



Determining the Professional Perceptions of Nursing Students Using the Metaphor Analysis Method

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ABSTRACT

In this study, it is aimed to determine the perceptions of first and fourth year nursing students about the nursing profession by using the metaphor analysis method. Qualitative research design was used in this study. The study was conducted in the Nursing Department of a university. The study was concluded with data obtained from 87 nursing students. Purposive sampling method was used in the selection of the sample and this sampling method; The data were analyzed through metaphor analysis. The data were collected between September 15 and September 30, 2022 in the classroom environment with Personal Information Form and Semi-Structured Interview Form. To ensure good quality in presenting the study, the Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research (COREQ) was used as a guide. Fifty two first-year nursing students and thirty five fourth-year nursing students participated in the study. Forty six different metaphors related to the "nurse" profession were forming by the first and fourth year nursing students, and these metaphors were classified under two categories as positive and negative according to their common aspects. It was observed that fourth-year nursing students used positive metaphors regarding the concept of nursing more frequently than first-year students. Nurses; in clinical practice, students should use effective communication techniques and have good observation skills in order to positively affect their perceptions of the nursing profession.

Keywords: Metaphor, Nursing, Nursing perception, Nursing student, Qualitative study

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Introduction

The metaphor, based on the Greek word "metaphora"; while it means "to take from one place to another" (Abay et al., 2016); According to the Turkish Language Association, the word meaning of metaphor is "to use a word or meaning in a different meaning than the accepted one" (TLA). Lakoff and Johnson (2008), who are pioneers in metaphor analysis research, use the concept of metaphor; they define it as "metaphorical words used to understand, compare or experience a phenomenon or situation from another perspective".

Metaphors; it is a mental mapping mechanism used in situations such as making concepts that are difficult to understand more understandable, comparing abstract or complex phenomena with more concrete facts, comprehending events and revealing how they are perceived (Saban, 2009; Ünsal et al., 2016). Metaphors can also be used to examine a familiar process from a creative perspective and to evoke emotions (Carpenter, 2008). So metaphors; it can be interpreted that it is an art used to decorate the language, unlike the language used daily (Zembar et al., 2015).

In this context, understanding how the nursing profession is perceived through metaphors; it will enable the profession to be analyzed and examined in depth, to

evaluate nursing education, to raise awareness about the problems and to develop the profession (Karakul et al., 2022). Metaphor analysis of profession perceptions by Sharoff (2013); the fact that it is effective in understanding the profession, discovering the insight of individuals about the profession and revealing a deep understanding also supports this situation. On the other hand, students have positive thoughts and perceptions about the nursing profession; compliance with the profession is important in terms of providing qualified service to the society and creating an efficient working environment (Dimitriadou et al., 2015; Özmen and Çetinkaya, 2016). In the same way, negative perceptions of students about the nursing profession are determined, and these perceptions are transformed into positive perceptions and correctly shaped; gaining importance in terms of increasing the quality of the profession (Özveren et al., 2018). When the literature on the subject is reviewed, it is seen that there are a limited number of metaphor studies specific to nursing students' occupational perceptions (Kale and Çiçek, 2015; Kaya et al., 2013); this situation brings with it the determination of nursing students' perceptions of the profession and carrying out current studies in this field. In addition, the fact that the comparative evaluation of this

study subject is original suggests that it may contribute to the literature.

The aim of this study is to determine the professional perceptions of first and fourth year nursing students using the metaphor analysis method.

Research Questions

RQ 1. What metaphors do first-year nursing students use regarding the concept of nurse?

RQ 2. Which metaphors do nursing fourth grade students use regarding the concept of nurse?

RQ 3. What themes can these metaphors be divided into?

Material and Methods

Study Design

Qualitative research design was used in this study. Qualitative research; these are studies that try to reveal perceptions and events in their natural environment, realistically and holistically (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018). To ensure good quality in presenting the study, the Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research (COREQ) was used as a guide.

Sample

The study was carried out in the Nursing Department of a university. The population of the study consisted of 171 students studying in the first and fourth grades of the nursing department. Purposive sampling method was used in the selection of the sample and this sampling method; it helps to examine the events that are thought to have rich information and to discover the facts (Creswell, 2013).

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Being able to read and understand Turkish, being willing to participate in the study, and not being absent at the time of the study were the inclusion criteria; The cases of uniformly answering the questions in the questionnaire and not producing any metaphor sources provide the exclusion criteria from the study. In this context, the study was concluded with the participation of 87 nursing students.

Data Collection

Personal Information Form and Semi-Structured Interview Form were used to collect data.

Personal information form

It was prepared by researchers within the framework of the literature (Kaya et al., 2013; Özveren et al., 2018). The Personal Information Form consists of four questions (age, gender, marital status, class of education) aiming to determine the sociodemographic characteristics of the students.

Semi-structured interview form

In the form prepared by the researchers in line with the literature (Altun and Camadan, 2013; Kale and Çiçek, 2015), it is similar to "Being a Nurse...". Because....." there is an open-ended question. In studies where metaphors are used as a research tool, the word "similar"

is used to reveal the connection between the metaphor and the source of the metaphor, and the word "because" is used to provide a justification for the metaphors produced (Creswell, 2013; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018). In this context, the metaphors produced by the students who agreed to participate in the study constituted the main data source of this study.

Data were collected in a classroom setting between September 15 and September 30, 2022. Before starting data collection, a pilot study was conducted with 2 students. Then, the Personal Information Form and Semi-Structured Interview Form were distributed to the sample group by the third researcher and the group was asked to answer the questions. The data collection process took approximately 20-25 minutes.

