PERCEPTION AND PREFERENCE OF NURSING PROFESSION AMONG SELECTED SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS MALE STUDENTS IN KAFANCHAN METROPOLIS, KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *The study was set out to investigate perception and preference of nursing profession among selected senior secondary schools science stream male students in Kafanchan metropolis. A descriptive survey research design was used. A convenient sampling technique was used in selecting the senior secondary schools while simple random technique was used in drawing a sample population of 186 respondents from a target population of 360 male science students. A four-sector structured questionnaire adopted from Alexander (2010) and adapted to the study setting based on the study aim, was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha and a value of 0.7 was obtained which showed that it is reliable. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Stated hypotheses were tested using IBM SPSS version 20. Findings revealed that respondents demonstrated moderately positive perception about nurses and nursing at overall mean score of 3.32 (table 2). Findings regarding career choice of respondents showed that despite the positive outlook on nurses and nursing, only but 5.5% (9) chose nursing while majority of respondents chose a wide variety of other careers topmost were Engineering and Medicine (fig.1). The findings also revealed that factors in table were all perceived as important career choice motivating factors in the respondents' career decision taking into consideration the overall mean score of 3.62. Hypotheses tested using one-way ANOVA at 5% level of significance showed a significant relationship between levels of study and perception about nurses and nursing at (Fcal=1.51; Ftab=3.00; df=2,160; p<0.05); significant relationship between perception and career choice at (Fcal=0.77; Ftab=1.38; df=33,129; p<0.05). It was recommended among others that Stake holders in Nursing education and practice should critically examine the top-ranking motivating factors of an ideal career with the view of upgrading the profession in fulfilling those factors to attract more male potential entrants.*

Keywords: Perception, Preference, Nursing Profession, Kafanchan

INTRODUCTION

Historically, Nursing has been perceived negatively by the public. Nursing, despite it advancement, is still widely perceived to be preponderantly a female profession. Globally, this perception has often discouraged the entry of qualified young men into the profession (Alexander, 2010). Even though the statistics of male registered nurses globally is very sketchy, latest statistics reveals that male nurses represent just a minute fraction

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of the nursing workforce (Alexander 2010). The perception held by public and even some nurses that nursing is meant only for female has posed a great challenge to the profession. One of the greatest things to remember about nursing is that it is a profession and not a gender. However, stereotypically nurses are mostly portrayed as females. According to Loughery (2008), young males tend to avoid carriers such as nursing due to the stereotypically association with women and are often asked the question of why they did not become a doctor instead.

Many studies worldwide report that interest in nursing among males as a carrier is low. A report by U.S census Bureau (2013) reveals that nursing profession remains overwhelmingly female, but the representation of men has, however, increased as the demand for nurses has grown over the last several decades. The study shows that the proportion of male registered nurses has more than tripled since 1970 from 2.7 percent to 9.0 percent. There were 3.5 million employed nurses in 2011, about 3.2 million of whom were female and only about 330000, as males in U.S.A. National sample survey of registered nurses in the U.S.A revealed that men are leaving nursing at a higher rate in their first four years of practice (Sprantley, 2000). Similar findings revealed that gender bias in favor of females has made matters even worse. Studies about gender issues in nursing have found out that male nurses are being stereotyped both outside and within the profession as homosexuals, low achievers and feminine (Amstrong 2011; Harding, 2007; Ehwarieme, 2016). Keogh and Olynn (2007) reported a number of barriers against men in nursing which has led to men not choosing nursing as a career. These barriers include nursing being perceived as women's work, a profession supporting the stereotypical feminine trait of nurturing, caring, domestication, and gentleness which is in contrast to the masculine characteristic of strength, aggression and dominance. Presently certain areas like obstetrics and gynecology are not still open to men. Specifically males are not admitted into basic midwifery programs. A surveyed register of college of nursing and midwifery, Kafanchan, the only available college of Nursing and Midwifery in Southern Kaduna Zone revealed that the number of male students was 23.1% of the last enrollment (37 out of 160). For those in 2nd and 3rd year, populations of males to females are 17:42; 18:32 respectively (school register, 2018)

Reports on low interest in nursing abounds. A study among upper male secondary school students in Malaysia reveals that only 8.3% (n=7) indicated an interest in pursuing the nursing carrier (Alexander, 2010). A study in Tanzania among secondary school students also show that of all health related profession; nursing was the least popular with only 9% students expressing an interest, whilst among Asian students in Australia less than 10% were interested in nursing as a profession (M.Devi& S. Devi, 2015).

