



© International Journal of
Human Sciences

ISSN: 1303-5134
www.insanbilimleri.com/en

Volume: 4 Issue: 1 Year: 2007

A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE NURSING ACADEMICIANS IN TURKEY*

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Abstract

Nursing; is a profession and a discipline composed of science and arts aiming to protect/develop human health. The occupational basics of the Nursing profession consist of questing methods including experimental, aesthetic and individual data and ethics. Dealing with these questing methods scientifically, in its full sense started in our country after Nursing Schools were founded. With the start of master's and doctorate programmes in 1968 and 1972, today countless researchers and academicians have recorded important progress in various majors in terms of academic study. This study was planned as descriptive to specify the reasons of nursing academicians for choosing their majors and the problems they encounter throughout their academic studies. The questionnaire was sent to the departments relevant to nursing in Turkish state universities via e-mail. Information about the survey was given, and those wishing to participate in the questionnaire did so on the web. 78 academician, from 30 different state universities participated in the research. The average age of the participants is 32.5 ± 5.1 , 51% are single, 32% are associate professors and 68% are educational staff. 87% of the participants have occupational experience as health care professionals. 24% of the participants have bachelor's degree, 27% have master's degree 22% have doctoral degree from Hacettepe University. 96% of the participants are graduates of Nursing Department. 21% of the participants are graduates from the department of obstetric and gynecological nursing. 13% of the participants are doctorate graduates of the department of internal medicine nursing doctoral.

* This study has been accepted as a poster announcement in Third International Nursing Management Congress (9-11 November, 2006) and it has been published in congress book as a full text

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It was detected that the interest in the major constitutes some 37 % of the Nursing Academicians' reasons for choosing Master's degree. 54% of the research group chose their PHD programme for it is the continuation of their master's degree. For their PHD programme 13% of the participants changed their major after their master's degree and this change occurred because of the lack of nursing and/or their major program at doctorate level in the city they live. 92% stated that the reason for their academic carrier is contribute to the development of the profession by completing their self-development. The lack of academic staff, insufficiency in language skills, being unable to spare time due to excessive work, the psychological pressure and conflicts within the office, and financial asperity are among the main problems in the pursuit of academic career. Consequently, the resolution of the problems experienced by nursing academicians, through conclusive steps, will improve the desired future vision and mission of the profession both academically and in terms of nursing as regards the health care system.

Keywords: Academic nurses, Carrier, Majors, Turkey

I. Introduction

Nursing is a profession or discipline consisting of science and arts aiming to protect and improve human health. The occupational basics of nursing consist of questing methods including experimental, aesthetic, individual knowledge and ethics. The complete scientifically interest in these interrogative methods has begun after the foundation of Nursing Vocational High School in our country. Today innumerable researchers and academicians have made important progress academically in different main branches with the beginning of doctorate programmes in 1972 and post-graduate education in 1968^{1,2}. Master's being 4 terms (2 terms theoretical/practical+2 terms thesis period) and doctorate being 8 terms (4 terms theoretical/practical+4 terms thesis period), post-graduate education of Nursing in Turkey is given at master's level in 35 state universities and at doctorate level in 7 state universities.

It is expected that Turkey also will play an active role in nursing together with the other countries providing doctorate education. This study forms a model for determining difficulties nursing academicians face during their education and reasons of them for selecting certain majors for their post- graduate studies. According to the statistics of Higher Education Institute

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(YÖK) for the education period 2005-2006, totally 641 academic staff (44 Professors, 32 Associate Professors, 143 Assistant Professors, 225 Lecturers, 22 Instructors and 165 research assistants) are employed in nursing and Health Schools in Turkey.³

