

Research Article

A Descriptive Study to Assess the Knowledge Related to Career Options and Perceived Stress Related to Career Among Nursing Students at a Selected College Of Nursing, New Delhi

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A B S T R A C T

Introduction: Nursing is a profession that demands significant intelligence, motivation, and determination, as stated by Karen Davison. They dedicate their lives to caring for mothers and children, administering lifesaving immunizations and health guidance, attending to the elderly, and generally addressing everyday health needs. Often, they serve as the first and only source of care within their communities.

Objectives: The objective of the study was to assess the level of knowledge regarding career options, evaluate the perceived stress level related to career decision-making, and develop and disseminate the informational pamphlet on career options and stress management interventions among nursing students in the selected college of nursing, New Delhi.

Methods: Quantitative research approach and descriptive research design were used for the proposed study. A total number of 297 samples (Nursing students) were taken through convenient sampling technique from 18 years to 25 years of selected college of nursing, New Delhi in the month of December 2025. A structured questionnaire was used to assess the knowledge related to career options and standardized Likert scale Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data.

Result: The findings revealed that a significant majority of students demonstrated a good level of knowledge regarding career-related options. Out of 297 respondents, 75.08% exhibited good knowledge, while 21.54% possessed an average level of awareness, and only 3.36% showed poor knowledge in selecting appropriate career paths. Regarding perceived stress related to career decision-making, the results indicated a varied response. Approximately 24.24% of students agreed that they experienced stress concerning their career options, and 5.72% strongly agreed with feeling such pressure. In contrast, 32.65% of the students remained neutral, 20.87% disagreed, and 14.47% strongly disagreed.

Conclusion: The result suggests that most students possess a reasonably sound understanding of available career pathways, which serves as a strong foundation for informed decision-making. However, the findings also reveal notable levels of perceived stress associated with career selection. While a considerable segment of students reported experiencing stress or pressure although this mixed pattern indicates that it is not universally experienced at high intensity.

Keywords: Career Options, Perceived Stress, Career Knowledge

Introduction

Nursing is a profession that demands significant intelligence, motivation, and determination, as stated by Karen Davison.¹ They dedicate their lives to caring for mothers and children, administering lifesaving immunizations and health guidance, attending to the elderly, and generally addressing everyday health needs. Often, they serve as the first and only source of care within their communities.² In the present day, when nursing is regarded as the most honourable and trusted profession, there were 1.79 million registered nurses and midwives, along with 786,796 auxiliary nurse midwives in India, according to data from the Indian Nursing Council (INC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) from 2014.³ The shortage of nurses continues to be one of the most significant challenges faced in India and other developing nations. Numerous nursing graduates in the past have chosen to leave the nursing profession after completing their studies, opting instead for alternative career paths. Despite improvements in working conditions and revisions to pay structures, these changes have not alleviated the nursing shortage.⁴ The current generation is focused on preparing themselves according to their preferences, often seeking higher education, relocating to different cities, and making necessary adjustments. Career planning or selecting a preferred job enhances job satisfaction, while a randomly chosen career can negatively impact both job satisfaction and the quality of care provided.⁵ The factors influencing students' decisions to enter nursing include their desire to assist others, provide care to those in need (55.5%), the ease of finding nursing jobs (44.5%), and the high regard for the profession in society (29.2%).⁶ A significant 96% of students regard nursing as a noble profession, while 88% receive support from parents and friends in their decision to pursue nursing. Additionally, 86% are driven by self-motivation, and 80% make their choice based on family influence.⁷ Nursing is inherently stressful due to its complex job demands and requirements, with high expectations and significant responsibilities identified as primary stressors. The factors contributing to stress in nursing students

consist of a deficiency in professional knowledge and skills, challenges related to patient care, assignments, and workload, the practice environment, interactions with nurse educators and nursing staff, as well as daily life. Additionally, significant sources of clinical stress for students during their clinical education include feelings of uncertainty, insufficient professional skills, anxiety regarding the potential for making mistakes or harming patients, exposure to social issues, and performance anxiety arising from the expectations of academic and clinical staff. Consequently, the current study aims to investigate the career related knowledge and stress of nursing students.⁸