Currently, nursing profession still faces challenge of having very few men and even men who take the bold step of choosing a carrier in the profession still face several challenges. Portrayal of Nursing as preponderantly a female profession taught to carry out mundane tasks as well as playing second fiddle roles to doctors has greatly affected the image of nursing in the public especially among males. The poor perception and attitude towards nursing among males has made nursing a low profile course and hinders its advancement even more. Perception is the way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted (Oxford dictionary, 2013). Attitude and perception of males toward nursing appear to depend upon the degree of knowledge, autonomy to practice and economic power nurses have. Assessing perceptions of senior secondary schools male students of nursing as well as factors that affect these perceptions is imperative as it will give clues regarding recruitment of next generation of nurses, review of curriculum and practice guidelines. Perception held by young male students about the nursing profession greatly influence the personal and public image of nursing. To improve nurses social image is to intervene in the social image of nursing that exist among males.

STATEMENT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM
Despite the historical presence of men in nursing the perception of nursing as overwhelmingly a female profession has changed very little over the years. Significant numbers of secondary school students do not still think of nursing as a profession. It appears that choice of career is made at an early age in life. Study by Foskett and Hemsley (1997) cited in (Alexander 2010) revealed that most pupils had rejected most jobs on the basis of perception. They further reported that the young people's perceptions were highly individual and are the product of images of jobs they see for themselves, those passed from parents and friends and those from the media. The dearth of literature about perceptions of senior male secondary school students about nursing and factor that influence these perceptions in Nigeria, in general, and particularly in Kaduna state, makes this study

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important. This study will add to the body of knowledge regarding societal perception about nursing and establish baseline information that will be helpful to nursing stakeholders in planning interventions that will improve the image of the profession.

AIM OF THE STUDY

General aim of the study is to determine perception and preference of nursing profession among selected senior secondary schools male students in Kafanchan metropolis. Specific objectives includes: (1) to determine senior secondary school male students perception about nursing profession in Kafanchan metropolis (2) to ascertain the preference of senior secondary school male students to nursing as a career (3) to determine the factors influencing the choice of senior secondary school male students toward nursing as a career

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

1. There is no significant statistical difference in perception of nursing across class
2. There is no significant statistical relationship between perception and preference of nursing among respondents

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive research survey design was used to assess the perception and preference of nursing profession among senior secondary school male students in Kafanchan metropolis.

Setting of the study

The study will be conducted among selected senior secondary schools male students in Kafanchan metropolis.

Target population

The science stream male students of selected senior secondary schools in Kafanchan metropolis were the target population of this study. This constitute about 306 science male senior secondary school students

Criteria for selection of sample:

Inclusion criteria:

The students who are:
- 10-24years of age
- Willing to participate in the study
- Able to speak and understand English
- Randomly sampled for the study
- And were in science stream

Exclusion criteria:

The students who are:

- Those who were outside the age range
- Those were not sampled for the study
- Those who were not in science stream

Sampling and sampling procedure

Sample size: The sample size was 186 science male students of selected senior secondary schools in Kafanchan metropolis using Krejcie and Morgan,1970 formula of $S=X^2NP(1-P)/d2(N-1)+X^2P(1-P)$, where S=Required sample size, X^2=the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841), N=the population size, P=the population proportion(assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum sample size), d=the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion(.05)

Sampling technique: Convenience sampling was used at the first stage in choosing the secondary schools for the study which included Government Secondary School, Kafanchan, Anglican Junior Seminary School, Kafanchan and Government Secondary School, Zikpak, Kafanchan. This is because the researcher has been able to negotiate access to the selected schools through existing contacts and to facilitate data collection in short duration of time taking into consideration SS3 students were about finishing writing their SSCE. Secondly, simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the sample population for the study in each school from SSS1-3.

