

Reflections on our Needs of Motivational factors and Attitudes which are Significant in Recruiting Students for Basic Diploma Nursing in India

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INTRODUCTION

THE nursing profession in India has a vital role to play in the National Health Programmes in building health, preventing disease, and caring for the sick and disabled. Human resources are the key to what a nation will do with all its resources. Without positive health, man functions at only a fraction of his potential. Health is a world problem and all scientific advances are freely shared with others, but each country, state, and city has to study its own situation with a realistic and creative approach. One of the heavy responsibilities will be to expand nursing services to all people, rural as well as those in the cities. The nursing profession has the responsibility to produce nurses with depth of scientific understanding, ability to think and reason and professional skill, judgement and character. The profession of nursing should be able to attract nurses who genuinely want to be nurses.

Some Concerns in Nursing Profession in India

Nurse educators in India often complain of not getting desirable candidates for nursing, thus there is no academic satisfaction in recruiting the student nurses. There are no statistical data available, but from my personal observation, it can be said that often candidates who fail in gaining admission in academic and other colleges try nursing as their last resort. Moreover, the candidates who are needy and cannot support themselves for higher education or want to help their families, get into nursing education because the training in India is provided free with a stipend for board and lodging.

This monetary incentive to enter a school of nursing has not motivated those who would like to pay fees and educate themselves for a professional challenge. This practice of paying stipends has not attracted students who come from higher socio-economic backgrounds, who are genuinely interested in serving the sick and infirm; those who would like to take risks at a job and go further in their career, thus advancing

ing further in their profession.

Every person has his or her own interest in entering a profession. Some are interested in earning money and others are interested in progressing as fast as they can in their profession. The students who are in nursing profession due to financial hardships may be interested only in making enough money for their needs. Also, their performance in their work may be just average as they may not have any interest in occupational advancement. Thus, the interest in rising in their profession may be influenced by the environment and society from which they come.

The nursing profession has the responsibility to attract those candidates who would genuinely be willing to take risks on the job. These risks involve the nurses' critical thinking, leadership and ability to meet crisis situations on the job. We need those who will be willing to go to rural areas of the country where medical men are reluctant to go. In India, 80 per cent of the population live in villages and they are the most vulnerable section, prone to disease and mortality. Also, the profession is looking forward to having nurses prepared at the same level of education as any other profession, but it depends on the need of the services required by India.

The major purpose of this study is to identify the needs and motivational factors contributing towards the higher education required by nurses in India.

Nursing Needs of India for Survival of this Profession

There is a great need felt for the different kind of nurse who should be able to fit in the modern structure of nursing. The help and gifts from other countries for Indian hospitals have created the need for trained nursing personnel and advanced knowledge of the equipment. The Governor of Karnataka (South India), M. L. Sukhadia, in the 7th Trained Nurses Association of India's Biennial Conference said, "We must take steps to encourage nursing students to go for higher learning and research, for, only then can this profession keep in stride with the great advances

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that science had made in the last two decades. Nursing needs uplift and I feel that the road to progress is best achieved when the direction and action come from within."¹ He strongly advocated the growth of more good colleges of nursing within the country with courses at post-graduate level. Three or four colleges cannot produce the number required for the 600-million people of India.

The other reason for getting this investigation done is to find out the factors which can stimulate the desire in nursing students for occupational advancement. Modern nursing care does not include only passing a pill or giving a bed bath; rather, every step in nursing care of the patient requires technique, intelligent decision-making, as well as to take initiative in critical situations. There is a lack of qualitative, comprehensive nursing care in India. The need is greater to get qualified teachers who can guide the students and not only to command them. In the guide for schools of nursing, it is stated, "There are many factors which contribute towards a good school of nursing, some of which are outside the control of the staff; but actual organization of the programmes and the methods used to implement it, however, are exclusively their responsibility, and the manner in which this is carried out will reflect the quality of nursing.....The nurse who works in the field of education needs to be able to work with others, interested in students, and able to lead rather than command them and to contribute to their development."²

The Planning Commission has laid great stress on the health of the rural population. The 80 per cent of population in India live in villages. There is a tremendous rate of morbidity and mortality. One can name a type of infection and will find it in India. According to the findings of the Planning Commission, "There are 5,183 health centres run by the health visitors who are prepared at minimum level of nursing training. They lack leadership and are not at all motivated to go for higher education as they fear of losing monetary security. They are heavily responsible with their family needs and require money to support them."³

We do need to find out about the motivated students as there is a great need of advanced knowledge in maternal and child health. The demands have been greater than the sources. The World Health Organization has stated that, "The data from India shows that in childbirth about 90 per cent of women in rural areas are not assisted by trained attendants; the situation is better in urban areas, but far from satisfactory."⁴

The manpower to study on nursing conducted in 1970 has indicated that the Registered Nurse to patient ratio in 1967 was 1:9499. The trained personnel at higher level was inadequate to meet

the need of the nursing profession to render effective and efficient nursing services.

India also needs some strong minds and leaders to make the nursing profession independent from the paternal attitude of so-called superior physicians. The physicians take it for granted that they must direct and protect the nursing profession. Their innermost desire is always to let the nursing profession to stay subordinate to medicine and never give it a chance to be free to stand on its own feet. There is a great need felt by the nursing profession to have a group of strong leaders who would help in making nursing independent and self-sufficient for its survival, like any other profession.

The other reason for the need of motivated candidates is to remove the cultural stigma put on the nursing profession by the Hindu society of India. Due to religious background, Hindus never appreciated the nursing profession. As in India, it is compulsory for the student nurse to live in residence; she gets more freedom than living at home and has to mix up with Christian nurses, which is not approved by the Hindu society in general. The whole attitude is due to complex caste, class and religious system of India.

We do need candidates who can be strong future leaders and change agents for the better image of the nursing profession. The leadership is needed at large scale to assess, plan and implement curricular changes based upon the high quality of nursing care. The students' population has to meet the pre-requisite criteria to meet the high standards of the nursing profession. Moreover, the minimum requirements of nursing training should eventually move upward and make the baccalaureate degree as the minimum accepted qualifications. The profession, like any other, needs to stand on its own feet in this competitive world of technology.

References

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