

# Influential Factors on Nursing Career Preparation Behavior in the Post-COVID-19 Era

Saleh Awad Khdran Alharb<sup>1</sup>, Malak Mudhhi Alanazi<sup>2</sup>, Zainah Safar S Alshahrani<sup>3</sup>, Haya Mohammed Hassan Alshahrani<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Nursing

<sup>2</sup>General Nursing

<sup>3</sup>Nursing Technician

---

## Abstracts

In order to improve nursing students' career preparation and nursing professionalism, this study intends to identify the factors influencing nursing students' career preparation behavior in the post-COVID-19 era and to establish a foundation for preparation strategies. In order to determine the factors influencing nursing students' career preparation behavior in the post-COVID-19 era, this descriptive cross-sectional study measures major satisfaction, self-efficacy, nursing image, nursing professionalism, nursing image and intuition, and career preparation. The information was gathered via an online survey. By offering career planning and counseling based on the student's level of understanding and cognitive behaviors to foster the professional and positive attitudes that are crucial for a successful nursing career, nursing professionalism and image can be improved. To help nursing students get ready for their careers, nursing schools should include facilities, a mentorship program, and a job portal.

Keywords: Nursing, pandemic, nursing career, career preparation.

## 1. Introduction

Due to its contagious nature and significant issues in 2020, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic constituted a serious threat to human health. The global pandemic's protracted existence has affected many aspects of life, such as the scarcity of nurses in the medical field. Additionally, reports suggest that longer workdays are contributing to increased fatigue and safety hazards. The shortcomings of healthcare systems have been brought to light by the COVID-19 pandemic, underscoring the urgent need for all governments to invest heavily in nursing in order to effect such significant change ( Park, 2021; Kaynar, 2020).

Mental health has been significantly impacted by the pandemic's worldwide spread. Because they provide direct patient care, nurses made up the largest percentage of medical professionals (73.5%), and it was reported that one nurse contracts COVID-19 every day. Anxiety, stress, and exhaustion are some of the detrimental effects of the pandemic on nursing students' mental health. Anxiety and risk awareness were found to be significantly elevated in nursing students.

As a result, there are worries that the stress and anxiety associated with the job may make people reluctant to pursue a career as nurses (Oh E, 2020).

Low turnover rates and efficient nursing work performance are influenced by good nursing professionalism. In order to take advantage of this crisis and offer a clear path for appropriate nursing education and differentiated nursing services, a clear road map is becoming essential. A nationwide study carried out in China found that the COVID-19 pandemic enhanced nursing students' professional identities. During the pandemic, people who identified more strongly as professionals were more optimistic and intended to continue working as nurses. However, poor mental health has been linked to attitudes about nursing as a career and difficulties in learning and preparing for the workforce. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, nursing students feel that it is time to redefine the nursing profession, give them a chance to change who they are as professionals, and address healthcare issues (Hwang, 2017).

Although nursing's reputation is currently improving, it still has unfavorable social perceptions, including being a challenging profession, having a strict corporate culture, and being a feminine occupation. According to a systematic review that looked into how society views the nursing profession, nursing is important for public health. On the other hand, it has been revealed that nurses are viewed as doctors' subordinates, performing medical procedures as directed, blindly following doctors' orders, putting up with long hours, and receiving pitiful pay. Following the pandemic, societies' perceptions of nursing were different from their pre-pandemic perceptions (Nie S, 2021; Rafati, 2017).

Choosing nursing as a career is hampered by this unfavorable perception of the profession, but a favorable perception of nursing elevates one's work and inspires pride. Thus, by looking at the connection between nursing students' career preparation behavior and nursing image, it is vital to help them adjust to the job later on and to enhance career preparation behavior by creating a positive nursing image while they are in college (Moon, 2011).

## **2. Nursing Career Preparation Behavior:**

There were notable differences in the motivation to pursue nursing and the satisfaction with clinical practice between the career preparation behavior based on general characteristics. Even though online learning is supposed to be beneficial in nursing education, sudden and unexpected changes in teaching methods without the required infrastructure and learning systems may be less effective. The preparation for employment was significantly impacted by the absence of clinical experience. According to earlier research, the more career preparation activities one engages in, the more satisfied one is with their work, and the more likely one is to change jobs. An effective career development plan could be developed by utilizing all of these elements to enhance career preparation behavior. As a result, it is essential to consider nursing students' mental health and provide them with psychological support as they get ready for the workforce. In addition to psychosocial support and job counseling (Rafati, 2017).

This study found a correlation between self-efficacy and post-COVID-19 career preparation behavior. This result is in line with earlier studies that showed a positive relationship with

contentment level. Prior research on nursing students revealed that behavioral changes and job readiness were significantly influenced by self-efficacy and coping mechanisms (de Bruin W, 2020).