Instrument for data collection

The instrument was adopted from Alexander (2010) and adapted to the study setting base on the study aim. The tool is a four-sector instrument. Section A comprised of the biographic data of the respondents; Section B comprised of seventeen (17) likert scale questions on perception about nurses and nursing. a scale of 1-5 was used to measure the respondents' level of perception; score below 3.0 was regarded as negative perception while a score above 3.0 was regarded as positive perception; Section C comprised of one (1) question on career choice; while Section D comprised of perceived motivating career choice factors on a 5-point likert scale which will be analyzed as important motivating factors if the mean score is above 3.0, while not important motivating factors if the score is below 3.0

Validity and Reliability

Validation of the instrument was ensured using face and content validity to ascertain its construct and content. A test-retest was conducted on 10 senior secondary school male science students of Government College Kagoro, Kaura Local Government to

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assess their perception and preference of nursing as a carrier. The data obtained were analyzed using Cronbach's alpha; the reliability was ensured at 0.69.

Method of Data collection

The structured questionnaires were self administered by the trained research assistants who were teachers in the selected schools to respondents after detailed explanation and instruction on how to fill the questionnaire

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and percentages and hypotheses tested using one-way ANOVA at 5% level of significance to compare perception of nursing to preference of nursing profession among respondents. SPSS version 20 was employed in the analysis

Ethical Consideration

The researcher ensured that ethical principles were strictly adhered while conducting the research. The study was approved by the Human Research Ethics committee of Kafanchan Education Zonal Office. Informed consent was obtained from students before giving out questionnaire for their responses following presentation of ethical clearance letter to the principals of the selected schools from the education zonal office.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

All of the 186 respondents accepted to participate in the study. Out of the 186 questionnaires administered, 167 questionnaires were returned of which four questionnaires were incompletely filled and were thus excluded from this analysis. Therefore, 163 respondents are included in this study.

Table 1: Sociodemographic characteristics of respondents

S/N	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age		
	10-14	15	9.2
	15-19	137	84.0
	20-24	11	6.7
	Mean±SD	16.8±3.39	
2	Level of study		
	SS1	54	33.1
	SS2	70	42.9
	SS3	39	23.9
	Total	163	100
3	Religion		
	Christianity	142	87.1
	Islam	19	11.7
	Traditional	2	1.2
	Total	163	100.0

Table 1 above shows that those between the ages of 15-19 years accounted for the majority (84%, n = 137). A significant number (9.2, n=15) of respondents were between the ages of 10-14 years. The average mean score (Grand mean) for age is 16.8 years.

Level of study of respondents reveals (table 1) that majority (42.9%, n=70) of respondents were in SS2 while a significant number (33.1%, n=54) of respondents were in SS1 class.

Table 1 above shows that Christian were in the majority (87.1%, n=142), significant number (11.7%, n=19) were practicing Islamic religion while 1.2% (n=2) were of the traditional faith.

Table 2: Respondents Perception about Nurses and Nursing

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean±SD
	1	2	3	4	5	
	Freq(%)	Freq(%)	Freq(%)	Freq(%)	Freq(%)	
you need good marks to get admission to study nursing	5(3.1)	5(3.1)	7(4.3)	70(42.9)	76(46.6)	4.26±0.92
a legal certificate is required to practice as a nurse	6 (3.7)	15(9.2)	17(10.4)	69(42.3)	56(34.4)	3.94±1.07
nurses provide a valuable and important service	2(1.2)	3(1.8)	12(12)	79(48.5)	66(40.5)	4.27±0.79

