of satisfaction of the students also has a significant effect on their motivation to take an active part in various activities during their course of studies. The driving forces of students in choosing their future profession, in studying and in working, are some of the most important factors facilitating the process of professional development. The nursing profession is an emotionally involving one. Nurses encounter pain and human suffering on a daily basis; on top of people's problems, there is the problem of limited financial resources. When faced with human suffering, future nurses, naturally, feel slightly disappointed in their choice of career. At the end of their training, however, they discover yet another aspect of the nursing profession – the gratitude of the patients for their care and efforts, and the satisfaction and fulfillment of a job well done. And that is what inspires them to continue their studies and to practice their profession in the future.

Conclusion: Occupational guidance is a vital prerequisite for a successful career. Experience shows that an efficient and successful career is directly connected with a successfully chosen profession. In this line of thoughts, it can be added that the performance of various activities during the training of the students will make them feel satisfied with their choice of career and will enhance their motivation to practice it.

Keywords: motivation, reasons, satisfaction, fulfillment, profession, students.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamically developing innovative processes in medical education and training raise the issue of the training of nurses who possess not only professional knowledge, skills and competences, but also certain qualities and skills that are of vital importance in the medical profession.

The opportunities for mobility that registered nurses have within the European Union have enhanced their motivation to study, and have boosted their striving after improving their qualifications, and participating in specialization courses and scientific forums. The improvement of the professional competence of registered nurses is a prerequisite for a more successful career, better remuneration and greater job satisfaction.

The modern European systems of education and training in the field of health care are designed to train competent specialists, able to provide society with high quality health care, and also motivated to continue their education and training.

The significant role of motivation in the medical profession is directly connected with the quality of the provided care and the level of job satisfaction of the specialists. Motivation is a combination of energies ensuing from external or innate preconditions for the individual; these energies underlie the individual's behavior and determine the form, direction, intensity and duration of such behavior. The individual is an autonomous personality with his/her specific traits; therefore, the reasons for choosing a certain profession vary widely.

There are numerous definitions of the nature and essence of motivation, and various theories of motivation. In psychological sources of reference motivation is defined as "in general terms, the inner motives to act or behave in a certain way"[2]. Motives are the inner driving forces, mostly conscious ones, by virtue of which future registered nurses master new knowledge, improve skills and competences, needed in the course of practicing their profession up to the required quality standards. These motives are characterized by a positive emotional attitude to the subjects studied, a striving after gaining an insight into their essence, satisfaction with their participation in the cognitive activity, a desire to constantly improve, pursuit of self-education and self-discipline. At different stages of the training of students majoring in Nursing, and in certain situations, leading and accompanying motives are differentiated, as they are exposed to the influence of a range of factors.

AIM

The aim of this research is to investigate the motivation of students and their reasons for choosing this profession, as well as their desire to practice the profession after graduation.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS

The subjects of the study are 283 trainee-nurses from the Medical University of Plovdiv, 'Trakia' University of Stara Zagora, Haskovo Branch, 'Prof. Dr. AsenZlatarov' University of Burgas. The survey was conducted in 2015 and 2016 on condition of anonymity. The following methods were employed for the analysis and assessment of the results: individual anonymous survey /questionnaire/; interview.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In terms of age, the analysis of the results showed that most of the respondents were in the age group of 20-25 – 81.6%, and over 29 – 12% [Fig. 1].

