

NURSING STUDENTS' RESILIENCE TOWARD THE STEREOTYPICAL IMAGE OF THE NURSING PROFESSION

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ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVES

To assess resilience among nursing students toward the stereotypical image of the nursing profession.

METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional descriptive design was employed and a convenient sampling technique was used to recruit nursing students from various nursing colleges in Peshawar. The duration for this study was three months. A Conner-Davidson resilience scale (CD-RISK) was used for the sample of 262 BS Nursing students to assess the resilience toward the stereotypical image of the nursing profession.

RESULTS

The study revealed that the mean resilience score was 52.24 out of 72±9.9. On the basis of quartile, low resilience was 0% (equal or lower than 25 percentile), moderate was 51.9% (greater than 25 but lower than 75 percentile), and high resilience was 48.1% (greater than 75 percentile).

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the resilience among nursing students regarding nursing image was mostly at moderate level. On the basis of result of this study we recommend different strategies to be adopted as to assess and build resilience among nursing students toward the image of the nursing profession.

KEYWORDS: Nursing Students, Resilience, Stereotypes, Nursing Profession

INTRODUCTION

As the backbone of healthcare system, nursing is a noble and compassionate profession that is significant worldwide.¹ With its multidimensional nature, nursing profession contains a wide range of activities and responsibilities ranging from the admission to the discharge of patients in the healthcare setups.² During the recent COVID-19 pandemic, nurses have played an angelic and heroic role by providing not only physical care to the patients but also by promoting health education, providing emotional support, and collaborating with healthcare teams.³ To effectively carry out their role as caregivers, nurses need to possess concrete skills, knowledge, and intellectual mastery to solve the actual and potential problems in a caring environment.³ However, there are various stereotypes associated with nursing that exist worldwide such as, nursing has traditionally been perceived as a profession primarily for women across much of the world, this perception has shaped the societal view of nursing as a female dominated profession.⁵ Furthermore, the image of nursing in society often reinforces stereotypes that is solely

focused on romance, pleasure-seeking, and trivial matters, while being perceived as a subordinate profession to male doctors, existing primarily to support and enhance their work.⁶ In many cultures, there is the belief that female nurses may face challenges in their personal life, including difficulties in finding marriage partners due to night shifts and providing care to male patients.⁷ However, since 2000, there is a noticeable increase in male representation in nursing, attribute to change in job structure and greater recognition of nursing as a profession.⁸ Despite the progress, nurses worldwide still face discrediting perception of being seen as a mere assistant or subordinates to doctors, lacking autonomy and decision-making power, and experiencing marginalization within the healthcare system.⁹ Additionally, most families tend to discourage their children from perusing a career in nursing due to factors such as low salaries, excessive work hours, overnight shifts and the perception of being subordinates to doctors, all of which make it less attractive as a profession.¹⁰ As a result, these stereotypes pose obstacles for students in entering the nursing field and can also discourage students from

pursuing or remaining in the profession, leading them to choose alternative career path.¹¹ Despite the significant contributions nurses provide to the healthcare system, the stereotypes make it difficult for students to choose the nursing profession.¹² While the demand for nurses is increasing globally, there is a concerning proportion of students encountering difficulties in completing their education.¹³ It has been observed that many students opt for nursing when they are unable to secure admission in medical schools, indicating nursing as an alternative career choice.¹⁴ However, male nursing students encounter varying challenges during their education, leading to attrition, which can differ across cultural contexts.¹⁵ Developing resilience in education is crucial for nursing students as it enhances their mental well-being, equips them with effective coping strategies, and also enables them to overcome challenges and adversities that may hinder their academic success.¹⁶ Resilience is the ability and personal qualities of an individual to withstand, cope, and adapt with obstacles or challenges.¹⁷ Also, resilience is a multifaceted concept, which arises from a combination of coping skills, adaptability, and accumulated success achieved when dealing with challenges and stress.¹⁸ Nevertheless, despite the obstacles, there are several nursing students who exhibit varying levels of resilience. Wherein high-level resilient students actively engage in confronting obstacles, seek advice, promote self-awareness, and seek social support, while some students have maladaptive strategies like avoidance, self-reproach, and may even opt to leave the profession.¹⁹ According to literature, a smaller proportion of students feel that they will challenge or alter the existing stereotypes associated with nursing, while a significant number of students exhibits a negative attitude toward the nursing profession and even mock the profession.²⁰ To enhance coping skills and adaptability, research recommends seminars or workshops for students on resilience.²¹ Therefore, resilient individuals exhibit greater positivity, confidence, and the ability to view the situations in a more positive light, while effectively manages challenges by drawing on their behavioral, cognitive, and emotional abilities.²² Despite its undeniable importance, no study has specifically examined the resilience level of nursing students in Pakistan in response to these stereotypes. So far, there has been a notable gap in research exploring the resilience of nursing students in Pakistan in relation to stereotypes within nursing profession. Consequently, this study aims to evaluate the resilience among nursing students who face the stereotypical image associated with the nursing profession. The significant of resilience cannot be understated, particularly when

