Perceptions of nursing profession: focus group interview among applicants to nursing education

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INTRODUCTION

• Perceptions guide the career choice in nursing (Hemsley-Brown and Foskett 1999; Buchan and Seccombe, 2010, Brodie et al. 2004), retention in the education (Harvey and McMurray 1997), and retention in the nursing profession (Başkale and Serçekuş 2015).

• According to recent literature review (Glerean et al. 2017) perceptions of the young people about nursing profession are outdated and don’t reflect the tasks and responsibilities of a modern nurse.

• More information about the perceptions of the nursing applicants’ is needed to support the student retention in nursing education

• This study is a part of project “Reforming Student Selection in Nursing Education (ReSSNE) which aims to produce a national and reliable student selection method for Finnish nursing education.
STUDY

PURPOSE

• To describe the nursing applicants’ perception of the nursing profession and to identify factors influencing the perception.

METHOD

• Three focus group interviews (n=18) with nursing applicants were conducted at three Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences in November 2016.

• Data were analyzed with inductive content analysis.
PERCEPTION OF THE NURSING PROFESSION

Characteristics of a nurse
- Attitude
- Working skills
- Calling
- Suitable character
- Theoretical competence
- Good general education

Content of the nursing work
- Direct nursing
- Indirect nursing
- Decision making

Nature of nursing work
- Demanding work
- Unpredictable work
- Rewarding work
- Multiprofessional teamwork
- Restricted autonomy
- Work environment’s influence
- Evidence-based practice

Career in nursing
- Employment
- Versatile career options
- Education

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FACTORs INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF THE NURSING PROFESSION

**Personal factors**
- Work experience from the field
- Experiences as patient
- Notions from healthcare
- Personal interest

**Family and friends**
- Family members
- Relatives
- Friends

**Media**
- Internet
- TV-series
- Magazines
- Radio advertisement

**Career counseling**
- Information given about professions
- Open day events at educational institutes
CONCLUSIONS

• The perception of the nursing applicants about nursing profession is more versatile and realistic compared to previous literature. Identified influencing factors were consistent with the literature.

• Nurses were described as a patient centered decision makers who conduct evidence based practice. However, the nature of nursing work was described mentally and physically stressing with limited level of autonomy. Career possibilities in nursing were not recognized.

• In the future, the evaluation of nursing applicants’ perceptions in the student selection process might lead to greater student retention.
REFERENCES