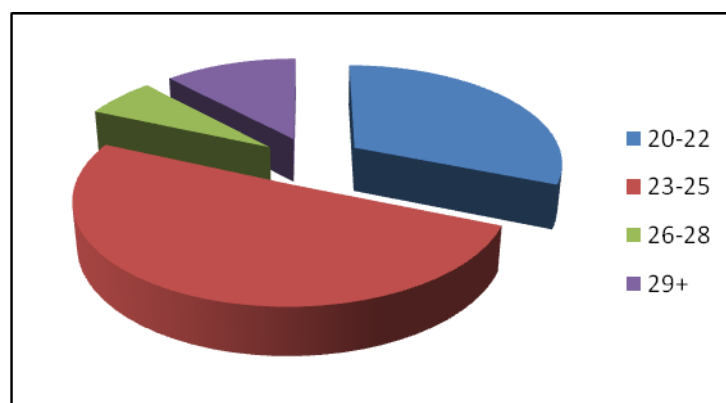


Fig. 1 Distribution of the students by age

Although small, the proportion of students aged over 29 is indicative of the fact that the nursing profession also attracts people with a greater life and social experience, because this profession, to a certain extent guarantees a secure job and stable income. In this regard, Y. Tsokova points out that "the nursing profession is considered much more attractive to students driven by the desire to acquire qualifications that will guarantee them a secure job. The stronger their motivation is, the more active they are in the process of education and training". [4].

In terms of sex, women traditionally prevail – 95.4%, as compared to only 4.6% of men.

The job of the registered nurse has traditionally been a female realm. In recent years, however, the number of men choosing this career path has shown an upward trend. Currently, there are 48 men working as registered nurses in our hospitals, and most of them tend to opt for Intensive Care units, surgical wards, and operating theatres. This is indicative of the growing interest on behalf of men in the nursing profession.

The survey has shown that the main motive in the respondents' choice of profession is "the desire to help others" - 62.90%, followed by "opportunities for career development" – 39.80% [Fig.2].

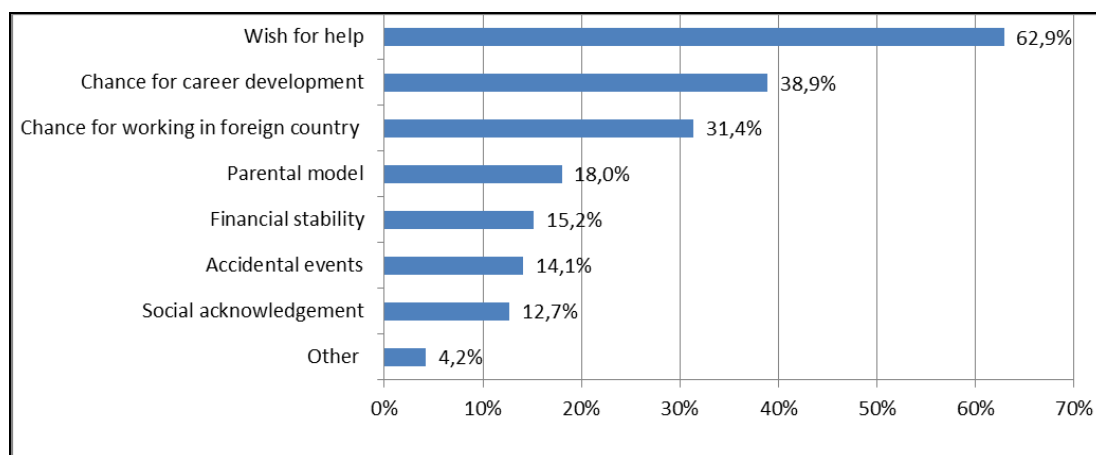


Fig. 2 Personal motives for choosing the profession of "registered nurse"

*The percentage exceeds 100 due to the fact that students were given the opportunity to choose more than one answer.

The ranking of the motives evidences the humane nature of students' motivation in the choice for their professional path. Almost two thirds of the students – 62.90% have stated that the main reason for their choice of career is the desire to help others. To the greatest extent, this is indicative of their ability to measure up their inner needs, their own conduct and goals in life to the highly humane nature of the chosen profession. The profession of registered nurse involves protecting, improving and restoring the health and life of people, it fails to achieve its rightful status, respect and recognition in society. It is a worrying fact that almost half of the surveyed students have chosen this profession because it will give them "the opportunity to work abroad" - 31,40%. In view of the drastically decreasing and absolutely inadequate number of the nursing staff in Bulgaria, urgent measures should be taken at national level to tackle this problem. No statistically significant differences were established in the responses of students from the different universities.