Material and Methods

The quantitative research on perceived stress, career study with a descriptive research design and a convenient sampling technique. The setting of the study was Rufaida college of Nursing, Jamia Hamdard. The sample of the study comprised 297 undergraduate nursing students underlying of 20-25 years in a selected college of New Delhi. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Principal of Rufaida College of Nursing, New Delhi to conduct the research. The consent was taken from each participant. The tool was developed through an extensive review of the literature to develop the items and scoring technique. The tool was organized into 3 sections. Section A included the demographic characteristics; Section B included structured questionnaire to assess the career related options among final year student had 15 questions and Section C included structured -5-point Likert scale to assess perceived stress related to career decisions making. The validity of the tool was ensured by 9 experts. The content validity of the tool was established by obtaining expert opinions from five subject matter experts, including nursing faculty and clinical specialists. A pilot study was conducted on 29 subjects. The result of pilot study was feasible. After pilot study, the final study was conducted on 297 samples with the use of descriptive statistics for data analysis.

Results

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of sample subjects by their demographic profile (course, age, gender, religion, education of father and other, occupation of father and mother family income, reason for choosing nursing as a career and from where they come to know about nursing as a career option).

Table 2: Mean, Median, Frequency and percentage distribution of nursing students based on structured knowledge questionnaire regarding career options in Rufaida College of Nursing, New Delhi.

Table 3: Frequency and percentage distribution of nursing students based on standardized perceived stress related to career decision making scale of nursing students at a Selected College of Nursing, New Delhi.

Table I. Shows the demographic distribution of the participants

n=297

Demographic profile		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Course			
a)	B.Sc (H) Nursing	143	48
b)	DGNM	142	47.7
c)	Post Basic B.sc Nursing	13	4.4
Age			
a)	<18	11	3.73
b)	18-21	172	57.91
c)	22-25	105	35.35
d)	>25	9	3.03
Religion			
a)	Hinduism	85	28.61
b)	Islam	188	63.29
c)	Christianity	16	5.38
d)	Other	8	2.69
Gender			
a)	Male	95	31.98
b)	Female	202	68.01
c)	Other	0	0
Education of father			
a)	Illiterate	30	10.10
b)	Primary level	56	18.85
c)	Secondary level	85	28.61
d)	Graduation or above	126	42.42
Education of mother			
a)	Illiterate	60	20.20
b)	Primary level	84	28.28
c)	Secondary level	80	26.93
d)	Graduation or above	73	24.57
Occupation of father			
a)	Private job	106	35.69
b)	Government job	40	13.46
c)	Self-employee	136	45.79
d)	Homemaker	15	5.05
Occupation of mother			
a)	Private job	18	6.06
b)	Government job	20	6.73
c)	Self-employee	10	3.36

d)	Homemaker	249	83.83
Family income per month			
a)	Less than 20000	86	28.95
b)	Rs.20000-30000	73	24.57
c)	Rs.30000-40000	53	17.84
d)	Rs.40000 and above	85	28.61
How did you come to know about nursing as a career option?			
a)	School/college	35	11.78
b)	Friends/Family/Teachers	195	65.65
c)	Career guidance programme	25	8.41
d)	Newspaper/social media	11	3.70
e)	other	31	10.43
Reason for choosing nursing as a career			
a)	Personal interest	102	34.34
b)	Parental pressure	18	6.60
c)	Job opportunity	142	47.81
d)	other	35	11.78

Table 2.Shows the mean knowledge score was 11.57 and median was 12.17 in structured knowledge questionnaire on career options in nursing

n=297

S.NO	Level of knowledge	Range Score	Possible Range Score	Obtained Range Score	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Median
1	Poor	0-5	1-15	3-15	10	3.36%	11.57	12.17
2	Average	6-10			64	21.54%		
3	Good	11-15			223	75.08%		

