

## **INTRODUCTION**

The nursing profession exists in response to a need of society and holds ideals related to human health throughout the life span (*Craven and Hirnle, 2008*). Nursing is a profession focused on assisting individuals, families, and communities in attaining, maintaining, and recovering optimal health and functioning. Modern definitions of nursing define it as a science and art that focuses on promoting quality of life as defined by persons, and families throughout their life experiences from birth to care at the end of life (*Ironside, 2004*).

Nursing relies on arrangement of knowledge from different disciplines including biology, sociology and psychology. The creation of a body of knowledge that is distinct to nursing is vital to establish nursing as a profession (*Lake and Snyder, 2008*). The four broad aims of nursing practice can be identified from the definitions of nursing, which include wellness promotion, the prevention of illness, restoring of health and facilitating coping to meet these aims (*Spouse and Cox, 2008*).

The word nurse originated from the Latin word *nutrix*, meaning to nourish. Definitions of nurse describe one who nourishes, fosters, and protects, a person prepared to take care

of the sick, injured, and aged people. However, the expanding roles and functions of the nurse in today's society have made any one definition too limited (*Harrison, 2009*).

Nurses provide care to a number of different parties, namely individual patients, families and communities as a whole. This nursing care usually involves a combination of the following areas, promoting health, preventing illness, restoring health and care of the dying (*Kozier and Erb, 2008*). This primary role of the nurse as caregiver is given shape and substance by the interrelated roles of communicator, teacher, counselor, leader, researcher and advocate (*Spouse and Cox, 2008*).

The professional nurse assures that he/she stays well educated in the field he/she is working in. This is achieved through continuing education and self study or research. The professional nurse must assure that he/she does not cross nurse-patient boundaries. The nurse must display empathy without becoming personally involved with patients. With empathy, the nurse is in a better state of mind to be most helpful to the patient. The professional nurse must display good work ethics including showing up for work on time, being a preceptor for new staff, and treating peers and administration with respect and courtesy (*Ulrich, 2004*).

The perception of nursing concept for people has a negative effect on nursing education, leading to decrease the numbers of students' who select the nursing school, this lead to the shortage of nursing staff. Such shortage negatively affected nurses ability to provide patient care and a growing number of studies demonstrate a relationship between low hospital nurse staffing and increased risk of adverse patient outcome (*Buerhaus et al., 2005*).

Recruiting students into nursing is a business that requires long-term strategies for all educators and providers. Recruitment will be more effective if potential consumers of nursing services are involved. Professional nurses can work through community organizations to involve the community in changing the image of nursing and in the recruitment effort. The image of nursing should reflect the qualifications and credentials of caregivers that provide safe, effective care to individuals and communities (*Shattel.,Mody ., Hawkins .,and Creasia.2002* ).

Shortage of nursing which may be a result from bad and negative image could be solved by improving image through awareness recruitment campaign (*Donnelly and Gibson, 2005*).

### *Significance of the Study:*

The recruitment to nursing education could be influenced by many factors. Among these factors is the negative or incorrect image the society has of the nursing profession. Such image could negatively shape the attitudes of patients, policy-makers, as well as applicant students and their parents. Mass media may also influence the opinion of future recruits and shape the attitudes of general public, either positively or negatively. A previous study by *Salman (2001)* in selected preparatory and secondary schools found that students had inadequate knowledge regarding some aspects of the nursing profession as meaning, roles, work opportunities, and the advantages of this profession. Moreover, they considered nursing as a non-respectable profession. This reflects the negative public attitude towards nursing profession. Nonetheless, nothing was done to change this negative image, especially among school students among whom many would be potential future nurses if they perceive the reality of nursing profession. Therefore, this research is an attempt to enlighten the perception of preparatory school students regarding nursing profession through a short-term school based program, which may attract students to choose nursing as a career.

## **AIM OF THE STUDY**

This study aim is to assess the effect of a nursing awareness program on preparatory school students' perception of the nursing profession.

### **Objectives**

- 1- To assess the perception of preparatory school students towards nursing profession before the awareness program.
- 2- To implement the awareness program .
- 3- To re-assess the perception of these students towards nursing profession after the awareness program.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### **Nursing as a Profession:**

The word "Nursing" is derived from the Latin word "nutire" which means "to nourish". Thus, the nursing profession from its earliest beginnings has evolved in response to human needs. It is the responsiveness to the needs of others that has allowed the diversity within nursing to flourish (*Sussman, 2003*). Moreover, definitions of nursing are apart, sometimes implicit, sometimes explicit, of code of ethics, specifications of the scope of nursing practice, and education curricula (*Dunham, 2006*).