Students' level of satisfaction has a significant impact on their motivation to take an active part in the various types of activities during their studies. Their participation in practical activities turns students' personalities into subjects of medical work. In this sense, students' motivation in choosing a career, in learning and working is one of the factors contributing to the optimization of the process of development.

The next question is aimed at revealing whether the idea students had before commencing their studies corresponds to the actual practice. One of the main approaches to determining of the level of students' satisfaction with their choice of profession involves determining the extent of the discrepancy between idea and reality [Fig.3].

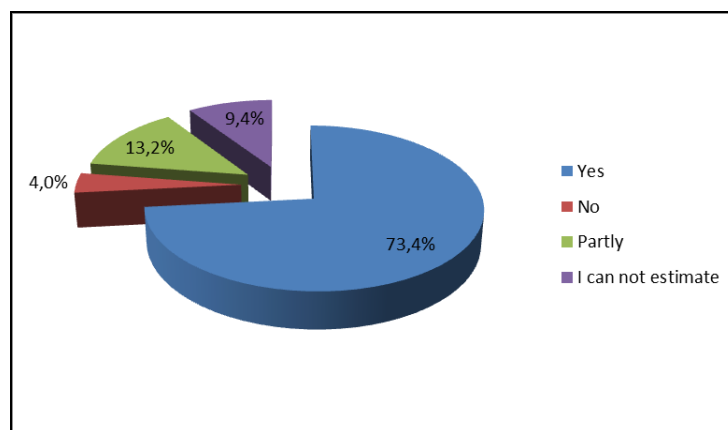


Fig. 3 Concurrence between expectations of the profession and actual practice

It is of note that there is a high percentage of concurrence between expectations and reality – 73.40%. 13.20% of the surveyed students are partially satisfied with the extent to which their ideas correspond to reality. The responses given are logically connected with the public awareness of the nature of the job of the nurse, and of the access to the work performed by the nurse. The nursing profession is emotionally charged. Nurses encounter pain and human suffering on a daily basis; on top of people's problems, there is the problem of limited financial resources. When faced with human suffering, future nurses, naturally, feel slightly disappointed in their choice of career. At the end of their training, however, they discover yet another aspect of the nursing profession – the gratitude of the patients for their care and efforts, and the satisfaction and fulfillment of a job well done. And that is what inspires them to continue their studies and to practice their profession in the future. In this regard, A. Andonova states that “students’ success depends on the level of their motivation as a result of the connection between motivation and emotion (which is of vital importance to health care students who, during their training, encounter not only human pain and suffering but also the convalescence, recovery and gratitude of the patients)”[1].

The results of the survey, concerning students’ intentions to practice their profession after graduating from the university, are in support of this statement. 78,4% have responded that they will practice their profession in all cases (“yes, in all cases”), 12,3% have chosen the option “probably yes”, 7,2% “probably not” and 2,1% have decided not to work as nurses [Fig.4] .