considering the challenges that stereotypes can impose on aspiring nursing students. The finding of this study will facilitate the implementation of targeted interventions and support systems that can enhance their resilience and counteract the impact of stereotypes within the nursing profession.

METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional descriptive study design was employed to evaluate nursing students' resilience toward the stereotypical image of the nursing profession. The study was carried out at selected nursing colleges of Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The participants of the study were male and female undergraduate students enrolled in Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program. The participants were selected through convenient sampling techniques. The sample size for this study was calculated through the Rao soft software to be 262, with a 95% confidence interval and a 5% margin of error. To assess nursing students' resilience toward the stereotypical image of the nursing profession a Conner-Davidson resilience scale (CD-RISK) questionnaire was adopted.²³ The questionnaire contained 18 questions on 5 Likert scale as: 0-Not true at all, 1-Rarely true, 2-Sometimes true, 3-Often true, 4-True nearly all the time. The data was analyzed through SPSS version 22. The students were provided with information regarding the purpose of the study, and verbal agreement was obtained. Data was gathered and handled confidentially. Permission for data collection was obtained from the head of the department of each nursing college.

RESULTS

A convenient sample was use to select 262 Bachelor Nursing students including 61.1 % of males and 38.9% females as shown in the table (1). In terms of their academic years of Bachelor of science in nursing study, 24.8% were in the first year, 21.8% in second year, 33.2% were in third year, and 20.2% were in fourth year as shown in the table (1).

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

Variables	Groups	N	%age
Sex	Male	160	61.1
	Female	102	38.9
Class of Study	1 st year	65	24.8
	2 nd year	57	21.8
	3 rd year	87	33.2
	4 th year	53	20.2

The overall responses to the questionnaire are given in the table (2).

Table 2: Display the Nurses' Knowledge Regarding the Regulation of High Alert Medications

Statement	Not True at All (%)	Rarely True (%)	Sometimes True (%)	Often True (%)	True Nearly at All Time (%)
I am able to adapt to an environment where people have a stereotypical image of the nursing profession	8.4	13.7	27.9	24	26
I can deal with and am happy with whatever people say about the nursing profession	8.4	11.1	20.2	25.2	35.1
The scope of the nursing profession and the worldwide acknowledgment of the crucial role of nurses in healthcare give me confidence in dealing with the local stereotypical image of the nursing profession	1.5	5.7	16.8	35.1	40.8
I try to see the humorous side of the social perception regarding nurses and the nursing profession	6.1	14.5	28.2	33.2	17.9
Sometimes negative comments about the nursing profession make me strong	22.5	13	26.6	21	22.9
Good or bad, I believe that everything happens for a reasons	2.7	7.3	14.5	22.9	52.7
I put my best efforts, regardless of the outcomes	08	5.3	10.3	34.7	48.9
I despite the challenges, I am confident that I can accomplish my objectives	08	7.3	13.7	26.3	51.9
Even when everything seems hopeless, don't give up	4.2	11.8	18.3	30.2	35.5
When under pressure, I maintain focus and think clearly	5.3	9.2	20.2	31.7	33.6
I prefer to take the lead in solving problems rather than relying solely on others to make decisions	1.5	5.7	20.6	36.6	35.5
I am not easily discourage by the social image of the nursing profession	7.3	13.4	13	29	37.4
I think of myself as a strong person when dealing with negative comments from people about nurses and the nursing profession	4.2	13.7	9.9	29	43.1
I am able to handle stress and anxiety related societal unacceptance of the nurses and nursing profession	5.3	7.6	22.1	41.2	23.7
I have a strong sense of purpose in the nursing profession	1.5	7.6	8	28.2	54.6
I believe I am in charge of my life	1.9	6.1	12.2	24	55.7
I work to attain my goals, despite any roadblocks I encounter because of the stereotypical image of the nursing profession	1.1	5.7	16.4	35.5	41.2
I take pride being in the nursing profession	3.4	6.1	10.3	18.3	61.8