Nursing is the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnoses and treatment of human response, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities, and populations (*American Nurse Association, 2003*).

In the past, nursing was based on principles borrowed from the physical, biological, social sciences and other disciplines. Today, nursing is a professional discipline with a unique body of knowledge and skills complementary to other health care professions relies on research as a basis for

practice. It's in order to help people adopt a healthy life style, to enable them to cope with their health problems and to care for them during illness in ways which promote, maintain health and healing and minimize disability (*Chitty, 2000*).

The mission of nursing in society is to help individuals, families and groups to determine and achieve their physical, mental and social potential, and to do so within the challenging context of the environment in which they live and work. These require nurses to develop and perform functions that relate to the promotion and maintenance of health as well as the prevention of illness. Nursing also includes the planning and implementation of care during illness and rehabilitation and encompasses the physical, mental and social aspects of life as they affect health, illness, disability and dying (*Dukes, 2003*).

The advancing technology in the health care field, the diverse areas of specialization, and the distinct practice settings, require nurses to play key roles in promoting higher standards of health care services. They are a critical part of a well functioning hospital staff, and physicians rely on and work with them to provide effective care (*Cherry and Jacop, 2002*).

The word profession is an abstract term, referring to a broad category of an organized occupation. Profession is a

word that is assigned by society to an occupational group. The use of the word profession technically means that the members of an occupational group have met all the criteria that are generally acknowledged to be necessary to meet the definition of all profession (*Ulrich, 2004*).

Profession is defined as an occupation that requires extensive education or a calling that requires special knowledge, skills and preparation. A profession is generally distinguished from other kinds of occupations by its requirement of prolonged, specialized training, body of knowledge based on research, autonomy and a regulatory professional body (*Abd Elkader, 2004*).

Profession is defined as a prestigious occupation with a high degree of identification among the members that requires a lengthy and rigorous education in an intellectually demanding and theoretically based course of study (*Carroll, 2003*). Nursing as a profession has been defined by the Canadian Nurse Association (CAN) as a profession exists in response to need of society and holds ideal related to human health throughout the life span (*Ulrich, 2004*). It also a dynamic profession that has evolved into a theory and research-based practice from its unorganized and poorly defined beginnings. This profession is based on the framework of



competence, autonomy, determination and human caring has evolved (*Andrew,2003*).

A profession is autonomous if it regulates itself and sets standards for its members. So if a job is to have status, it must function autonomously in the formation of policy and in the control of its activity (*Ulrich, 2004*).

Professionals are expected to show a degree of special attainment, altruism, and self –sacrifice in their dealings with the rest of the community and in return receive privileges both in the workplace and at large (*Bryan – Brown and Dracup,2003*).

Professionals have a high degree of self-control of their behavior and are governed by a code of ethics. The code of ethics is a statement of values. The code ensures a high quality of service. It guarantees competency of membership, honor and integrity as well as protection of the client or patron. The code is a direct expression of the professions' principles of service orientation (*Donnelly and Gibsona, 2005*).

Professionalism is not referred to as frequently as profession in literature. It has been defined as a set of attributes among the characteristics of professional. Professionalism is behavior that upholds the status, methods, character, and standards of a given profession (*Florida,2001*).

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Profession has the following eight characteristics: The services provided are vital to human beings and the welfare of society. There exists a special body of knowledge that undergoes continual growth through research., The services provided involve intellectual activities and individual responsibility or accountability, practitioners receive education in institutions of higher learning, practitioners have autonomy and control their own policies and activities, they are motivated by the service, practitioners decisions and conduct are guided by a code of ethics, high standards of practice are encouraged and supported by an organization (*Spous, 2008*).

The evolution of nursing into a profession was characterized by attributes of critical thinking and decision-making that were formerly deemed unsuitable. It has developed and refined its own unique approach to practice, called the nursing process. The nursing process is essentially a cognitive "mental" activity that requires both critical and creative thinking and serves as the basis for providing nursing care. Autonomy, or control over one's practice, is a controversial area for nursing. Many nursing actions are dependent by requiring nurses to perform certain actions only where authorized by the physicians or hospital protocols. Also, there is a code of ethics in nursing profession to provide

professional standards and a framework for decision-making that help nurses to act with integrity (*McDonald, 2001*).