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nurses are highly trained and skilled professionals	5(3.1)	9(5.5)	12(7.4)	75(46.0)	62(38.0)	4.10±0.97
nurses work with high medical technology	3(1.8)	15(9.2)	29(17.8)	75(46.0)	41(25.2)	3.83±0.97
nursing is easy; anyone can be a nurse	52(31.9)	55(33.7)	21(12.9)	26(16.0)	9(5.5)	2.29±1.23
nurses only do menial tasks such as bathing, wheeling and cleaning the patient	30(18.4)	72(44.2)	25(15.3)	23(14.1)	13(8.0)	2.49±1.18
nurses do not think; they only follow doctors' orders	34(20.9)	72(44.2)	22(13.5)	23(14.1)	12(7.4)	2.43±1.18
nurses do not lack job; they get employed easily	9(5.5)	61(37.4)	28(17.2)	43(26.4)	21(12.9)	3.09± 1.37
nurses work only in hospital	20(12.3)	49(30.1)	30(18.4)	38(23.3)	26(16.0)	3.01±1.29
research is important in nursing	3(1.8)	3(1.8)	14(8.6)	80(49.1)	63(38.7)	4.21±0.82
nurses participate in development of health care policies	1(6)	9(5.5)	15(9.2)	83(50.9)	55(33.7)	4.12±0.83
nurses are paid very well	3(1.8)	22(13.5)	39(23.9)	72(44.2)	27(16.6)	3.60±.98
nurses are highly respected in Nigeria	5(3.1)	24(14.7)	35(21.5)	58(35.6)	41(25.2)	3.65±1.10
nurses are usually tired, stressed and overworked	10(6.1)	27(16.6)	28(17.2)	68(41.7)	30(18.4)	3.49±1.15
nursing is only for women	90(55.2)	48(29.4)	8(4.9)	13(8.0)	4(2.5)	1.73±1.04
the only reason any male would join nursing is because he is not smart enough to do medicine	74(45.4)	52(31.9)	19(11.7)	12(7.4)	6(3.7)	1.92±1.09
Grand mean						3.32±0.40

Table 2 is a 5-point likert scale with an average score of 3.0 (SD=1, D=2, N=3, A=4, SA=5; average score = 1+2+3+4+5/5 = 3.0). Therefore any score above the average score of 3.0 is regarded as positive perception while a score below 3.0 is regarded as negative perception.

Table 2 above shows the following five positive statements on perception about nurses and nursing receiving mean scores greater than 4, indicating a high level of agreement. Majority (46.6%, n=76) of respondents strongly agreed that 'you need good marks to get admission to study nursing'. Similarly significant number (48.5%, n=79) agreed that 'nurses provide a valuable and important service' while majority (46.0, n=75)

agreed that 'nurses are highly trained and skilled professionals'. On whether 'research is important in nursing' 48.1% (n=80) agreed to the statement. Nurses were perceived to participate in development of health care policies by majority (50.9%, n=83) of respondent who agreed to the statement.

The following five positive statements received a mean score slightly above 3.0 indicating moderately positive perception. Those respondents who agreed that a 'legal certificate is required to practice nursing' were in the majority (42.3%, n=69). Majority (46.0%, n=75) of respondents agreed that 'nurses are paid very well'. For the statement 'nurses are highly respected in Nigeria' majority (35.6%, n=58) surprisingly agreed to the statement

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unfortunately, the positive statement 'nurses do not lack job; they get employed easily 'was disagreed by the majority (37.4%, n=61) of respondents.

The five negative statements below received a low mean score of below 3.0 indicating disagreements. 'Nursing is only for women' was strongly disagreed upon by the majority (55.2%, n=90) of respondents. Almost half (33.7%, n=55) of respondents disagreed to the statement that 'nursing is easy; anyone can be a nurse' while majority (45.4%, n=74) of respondents strongly disagreed that 'the only reason any male would join nursing is because he is not smart enough to do medicine'.

Both, 'nurses only do menial task such as bathing, wheeling and cleaning the patients', 'nurses do not think; they only follow doctors orders' were disagreed by the majority (4s4.2%, n=72) of respondents.

Interestingly, the negative statement 'nurses are usually tired, stressed and overworked' received a mean score slightly above 3.0 indicating agreement as majority (41.7%, n=68) of respondents agreed to the statement.