II. Material- Methods

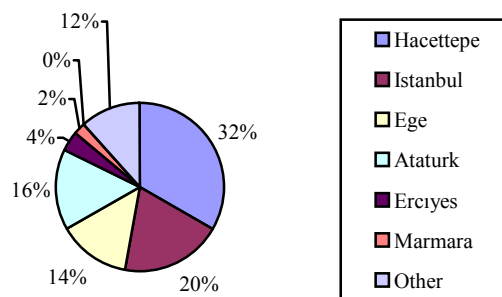
This study has been planned as descriptive in order to specify the difficulties which nursing academicians in Turkey experience while making career, and their reasons for selecting certain majors. The research was carried out between April and June 2006. The survey was sent via e-mail to the academicians and the members of higher education in nursing departments in state universities of Turkey. In the survey are 24 questions. 4 of them; nursing academicians' socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, marital status, the city they live in) and 16 including individual features (academic name, university to be registered, clinical experience in the past, duration and place of the experience, license programs to be graduated, license department to be graduated year of completing license university where higher education is studied, department of higher education, year of completing higher education position of change of branch for doctorate after higher education, branch of doctorate transferred, university of doctorate, department of doctorate, year of completing doctorate) are both close ended questions and there are four open ended ones including the reasons for making academic career, the difficulties encountered during the career, and the reasons for selecting the major of master's programme and that of doctorate. The information on research was given and the participants wishing participate in the survey did so via web. The filled survey forms were evaluated through SPSS 10,0 packet programmer.

III. Findings

78 academic personnel from 30 state universities participated in the survey. The average age of the participants is $32,9 \pm 5,1$ (24-46 age), 51% unmarried, and 32% of them work as university lecturers, 68% of them as members of higher education serve. 87 percent of the participants have occupational experience as health-care professionals previously (table 1). 24% of them completed Bachelor's, 27 % of them completed Master's programme, 32% of them completed doctorate programme at Hacettepe University (graphic 1).

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Graphic 1.The Participants Have Completed Doctorate Programme at Universities



96% of the participants are graduates of Nursing, 21% of them of gynecological diseases and maternal nursing department at master's level, 13 % of them of the department of medical nursing at doctorate level. It was detected that the interest in the major constitutes some 37 % of the Nursing Academicians' reasons for choosing Master's degree. 54% of the survey group selected doctorate program for its being the continuation of the Master's degree (Table 1).

Table.1- The Socio-demographic Characteristics of Participants

	n	%
Title		
Professor	2	2.6
Associate Professor	2	2.6
Assistant Professor	21	26.9
University Lecturer	24	30.8
Research Assistant	28	35.9
Specialist	1	1.3
Total	78	100.0
Professional Experience		
Have	68	87.2
Have Not	10	12.8
Total	78	100.0
Department of License Graduated		
Nursing	75	96.2
Midwifery	3	3.8
Total	78	100.0
Reason of Selection of Higher Educate Department		
Interest in main branch selected	29	37,2
Branch Congenial to Professional experience	20	25,7
The only section in the university studied	10	12,8

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The others(The section which is difficult in license education, vacancy in the section in adequacy of alternatives)	19	24,3
Total	78	100,0
Department of Higher Education Graduated		
First principles and bases of nursing	11	14.1
Nursing of Internal Medicine	13	16.7
Nursing of Surgical Diseases	7	9
Nursing of Obstetric and Gynecologic	16	21
Nursing of Infantile Diseases	7	9
Nursing of Public Health	11	14.1
Nursing of Psychiatry	9	10,5
Management in Nursing	3	3.8
Teaching in Nursing	1	1.3
Total	78	100.0

15% of them changed their majors for the doctorate program after master's degree program and this change resulted from the fact that there is no doctorate programme in nursing or/and in their master's major in the city they live. 92% of the participants stated that they had made career in order to contribute to the improvement of the profession by completing their individual development.

They experienced difficulties because of academic career, financial hardships, difficulties of research, participating in the permanent staff of university lecturers, inadequacy of the members of university education, difficulty of serving as a nurse in a clinic while making career and the others (negative behaviors of the members of university education, infighting atmosphere, psychological pressure, wrong, unjust and emotional approach of managers, abundance of procedure (table 2).

