

Perception that Community Hold about Nurses and Nursing as A Profession

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Abstract :

Introduction: Nursing is a health care profession, which is focused on the care of individuals, families, and communities; so that they can attain, maintain, or recover optimum health. Nurses care for individuals of all ages and cultural backgrounds who are healthy and ill in a holistic manner based on the individual's physical, emotional, psychological, intellectual, social, and spiritual needs (Patidar et al., 2011). Society recognizes nursing as a profession which provides a valuable and essential service for maintenance of the health of the people. When nurses take up nursing, they enter into an unwritten contract with society. Society gives them the mandate to perform nursing which is a social function that carries social responsibility. Society holds certain expectations from members of the nursing profession, based on a relationship of trust (Searle & Pera, 1995). Any form of malpractice by nurses would endanger the safety and welfare of society and thus harm the relationship between the nursing profession and society. The nurses have a duty to uphold high standards of nursing practice which is what society values about nursing. If they fail to meet these standards and expectations, nursing loses its meaning, professional integrity and good image (Kunene, 2001).

Image is part of a profession. It's the way that profession appears to other disciplines and to the general of health care. Image and the perception of the profession impact recruitment of students, the view of the public, funding for nursing education and research, relationships with healthcare administrators and other healthcare professionals, government agencies and legislators at all levels of government, and ultimately, the profession's self-identity (Finkelman & Kenner, 2013). 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. Where, 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 (Mahran & Al Nagsha, 2012). Nurses' image has always been a concern for those in the profession. 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 (Emeghebo, 2012). Nursing is a profession that has long been troubled with its public image. The public has a stereotypical view of nursing, in which nurses may be regarded as less intelligent than doctors, dependent on doctors, powerless and underpaid (Tang et al., 1999). The public who are constantly presented with an inaccurate and negative nursing image will view a career in nursing as undesirable (Mahran & Al Nagsha, 2012). Various people have different understandings of the nursing profession based on prior events in their lives since perceptions are subjective (Achilles, 2009).