Professional socialization and its determinant factors among B Sc nursing students in Kerala

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ABSTRACT

Professional socialization is the process by which individuals acquire the specialized knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, norms and interests needed to perform their career roles acceptably. It is a complex process with four critical attributes: learning, interaction, development and adaptation. Even though, India is one of the largest providers of nurse workforce to many other countries in the world, scientific researches to explore the professional socialization, professional values and its related variables like professional self-concept and self-esteem of our nursing students are rarely done. The need for this study has its very basis on exploring the complexities of factors that enable nursing students to get socialized and streamlined into the culture and values of the profession. Kerala State in South India, at present has 119 Nursing Colleges affiliated to Kerala University of Health Sciences (KUHS), offering B Sc Nursing course and approximately 5,500 new B Sc Nursing graduates are passing out from Kerala, every year.

The present study was done with the aim to obtain a data base on professional socialization and its selected determinant factors among B Sc Nursing students in Kerala State, which can help policy makers and nurse leaders get an insight into these aspects. The study had five objectives: to describe the socio-demographic factors of B Sc Nursing students; to describe and find out the correlations between the self reported professional socialization, professional values, professional self-concept, perception on status of Nursing as a profession and the self-esteem of students and compare these variables among I, II, III and IV year B Sc Nursing students; and to find out the relationship of the study variables with selected socio-demographic factors like religion and socio-economic status of the student’s family.

The study used a cross-sectional survey approach with descriptive–correlational study design. Probability sampling, namely, multi-stage cluster sampling was used to select subjects from 14 Nursing colleges in Kerala State, proportionately selected from all the geographical zones under KUHS. The total sample size was 580, as per the sample size estimation using power analysis (estimated power = 0.95), with equal number of students from I, II, III and IV year B Sc Nursing classes. Six self-report questionnaires / scales were used for data collection, namely, socio demographic factors inventory, Professional Socialization Scale for nursing students, Professional value scale for nursing students, perception scale on status of Nursing as a profession and Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale. Among these, Rosenberg’s self-esteem scale is a standardized scale and all other tools were developed by researcher and refined through validity and reliability checking, pre-testing and pilot study.
Results: Descriptive analysis of the socio-demographic factors showed that a large majority, 571 (98.4%) of students were females. Only 1.6% of students were males. The age distribution showed that majority, 161 (27.8%) were of 21 years. Since equal numbers of students were selected from I, II, III and IV year classes for comparison purpose, 25% belonged to each class. Majority of students (63.6%) belonged to Christian religion. Among the 580 subjects majority, 500 (86.2%) were from Self-Financing Colleges, 40 each (6.9%) from Co-Operative College and Government College of Nursing.

The total scores obtained by subjects in the Likert’s type scales, to measure Professional Socialization, Professional Value and Professional Self-concept were categorized into excellent, very good, good and poor based on the sample mean and SD values. Descriptive analysis of the scores obtained by subjects in the Professional Socialization Scale showed that majority, 239 (41.2%) of subjects had „very good” level of professional Socialization, whereas 83 (14.3%) belonged to excellent category. Professional values were in „very good” category among majority, 239 (41.2%) and Professional concept also was in „very good” category among majority 266 (45.9%).

Descriptive analysis of the scores given by subjects on the semantic differential scale to measure students’ perception on status of nursing as a profession showed that professions characteristics which received „score 7” by majority of subjects were “essential for society” (79.8%), “responsible” (68.6%) and Ethical (51%). The characteristics which received least number of „score 7” were autonomous (17.2%), intellectual work (22.8%) and altruistic (22.8%). It can be interpreted that B Sc Nursing students very confidently perceived Nursing profession is Essential for society, Responsible and Ethical, but they perceived it also as dependent rather than autonomous; mechanical work rather than intellectual work and self-centered rather than altruistic. Only 43% of subjects confidently could say that Nursing is a well reputed profession and 45.3% perceived that members of the profession are organized by professional associations. The self-esteem of students, measured with Rosenberg’s Self-esteem Scale showed that majority, 426 (73.4%) had xi
moderate level of self-esteem, and only 96 (16.6%) had high self-esteem. The sample mean of self-esteem score was 28.36 (SD=3.4).

The correlation matrix plotted with the bi-variate Pearson correlation values (r), computed between the study variables, Professional Socialization, Professional values, Professional concept, Self-esteem and Perception of status of nursing showed that all the correlation values were positive (r=0.119 to 0.644) and statistically significant at 0.001 level. Hence it was concluded that significant mild to moderate positive linear correlations exist between professional socialization and its determinant factors analyzed in the study, which means an increase in one variable result in increase in other variables too, and vice versa.

Comparison of the study variables among the I, II, III and IV year B Sc students was also done. The mean values of professional socialization and professional self-concept were highest among 1st years and lowest among III rd years. Professional values were highest among IV year B Sc Nursing students and lowest and equal among II years and III years. Mean of perception on status of Nursing as profession was highest among 1st years and lowest among III years. Self-esteem scores were also highest among 1st years and lowest and equal among III years and IV years. The significance of difference in mean values were analyzed using one way ANOVA and it was seen that difference in mean values of Professional Socialization (F=3.009, P<0.05) and professional self-concept (F=5.205, P<0.01) among I, II, III and IV years were statistically significant. Mean difference of all other variables were not statistically significant.

The relationship of Socio-economic status (SES) of the student with the study variables were analyzed by computing the Pearson Correlation (r), values between the SES and each study variable. All the „r“ values, except the one between SES and self-esteem score were negative values. Hence it was inferred that as the family socio-economic status of the students increases their professional socialization, professional values, self-concept and perception on Nursing as a profession decreases. The correlation (r) of SES with self-esteem score was positive and statistically significant (P<0.05), which means, as the socio-economic status of family increases the students” self-esteem also increases significantly. There were significant difference in the mean values of Professional Socialization (F=6.494, P<0.01) and professional values (F=5.327, P<0.01) of students belonging to Hindu, Christian and Muslim religions.
The other study variables were not significantly varying among subjects of various religions. All the mean values were highest among Hindus. The study concluded that professional socialization and its selected determinant factors, namely, professional values, professional self-concept and their perception on status of nursing as a profession were in “very good” levels among majority of B Sc nursing students in Kerala state, India and majority had “moderate” levels of self-esteem. However, as the students moved from I year to IV year of their study, there was a statistically significant depreciation in their professional socialization and professional self-concept. Socio-economic status of the students’ family has a significant negative correlation with their perception on status of nursing profession and positive correlation with self-esteem. Religion of the students also found to be having significant relationship with their professional socialization and values.