Table 2-The Distribution of the reasons for selecting the major and the difficulties encountered

	n	%
Changing Branch After Higher Education		
Yes	10	15.2
No	56	84.8
Total	66	100.0
Reason of Changing Branch After Higher Education		
There not being doctorate program in the province to be lived	5	50
Believing in selecting incorrect branch of higher education	5	50
Total	10	100.0
Branch Changed After Higher Education		
The other nursing out of branch of higher education ABD	6	60
Basic medical sciences	4	40
Total	10	100.0
Reason of Selecting the Branch of Doctorate		
There being continuation of the branch of higher education	42	54,0

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The others(there being no doctorate program in nursing in the province, the will of attending a PhD program in basic medical sciences)	9	11,4
Not attending a PhD program	27	34,6
Total	78	100,0
Reason of Making Career in Nursing		
To contribute to the improvement of his/her profession and individual development	72	92,3
The others(to be sidelined as a nurse, negative attitudes of head nurses during working hours)	6	7,7
Total	78	100,0
Difficulties Faced With During Making Career*		
Having no problem	10	9,2
The lowest passing grade of foreign language and postgraduate entrance exam	14	13,0
Obligation of changing province for doctorate	12	11,2
Financial staitis	10	9,2
Search difficulties	21	19,5
To participate in the permanent stuff of university lecturer	8	7,4
Inadequacy of university lecturer	6	5,5
Difficulty of serving as a nurse in clinic during making career	12	11,2
The others(negative attitudes of university lecturers, infighting atmosphere, psychological pressure, wrong unjust and emotional approach of managers excess of procedure)	15	13,8

*more answers than one have given to this question

IV. Discussion and Result

Although we aimed in our survey to reach the 602 academic staff of the Nursing and Vocational Health Schools in all the state universities, such a small group of hundred participants makes us think that this was because the e-mails to reach the academicians didn't do so because of various reasons (system error, the academicians' not checking his/her e-mails, lack of interest). That the participation in our survey is limited bears a contradiction with the result of the research of Kisa and Kaya that the members of university education in nursing are in a positive mood towards technology (2006)⁴.

It is quite a positive result that 37% of academic personnel participating in the survey, begin their higher education because of the interest they show in their major, and 54% of them keep on their education at the same branch without changing the branch of higher education. It was determined in a study carried out in 1985 that exhaustion was little among those who did their job for they loved it⁵.

It is stated in literature that those who make choice of profession consciously and willingly, will become more successful in completing the necessities of their professions and this will lessen the syndrome of exhaustion. 87,2 % of participants have clinical experiences. This clinical experience has been effective at a rate of 25,7 % in academic personnel's preference of the major of postgraduate education. We believe that professional experience of

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the research group will provide positive contribution to both their own academic studies and their teaching careers.

Though respectively a low rate, 7,7 % of them chose to become academicians due to the fact that they could not start as a nurse. When we take the advantages of clinical experience into consideration, it is proposed that a certain period of clinical experience be obliged when appointing academicians, for the improvement of the profession and individual development.

15 % of the participants changed their area of study during doctorate after getting the master's degree 50% of the academic personnel who had changed their majors for the doctorate education, transferred compulsorily due to the fact that there was no doctorate program in the department of nursing at the university they study. Inadequacy of universities providing doctorate education in nursing in Turkey is a negative factor for the improvement of the profession, and the development of individual knowledge and skill. According to Catanaro and Woods, it is to be expected from nurses who have achieved doctorate degree that they find methods more scientifically for measurements and solutions for the problems of nursing, and become leaders of the research studies in nursing⁶. The increasing number of the universities giving doctorate education and the abundance of members of university education in the following years will provide an alteration to a more qualified education by preventing this obligatory transfer.

Financial hardships are top among the difficulties, which nursing academicians experience during their post-graduate education. Besides there are some others such as the lowest passing grade for foreign language and post-graduate education entrance exam, obligation of changing the city for doctorate, difficulties of research, participating in the permanent staff of university lecturers, problems of the members of university education, difficulty of serving as a nurse in clinic during making career and excess of the procedure. The enterprises providing academicians with material provision (free using courses preparing foreign language and The Selection Examination for Graduate Studies (LES) exams, computer courses, libraries and search centers) could diminish both financial asperity and difficulties of foreign language, LES and research. This problem could be solved by turning academicians having satisfactory grade of LES and foreign language and being employed as teaching staff into research assistants.

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Additionally, the participants have stated that negative behaviors of members of university, office conflicts, wrong, unjust and emotional approach of managers and psychological pressure cause the decrease of productivity .As to this matter we have no comment.

As a result, solving the problems of nursing academicians through conclusive steps will improve the desired future mission and vision of the nursing profession both academically and in terms of nursing within health-care system.

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