Table 2 above shows an average overall mean score (Grand mean) of 3.32, slightly above the average mean score of 3.0 indicating a general perception about nurses and nursing by the respondents to be moderately positive.
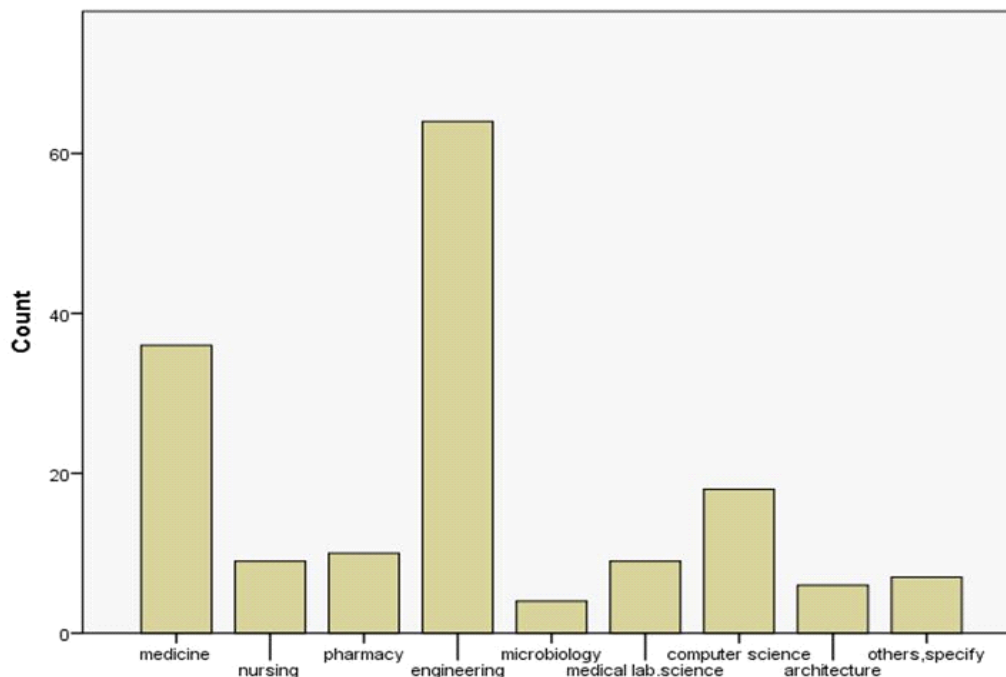

Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents According to their Career Interest.

As seen in Figure 1 those who indicated interest in pursuing nursing as a career where only (5.5%, n=9); the remaining 94.5% (n=91) of respondents were interested in a variety of careers as seen in the above figure (1). The prominent career interests were

engineering (39.3%, n=64), Medicine (22.1%, n=36), Computer Science (11.0%, n=18), Pharmacy (6.1%, n=10), Medical Laboratory Sciences (5.5%, n=9), Architecture (3.7%, n=6), Microbiology (2.5%, n=4) and others (4.3%, n=7).

Table 3: Respondents' career choice motivating factors

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Statements	not important at all 1 Freq(%)	less important 2 Freq(%)	Neutral 3 Freq(%)	Important 4 Freq(%)	very important 5 Freq(%)	Mean±SD
Passion	13(8.0)	15(9.2)	12(7.4)	38(23.3)	85(52.1)	4.02±1.30
Good salary/economic power	1(0.6)	4(2.5)	21(12.9)	43(26.4)	94(57.7)	4.38±0.85
Low stress	32(19.6)	21(12.9)	55(33.7)	36(22.1)	19(11.7)	2.93±1.27
Power/Leadership	10(6.1)	15(9.2)	27(16.6)	72(44.2)	39(23.9)	3.71±1.12
Prestige/Respect	2(1.2)	8(4.9)	13(8.0)	54(33.1)	86(52.8)	4.31±0.91
opportunity for advancement	7(4.3)	6(3.7)	19(11.7)	62(38.0)	69(42.3)	4.10±1.03
Marketability	5(3.1)	21(12.9)	42(25.8)	45(27.6)	50(30.7)	3.70±1.13
Autonomy	5(3.1)	19(11.7)	46(28.2)	56(34.4)	37(22.7)	3.79±2.53
Professionalism	1(0.6)	3(1.8)	9(5.5)	40(24.5)	110(67.5)	4.56±0.74
Grand mean						3.62±0.56

Table 3 is the representation of career choice motivating factors among respondents. The table is a 5-point likert scale with an average score of 3.0; a score above 3.0 is regarded as important career choice motivating factor while a score below 3.0 is regarded as not important career choice motivating factor.