The mean resilience scores out of 72 was 52.24±9.91 with a minimum resilience of 20 and maximum 72 as shown in the table (3).

Table 3: Mean and Range of Resilience

Mean	52.240
Std. Deviation	9.9115
Minimum	20.0
Maximum	72.0

For further interpretability it was categories into low, moderate, and high resilience base on the quartile. Low resilience was 0% (equal or lower than 25 percentile), moderate was 51.9% (greater than 25 but less than 75 percentile), and high resilience was 48.1% (greater than 75 percentile) as shown in the table (4).

Table 4: Categories of Resilience

Resilience Categories	Score	%age
Low	<18	0
Moderate	18-54	51.9
High	>54	48.1

To find out the association between the demographic variables of gender and class of study with outcome variable resilience, chi-square test was applied but it was not significant statically with p-values 0.989 and 0.060 respectively.

DISCUSSION

The finding of this cross-sectional study indicates that nursing students in Peshawar display varying levels of resilience towards the stereotypes of the nursing profession. These results are not consistent with the previous research conducted in South India that has demonstrated the presence of low-level resilience (55.1%) among undergraduate nursing students.²⁴ One of the factors examined in this study was the correlation between class of study and gender with the resilience level. The study finding revealed no significant correlation between class or gender and resilience level. similar to previous study no association between gender and resilience were

identified.²⁵ This suggest that class and gender may not influence the level of resilience among nursing students in relation to the stereotypical image of the nursing profession. The study findings also shed light on the distribution of resilience levels among the nursing students. It was found that 0% of the students' exhibit low levels of resilience, 51.9% showed moderate levels of resilience, and 48.1% demonstrated high levels of resilience. A study conducted in Islamabad and Rawalpindi found that nursing students exhibited similar levels of resilience.²³ These findings indicate a diverse range of resilience levels among nursing students and highlight the need for targeted interventions to support those with lower resilience levels. One possible explanation for the resilience observed in nursing students is their strong motivation and passion for the nursing profession. The study investigated several approaches to foster resilience, including mindfulness training, conflict management skills, stress management skills, biofeedback, communication skills, and development of emotional intelligence.¹⁷ Social support also plays a significant role in festering resilience among nursing students. Moreover, students who received support from their peers, faculty members, and healthcare professionals were found to be more resilient in facing the negative stereotypes. This emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive environment within nursing colleges, where students can openly discuss their concerns, share experiences, and receive mentoring from experienced professionals. However, it is worth noting that despite their resilience, nursing students still encounter challenges in dealing with the stereotypical image of the nursing profession. Negative stereotypes have the potentials to impact students' self-esteem, job satisfaction, and career choices. Therefore, it is crucial for educational institutions and healthcare organizations to implement interventions aimed at challenging and changing these stereotypes. The study's findings have several implications for nursing education and practice in Peshawar. Educational institutions should implement interventions to build students' resilience and equip them with the necessary skills to challenge stereotypes. Encouraging dialogue and provide platforms for open discussions regarding the nursing profession can also help combat negative stereotypes.

LIMITATIONS

The use of convenient sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of nursing students in Peshawar. Additionally, the cross-sectional design only captures a

snapshot of data at a specific point in time and does not allow for causality and temporality to be determined. Furthermore, time and financial constrains were few of the hurdles faced during data collection.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concluded moderate level of resilience among nursing students in Peshawar towards the stereotypical image of the nursing profession. The findings also suggest that class and gender may not influence resilience levels, and highlight the diversity of resilience levels among nursing students. These findings have implications for nursing education and practice, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to support nursing students and promote a positive image of the nursing profession. Future research should continue to explore these areas to further enhance nursing education and support systems.

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