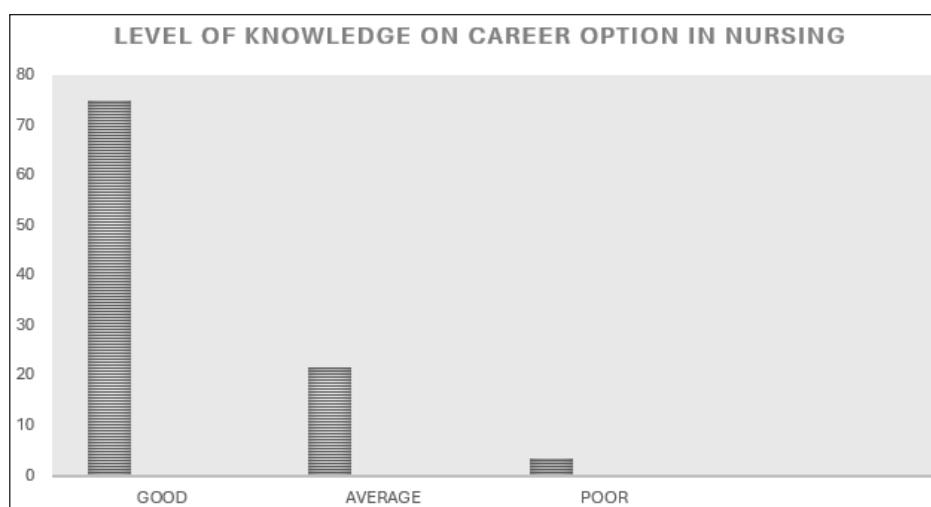


Figure 2.Bar diagram showing percentage distribution of knowledge assessment score on career options in nursing.

Items On Perceived Stress	Frequency	Percentage
I often feel down or depressed about selecting a career		
Agree	63	21.21
Strongly Agree	35	11.78
Neutral	11	3.70
Disagree	84	28.28
I often feel a sense of helplessness in selecting and planning my career		
Agree	45	15.15
Strongly agree	12	4.04
Neutral	91	30.63
Disagree	89	29.96
Strongly Disagree	60	20.20
I tend to procrastinate or avoid deciding on a career		
Agree	45	15.15
Strongly Agree	9	3.03
Neutral	88	29.62
Disagree	104	35.01
Strongly Disagree	51	17.17
I think that I should make a career decision as soon as possible, but I can't and this makes me anxious		
Agree	62	20.87
Strongly agree	20	6.73
Neutral	84	28.57
Disagree	88	2.62
Strongly Disagree	43	14.47
I feel stress or pressure to select a satisfying career		
Agree	72	24.24
Strongly Agree	17	5.72
Neutral	96	32.32
Disagree	62	20.87
Strongly Disagree	50	16.83
I frequently blame myself for something I did or did not do in selecting a career		
Agree	50	16.83
Strongly Agree	9	3.03
Neutral	97	32.65
Disagree	83	27.94
Strongly Disagree	58	1.52
I Tend To Smooth Over Any Career Problem And Pretend It Does Not Exist		

Agree	38	12.79
Strongly Agree	6	2.02
Neutral	111	37.37
Disagree	85	28.61
Strongly Disagree	57	1.19
I don't have the special talents to follow my first career choice		
Agree	64	21.48
Strongly Agree	8	2.69
Neutral	97	32.65
Disagree	79	26.59
Strongly Disagree	49	16.49
I influential person's disapproval of my career choice hinders me from seeking the job		
Agree	41	13.80
Strongly Agree	10	3.36
Neutral	98	32.99
Disagree	89	29.96
Strongly Disagree	59	19.86
I spend time everyday thinking about selecting a job and what I might do about it		
Agree	57	19.19
Strongly Agree	17	5.72
Neutral	90	30.30
Disagree	89	29.96
Strongly Disagree	44	14.81
I often find it difficult to cope with stress related to my career decisions		
Agree	54	18.18
Strongly Agree	14	4.71
Neutral	93	31.31
Disagree	88	29.62
Strongly Disagree	48	16.16
I often feel nervous and stress about my job placement		
Agree	68	22.89
Strongly Agree	18	6.06
Neutral	100	33.67
Disagree	68	22.89
Strongly Disagree	43	14.47
I feel confident about choosing nursing as a career option		
Agree	91	30.63
Strongly Agree	41	13.80
Neutral	94	31.64
Disagree	32	10.77
Strongly Disagree	39	13.13