Career preparation behavior was positively correlated with nursing professionalism and image:

Career preparation behavior was positively correlated with nursing professionalism and image. This result was consistent, and prior to clinical practice, nursing students had high nursing professional values. However, after seeing and experiencing the actual roles of nurses in hospitals, they were influenced by negative factors. Students' perceptions of the purpose of life and work are impacted by major emergencies, which weakens their desire to pursue worthwhile endeavors. A prior study found that self-efficacy had an impact on professionalism (Kim, 1995; Han, 2018).

Furthermore, self-efficacy is a key component of professionalism and was found to be the most significant predictor of nursing students' career preparation. In order to implement such significant changes, it is imperative that all governments make large investments in nursing, as the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the shortcomings in healthcare systems. On the contrary, rather than a lack of ability, the detrimental effects are more likely to be the cause of students' withdrawal from the nursing program. To encourage student retention and improve their sense of professional identity and professionalism, educational initiatives and coping mechanisms are therefore necessary (Neilson, 2012).

### **3. Recommendations:**

To encourage student retention and improve their sense of professional identity and professionalism, educational initiatives and coping mechanisms are therefore necessary. that even though these nursing students believed they were skilled in certain areas, like emergency rooms, intensive care units, etc., they should feel more prepared for the job by completing extra online or offline training or practicing in particular areas of specialization during the job preparation period. To encourage them to seek out more advice while preparing for their jobs, nursing schools and policymakers should organize career coping continuing education programs, such as counseling centers, workshops and job portals, or alumni gatherings.

On the other hand, educational institutions could use online resources to offer a range of information about career choices. Guidance and awareness of the students' environment are therefore helpful. By giving them accurate information and connecting them with companies that provide online job search support, it would be advantageous to help students explore their career options.

his study has a number of limitations:

First, the study's participants were all from the same university. The inability to confirm causal effects may limit the generalizability of our findings.

Second, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this cross-sectional study was conducted using an online survey. Given the correlation between psychological challenges during career preparation

and changes in nursing image following COVID-19, it is recommended that longitudinal studies be conducted in the future to assess cognitively based career preparation behavior.

Finally, third graders were excluded; only fourth graders were included. These students should be included in future studies in order to gather trustworthy data and raise awareness of early career preparation practices.

#### 4. Conclusion:

According to this study, the high employment rate of nursing inspired most fourth-grade students to pursue the field. On the other hand, they were very happy and eager to work as hospital nurses. Nonetheless, one to three years of employment was anticipated. This implies that there might be a lack of clarity regarding nursing's professionalism and reputation. Additionally, there was a strong correlation between career planning behavior and self-efficacy, nursing professionalism, nursing image, and major satisfaction. Educational institutions, legislators, and healthcare organizations can better assist nursing students in their career preparation journey in the post-COVID-19 era by comprehending and addressing these influencing factors. It is advised that nursing educators improve the professionalism, education, and career readiness of nursing students. Counseling programs that take into account the academic year must be created. Establishing a variety of unique professional preparation settings and job portals is also crucial, as is creating a hybrid career mentoring program and counseling that can be conducted more impartially within the nursing school.

#### WORKS CITED

---

- Park J.H., Kim J.H., Lee H.J., Kang P.R. The relationship of anxiety, risk perception, literacy, and compliance of preventive behaviors during COVID-19 pandemic in nursing students. *J. Korean Appl. Sci. Technol.* 2021;38:48-59.
- Oh E.G. Perspectives on nursing profession for a post-COVID-19 New Normal. *Korean J. Adult Nurs.* 2020;32:221-222.
- Nie S., Sun C., Wang L., Wang X. The professional identity of nursing students and their intention to leave the nursing profession during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. *J. Nurs. Res.* 2021;29:e139.
- Hwang E.H., Shin S.J. Factors impacting nursing professionalism among nursing students. *J. Korean Public Health Nurs.* 2017;31:97-108.
- Moon Y.S., Han S.J. Impact of self-efficacy and nursing professionalism on organizational commitment in nurses. *J. Korean Acad. Soc. Nurs. Educ.* 2011;17:72-79.
- Rafati F., Nouhi E., Sabzevari S., Dehghan-Nayeri N. Coping strategies of nursing students for dealing with stress in clinical setting: A qualitative study. *Electron. Physician.* 2017;9:6120-6128.
- de Bruin W.B., Bennett D. Relationships between initial COVID-19 risk perceptions and protective health behaviors: A national survey. *Am. J. Prev. Med.* 2020;59:157-167.
- Kim Y.R. A study on the change of the views on nursing profession of the nursing college students. *Korean J. Fundam. Nurs.* 1995;2:169-181.

- Han D.L. Images of good nurses as perceived by nursing college students: A q-methodological approach. *J. Korean Acad. Soc. Nurs. Educ.* 2018;24:61-71.
- Neilson G.R., Jones M.C. What predicts the selection of nursing as a career choice in 5th and 6th year school students? *Nurse Educ. Today.* 2012;32:588-593.
- Kaynar Şimşek A., Ecevit Alpar Ş. Image perception of the society for nursing profession: Systematic review. *Sak. Univ. Holistik Sağlık Derg.* 2020;2:32-46.