## **Professional Nursing Roles**

In the past, a nurse's role consisted of providing care and comfort to clients and performing specific nursing functions. The role of modern nursing has expanded to include a heightened emphasis on illness prevention, health promotion, and concern for the client's holism. Today's nurse engages in approximately eight interrelated roles: caregiver, advocate, critical thinker, teacher, communicator, manager, researcher, and rehabilitator (*Berry, 2004*).

Historically, the sole duties of nurse was to provide care and comfort to the sick; but as technology, knowledge, health promotion and prevention have expanded, so have the roles and functions of the nurse. Nursing was once a passive but now nursing is a profession of competent and professional participates as valued member of the healthcare team. Contemporary nursing requires that the nurse possesses knowledge and skills in a variety of areas. The contemporary nurse functions in the interrelated roles of caregiver, clinical and ethical decision maker, client advocate, case manager, communicator and teacher (*Godfrey et al,1999*).

There are many roles in nursing. Nurse cares for the patient, carries out the procedure ordered by the doctor and collaborates with doctor and other team members, and assesses the patient and treats his\her problems. The nurse coordinates the work of the others involved in the caring for the patient including the patients family. The nurse also protects the patient, working to prevent infection and ensure a save healthy environment. Finally, the nurse teaches the patient and his family about health–related matters and advocating them if necessary (*Spratley et al, 2002*).

As healthcare providers, nurse function in a variety of roles to give holistic client care and to develop as members of the nursing profession. These roles include care provider, communicator, leader, teacher, and researcher. These roles are interdependent and each is an integral part of the broad nursing role of caregiver. The nurse uses these roles to help clients of all ages to meet needs along the health continuum (*Taylor et al, 2005*).

### **Nurse as Caregiver**

Caring is the heart of nursing, nursing care for patients continuously 24 hours a day (*Turner et al, 2002*). The basic role of professional nurse is a caregiver; the nurse assesses client resources, strengths and weakness, coping behavior and

environment to optimize the problem solving and self-care abilities of patient and family (*Fagerbery et al, 2000*). The nurse provides a holistic approach to care, including assisting the client and family in coping with physical, emotional, social and spiritual impacts of the illness (*Potter and Perry, 2001*). Whether the client is defined as the individual, family, or community, nursing care proceeds along similar lines through using the nursing process, which involves assessment, nursing diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation (*Nettina, 2001*).

The nurse provider, as caregiver, combines the art of caring and the science of nursing to meet the holistic needs of individual, families and communities through collaboration with other health professionals. The caring role of nurse is defined as the role of human relations. The chief goal of the nurse in this role is to convey understanding about what is important and to provide support. Caring is central to most nursing interventions and an essential attribute of the expert nurse (*Timby,2001*).

### **Nurse as Communicator**

Central to all other roles is the role of communicator. The nurse spends most time with the patient; she\he has responsibility for communicating findings to healthcare team

in oral or written form. The quality of communication is a critical factor in meeting patients' healthcare needs. The nurse must be knowledgeable, articulate, and capable of effective written and verbal expression. The nurse communicates to other healthcare personnel, the nursing interventions planned and implemented for each client. Nurses communicate pertinent information verbally at different situations as change of shift reports, when clients are transferred to another unit, at client rounds, and when clients are discharged to other healthcare agencies (*Kenworthy et al, 2001*). Also, the nurse must use effective interpersonal and therapeutic communication skills to establish and maintain relationships with clients (*Campione,2000*).

### **Nurse as Teacher**

The nurse's role as educator is trying to help a population get the most accurate information working to minimize the impact of health problems on the client and family, making sure that they are not isolated, and empowering them to be active agents in their healthcare. Nurse as educator provides the people with information, knowledge or skills that they are in need to make appropriate choices and decisions (*Pollit and Beck, 2004*).

As teacher, the nurse explains to client's concepts and facts about health, demonstrates procedures such as self-care activities. The nurse provides clients and family members with information about health, treatment or therapy, and lifestyle changes. As a teacher, the nurse determines if the client understands the information presented and reinforces the learning as necessary. The nurse then evaluates the client's progress toward health-related goals. The nurse uses teaching methods that are compatible with the clients knowledge, education, capabilities and needs and incorporates other resources, such as the family, in teaching plans (*Spous, 2008*).

Nurses have many teaching roles. They may teach individual learners, such as patient who need instruction about treatment ;or they may teach groups of learners, such as prospective parents enrolled in Lamaze class. They also teach different types of learners'. They teach health professionals, including other nurses and physicians. They teach healthcare assistant in various setting, including patient care assistants, home health aids and others. Nurses also teach in the community, providing instruction in disease and injury prevention and health promotion (*Blais et al, 2006*).