The following five motivating factors received a mean score of slightly above 4.0 indicating that they are important motivating factors to the respondent's choice of career. Those respondents who perceived 'passion' as a very important career motivating factors were in the majority (52.1%, n=85). Similarly, 'good salary/economic power' was perceived as a very important career choice motivating factor by a majority (57.7%, n=94) of respondents while 'opportunity for advancement' received 42.3% (n=69) of respondents indicating it as 'very important' factor. 'Prestige/respect' was indicated 'very important' by majority (52.8%, n=86) of respondents while 'professionalism' was rated 'very important' by more than half (62.5%, n =110) of the respondents.

Three factors below received a mean score of moderately above 3.0 indicating they are somewhat important career choice motivating factors. 'Power/ leadership' was rated 'important' by majority (44.2%, n=72) of respondents. Similarly majority (30.7%, n=50) of respondents rated 'marketability' as 'very important' career motivating factor while 34.4% (n=56) indicated autonomy as 'important' motivating factor in career choice.

Interestingly, 'low stress' received predominantly 33.7% (n=55) neutral rating suggesting respondents indifference to stress associated with career as far as it pays which underscore the Nigeria poor standard of living and unemployment rate. Taking into consideration the overall mean score of 3.62, the listed factors in table 3 are therefore important motivating factors in career choice as perceived by the respondents.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

ANOVA Table1

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	Source of variations	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Percepdivi*Level of study	Between Groups (combined) Within Groups Total	.470 24.853 25.323	2 160 162	.235 .155	1.51	0.22

From the above ANOVA table, Fcal(1.51)≤ Ftab(3.00) at p<0.05, hence the null hypothesis is rejected; there is significant difference in perception about nurses and nursing across level of study.

ANOVA Table2

	Source of variations	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Career choice*Percepdivi	Between Groups(combined) Within Groups Total	138.125 704.869 842.994	33 129 162	4.186 5.464	0.77	0.811

From the ANOVA table above, Fcal(0.77)≤ Ftab(1.38) at p<0.05, hence the null hypothesis is rejected; there is significant statistical relationship in perception about nurses and nursing and career choice among respondents.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS
Finding from the study conducted among senior secondary school male students in Kafanchan metropolis revealed that 137 (84%) of the respondents were within the age of 15-19 years, while 15(9.2%) of respondents were within the age of 10-14years. A total of 70 (42.9%) of the respondents were in SS2 while 54 (33.1%) respondents were in SS1 Class. Respondents of Christian faith were 142 (87.1%) while those practicing Islam accounted for 19 (11.7%).

Study findings also revealed that male senior secondary school students of science stream in Kafanchan metropolis hold moderately positive views about nurses and nursing with some level of misconceptions. Respondents were knowledgeable of the educational requirement of nursing, need for licensing to practice as a nurse as well as aspects of appropriate socialization and research in nursing, including being respected, valuable members of health care team providing valuable services. Similarly, potential entrants also perceived nurses as highly respected in Nigeria and are paid very well. The reality is that nursing is doubtfully respected in Nigeria due to the negative portrayals with many nurses underemployed and overburdened with unclear mundane roles. The positive perception of nurses being highly paid and respected in Nigeria is likely due to the perceived relative economic power nurses have compared to their counterparts in education who spent same 3 years obtaining NCE certification as nurses who did basic nursing and midwifery obtaining registered nursing/midwifery certificates.

One of the misconceptions expressed by the respondents is that nursing is stressful and nurses are usually tired and overworked. Nursing can be stressful in situation of acute shortage during which a nurse may man 2 wards. Alexander (2016) showed that having to work long and inflexible hours discouraged potential entrants from choosing nursing as a career. Mkhize and Nzimande (2007) also found that difficult work and emotional challenges distracted people from choosing nursing as a career. The reality is that most civil servants in Kafanchan metropolis work 8-10 hours every day but nurses only work 7-hours and below shifts with occasional night offs.

Generally, male senior secondary school students of science stream in Kafanchan metropolis perceived nursing and nurses as a respected profession for both sexes, requiring high educational qualification; a trained, skilled professionals who are paid very well, respected in Nigeria and are stressed, usually tired and overworked in providing valuable services taken into consideration the overall mean score of 3.32 as seen in table 2.

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Alexander (2010) corroborated this finding by concluding that nurses are knowledgeable and skilled professional who provide valuable service. However, a study in Nigeria reported that nursing profession attracts generally a negative attitude from potential entrants (Ehwarieme et al, 2016).