I feel capable of making career decisions on my own		
Agree	100	33.67
Strongly Agree	37	12.45
Neutral	94	31.64
Disagree	33	11.1
Strongly disagree	33	11.11
I believe I have the skills and talents needed to succeed in my choosing career		
Agree	99	33.33
Strongly Agree	41	13.80
Neutral	88	29.62
Disagree	37	12.45
Strongly Disagree	32	10.77
I feel optimistic about my future career opportunities		
Agree	98	32.99
Strongly Agree	33	11.11
Neutral	97	32.65
Disagree	37	12.45
Strongly Disagree	32	10.77
I am confident in my ability to cope with challenges related to career planning		
Agree	89	29.96
Strongly Agree	46	15.48
Neutral	97	32.65
Disagree	29	9.76
Strongly Disagree	36	12.12
I feel supported by others in my decision-making process		
Agree	87	29.29
Strongly Agree	37	12.45
Neutral	94	31.64
Disagree	40	13.46
Strongly Disagree	39	13.13

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that 48.3% of the samples were from B.Sc. (Hons.) Nursing 4th year, followed by 47.3% from DGNM 3rd year and 4.4% from Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing 2nd year. With regard to age, the maximum number of subjects (57.8%) belonged to the age group of 18–21 years, followed by 35.5% in the age group of 22–25 years, 4.25% in the age group of below 18 years, and 2.1% were above 25 years. Of Rufaida College of Nursing, New Delhi.

Knowledge Regarding Career Options The findings revealed that nursing students had varying levels of knowledge regarding career options. A proportion of nursing students

possessed adequate knowledge about career options in nursing, while others had moderate to inadequate knowledge. The variation in knowledge indicates the need for proper career guidance and awareness programs among nursing students.

Perceived Stress Related to Career The study findings showed that a majority of nursing students experienced moderate levels of perceived stress related to career decision-making. Career-related stress was associated with concerns about future job opportunities, academic pressure, and professional expectations. The findings highlight that perceived stress related to career is a significant concern among nursing students.

This study is similar to the study done by Young-Mi Jung, which conducted a cross-sectional survey on nursing students' career identity, satisfaction with major, and career stress by career decision type among nursing students' colleges in Korea. The aim of this study was to understand the career decision types of nursing college students and, accordingly, identify their career identity, satisfaction with major, and career stress. Methods: Convenience sampling was used to recruit nursing students (N = 220) attending the same college in Korea. Data were collected from May 1 to May 30, 2017. General characteristics included sex, grade, religion, extracurricular activities, and motive for their nursing major choice. The instruments included career decision type, career identity, satisfaction with major, and career stress. Results were total cases of clusters showed 79 (39.5%) individuals in the undecided-uncomfortable type, 75 (37.5%) in decided-comfortable, 32 (16.0%) in undecided-comfortable, and 14 (7.0%) in decided-uncomfortable. The results indicated statistically significant differences in grade ($P = .001$), religion ($P = .040$), nursing major selection motive ($P = .030$), career identity ($P < .001$), satisfaction with major ($P < .001$), and career stress ($P < .001$) by career decision type. The conclusion of this study was that customized career education programs should be provided to nursing students to improve their career identity and satisfaction with their major while lowering career stress, considering career decision-comfort and decidedness, along with the reasons why some students find career decisions emotionally uncomfortable.

Conclusion

The study highlights that nursing students at this stage require adequate knowledge and guidance regarding career options to manage career-related stress effectively. Therefore, the findings emphasize the importance of providing structured career guidance and supportive measures within nursing institutions to help students plan their professional future and reduce perceived stress related to career.

Conflicts of interest: None

Sources of funding: None

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