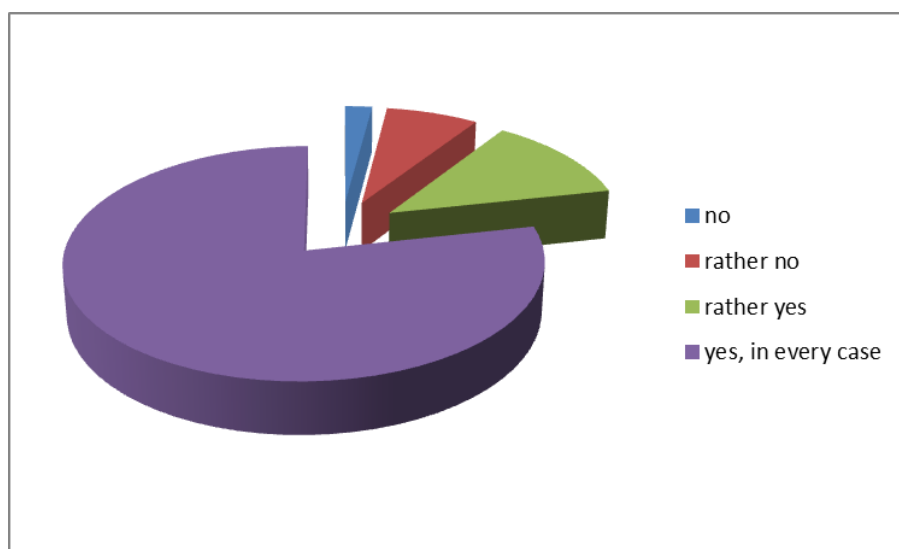


Fig. 4 Intentions to practice their profession

Choosing a career is an important step in everyone's life. The greatest risk in making the wrong choice is to be forced to do a job that brings you no satisfaction, to feel frustrated with what you are doing, to feel unimportant in the workplace. Such dissatisfaction will undoubtedly lead anyone to 'burn-out'. Occupational guidance aims at assisting people in their choice of a career and the respective professional education and training. It is of vital importance in the development of a positive personal attitude to work, in gaining professional confidence and satisfaction with their occupation. This is of particular importance to specialists in the sphere of health care, registered nurses being part of them.

Occupational guidance is a vital prerequisite for a successful career. Experience shows that an efficient and successful career is directly connected with a successfully chosen profession. In this line of thoughts, it can be added that the performance of various activities during the training of the students will make them feel satisfied with their choice of career and will enhance their motivation to practice it.

According to B. Tornyova and T. Cherkezov “receiving direct and adequate feedback in the process of training between targeted activities, quality and the specifics of the achieved results, is a crucial aspect of the motivation to learn. Results achieved in this way bear a psychological significance and act as motivators towards learning and training with even greater persistence and diligence” [3].

Another essential source of boosting students' motivation for professional activity are the modern healthcare facilities, the good working conditions, as well as the stimulating socio-psychological environment.

CONCLUSION

The research into the factors that motivate students to choose a career is important not only in view of optimizing the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but also in view of students' development as personalities.

The positive emotions ensuing from the successful solution to a problem and a successfully accomplished task on the part of students constitute a powerful urge towards improvement. The development of a system of motives strengthening the existing ones and the emergence of new ones confirms their controlling function and boosts the academic achievements of students. Various motives are formed, modified and expressed in their professional activity. The personal readiness and willingness to provide patients with high-quality health care are predetermined by the developed needs for knowledge and competences in the profession and an ambition to make a successful career.

The survey we have conducted allows us to draw the following **conclusions**:

1. The ranking of the motives evidences the humane nature of the motivation of the future nurses. Almost two thirds of the students – 62.90% have stated that the main reason for their choice of career is the desire to help others.

2. The motivation for a career choice should be regarded as a continuous process of developing attitudes and values, as well as willingness to make a career in the chosen profession. This motivation may change during the course of education and training as a result of the impact of a series of factors.

3. Strong inner motivation in the choice of a career path is a prerequisite for academic success. This means that future nurses, driven by a deep, conscious awareness of the need for improvement, self-improvement, acquisition of further knowledge and competences vital for practicing the profession, are more likely to achieve academic success than students driven by external motives (money, power, career).

SOURCES OF REFERENCE

[1] Andonova A., Students' motivation to study and qualify in the sphere of health care and public health. Summary of dissertation. Stara Zagora, 2012, p.10.

[2] Desev, L. Educational Psychology, S., 2000., p. 305

[3] Torniyova B, T. Cherkhezov, The motivation to acquire academic knowledge on the part of students majoring in Healthcare Management in the conditions of continuous education. 'Management & education' magazine, issue 3, vol. 5, 2009, p.100-105.

[4] Tsokova Y., Determinants of the professional development of nursing students at the Medical University of Plovdiv, Summary of dissertation, Plovdiv, 2017, p.39.