Despite the positive perception on nurses and nursing expressed by the respondents and the presence of College of Nursing and midwifery in the metropolis vast majority of the respondents were not interested in selecting nursing as a career. This is likely because of the fact that perception does not always translate into positive behavior and the misconception of nursing education being only offered at the basic level against the interest of many potential applicants in pursing university-based education. Similar findings were reported by Alexander (2010) who showed that students were not interested in pursuing nursing as a career despite the positive outlook on nursing. Foskett and Hemsley-Brown (1999) had found out that although young people expressed admiration for the work of nurses, this was rarely matched by an envy of nurses, or desire to become a nurse themselves. Furthermore, study on knowledge, attitudes and intention of high school students towards the nursing profession reported a low score in attitude dimension and a very low score on the intention of being a nurse (Al.Omar, 2014).

Findings regarding career choice motivating factors revealed the following career choice motivating factors receiving an overall mean score of 3.62 indicating how important motivating factors they are in the choice of an ideal career among respondents. Prominent among the factors are passion, good salary/economic power, prestige/respect, opportunity for advancement, autonomy and professionalism with 'low stress' receiving neutral rating. Nursing probably did not attract much interest from the respondents because they must have adjudged nursing profession failing to fulfill most of the top-ranking motivating factors of an ideal career. It was Loughrey (2008) who reported that an ideal career is defined by three variables: autonomy, economic power and knowledge. Similarly Kleinan (2005) opined that the low enrollment into nursing is due to the low economic status, poor salary, and value giving to nurses as compared to other professions.

SUMMARY

The study was set out to investigate perception and preference of nursing profession among selected senior secondary schools' male students in Kafanchan metropolis, Kaduna State, North Nigeria. From the data collected and analyzed, it has been shown that respondents demonstrated moderately positive perception towards nurses and nursing; however, despite the positive outlook on nursing and the presence of College of nursing and midwifery in the metropolis, vast majority of respondents did not indicate interest in pursuing nursing as a career which is translated to low male enrolment in nursing. Preponderance of the respondents were interested in the wide variety of careers, topmost were engineering and medicine. Motivating factors to respondent careers decisions included good salary, passion, autonomy, opportunity for advancement and professionalism. For gender imbalance to be addressed and nursing profession to attain the topmost position in the loop of health care professions, all top-ranking variable of an ideal profession that nursing has fail to fulfill thus hindering men from enrolling as well causing them to leave the profession have to be critically examined by all stakeholders in nursing education and practice

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis and discussion of findings, the following conclusions are made:

1. There exists significant statistical difference in perception about Nurses and Nursing across levels of study

2. There is also a significant statistical relationship between means of perception about nurses and Nursing and means of career choice among respondents

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Stakeholders in Nursing education and practice should critically examine the top-ranking motivating factors of an ideal career with the view of upgrading the profession in fulfilling those factors to attract more male potential entrants

- Administrators of nursing/midwifery schools, departments of Nursing should expand slot for increased enrollment of males into the profession as well as focus on special incentive in marketing nursing to male students

- Young adult are said to form image of an ideal career at very young age from what they see in media and from their modelled parents and significant others. NANNM should liaise with media houses on the need for appropriate representation of nurses regarding the unique role of nurses, their educational requirement and qualification and enormous opportunities available in

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nursing instead of the prevailing negative portrayals of Nurses and Nursing.

- University-based education should be embraced by administrators of nursing programs to upgrade the certificate of Nursing as well as the image of the profession through the acquisition of appropriate, University-based knowledge unique to a profession.

- Nursing programs' administrators, in collaboration with career counselors in Secondary Schools should engage in extensive sensitization campaigns to correct misconceptions already internalized by these potential entrants about nursing. 'Career counseling day' could be organized where these students have one-on-one talks with invited nurses and student nurses, especially males to correct such misconceptions.

- Student nurses, especially the ones in College of Nursing and Midwifery, Kafanchan should engage in organizing occasional 'health week' where they go into strategic places and institutions in the metropolis to further acquaint populace and potential entrants of the unique roles of nurses and the opportunities enshrined in the profession

Conflict of Interest

The Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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