Data collection was carried out face-to-face in the institution where the researchers work. None of the researchers gave lectures to the students participating in the research. The first and second researchers did not have any contact with the students, and the third researcher works in another department. In order to prevent bias in the data collection phase of the study, to ensure that students do not feel under pressure, and to support volunteering, the data were collected in the classroom environment by the third researcher working in another department. There was no one else in the class other than the third researcher and the nursing students. During the data collection phase, the students were informed about the purpose of the study and it was stated that they were free to participate in the study or not. While no audio or video recordings were taken during the data collection phase, notes on field notes were taken. In addition, after the data collection process, the students were told that the transcripts could be sent again for comments or corrections, but no such request was received from the students. Therefore, there were no repeated interviews.

Data Analysis

All authors took part in data analysis. The sociodemographic data obtained as a result of the study were evaluated in the SPSS package program and expressed as numbers and percentages from descriptive statistics. In the analysis of the data obtained from the open-ended question in the Semi-Structured Interview Form, metaphor analysis, one of the qualitative data analysis techniques, was used manually without any software. The profession perceptions of the nursing students included in the study were understood more strongly by metaphor analysis. Because in the analysis process, it was stated that the data could be categorized more easily by dividing the data into themes in terms of similarity or difference through metaphor analysis (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018).

Validity and Reliability

Before performing the metaphor analysis, the studies using this technique were examined (Altun and Camadan, 2013; Cerit, 2008; Eren, 2018; Çetinkaya, 2014; Saban, 2009) analysis and interpretation of the data: "naming

stage, elimination and increment stage, category development" It was carried out in four stages, namely, the stage of validity and reliability. In the naming phase, each of the data collection forms was numbered, and the metaphors used by the nursing students were noted. The similarities and differences of each metaphor with other metaphors were analyzed by using the content analysis technique in the screening and purification stage. The data that did not contain any source of metaphor, did not provide any justification for the metaphor, included features belonging to more than one category, and did not contribute to the understanding of the concept of the nursing profession were eliminated. Considering the data obtained during the category development stage, the metaphors produced were examined in terms of their common features. Each metaphor produced by the students was categorized under the theme of "positive" or "negative". While the findings of the study were classified as positive and negative, studies by Kale and Çiçek (2015) and Karakul et al. (2022) were taken as reference. In the validity and reliability phase, which is the most important step to increase the reliability of the study results, the data analysis process was explained in detail in order to ensure the validity of the study, and a category that was assumed to represent the best was determined for each metaphor. In order to ensure the reliability of the study, the researchers tried to reach a consensus from the beginning to the end of the study in order to be able to decide in case of any disagreement. The first author first coded the data independently, and the second author determined whether the codes were consistent with each other and to which category they belonged (Bölükbaş, 2018). In addition, after the study was completed, an independent researcher read the study and feedback was received. The similarity between the expert and the researchers in terms of the coded data set is an indicator of the reliability of the study. This similarity, called internal consistency in the model and conceptualized as inter-rater reliability by Miles and Huberman (1994), was calculated using the formula $\Delta = C \div (C + \delta) \times 100$. In the formula, Δ is the reliability coefficient, C is the number of topics/terms on which consensus is reached, and δ is the number of topics/terms on which there is no consensus. According to the coding control, which gives internal consistency, the consensus among the raters is expected to be at least 80% (Patton, 2002). In this study, Cronbach's alpha value was found to be 88% according to the formula $(37 / (37+5) = 0.88)$.

Ethical Considerations

Before starting the study, ethics committee approval was obtained from the Non-Drug and Medical Device Research Ethics Committee of a university (21.09.2022/028). Institutional permission was obtained from the School of Health Sciences, Department of Nursing, for its structuring after the approval of the ethics committee. Consent was obtained at the beginning of the study with an informed consent form from the nursing students participating in the study. By stating that they are free to participate in the study, informing the participants

about the principle of "Respect for Human Dignity", the principle of "Respect for Autonomy" and the principle of "Respect for Autonomy", the purpose of use and how to evaluate the time obtained, "Protection of Confidentiality and Protection of Privacy", the answers given throughout the study will be kept confidential has been fulfilled.

Results

Characteristics of participants

When the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants were examined, it was determined that the mean age of the students was 20 ± 1.68 , 78.2% of the students were women, 98.9% were single, and 59.8 of them were in the first grade (Table 1).

In this section, findings regarding the metaphors used by first and fourth year nursing students for the profession are presented. 25 metaphors produced by first-year nursing students were grouped under 2 categories as positive and negative according to their common aspects (Table 2). 21 metaphors produced by fourth grade nursing students were classified under 2 categories as positive and negative according to their common aspects (Table 3).

Categories

Category 1: Positive

When this category is examined, it is seen that first and fourth year nursing students perceive the nursing profession positively and use metaphors according to this perception. The common feature of these metaphors is that the nurse is defined as a person who improves himself in many subjects, counsels the individual and his family with the knowledge he has acquired, exhibits a collaborative approach, is an important part of the team and is benevolent.

The metaphors of "Family (12), Mother (2), Teacher (1), Medicine (6), Puzzle (1), Hero (43), Sun (2), Water (1), Plaster (1), Friend (4), Book (1), Flower (1), Childhood (1) and Salt (1)" under this category were produced by a total of 37 first-year nursing students (Table 2). The metaphors of "Hero (2), Family (6), Solar Light (2), Rainbow (2), Walking stick/crutch (4), Tree (2), Sport (1), Book (2), Stethoscope (1), Mirror (1), Search engine (1), Pen (2) and Bag (1)" under this category were used by a total 27 fourth-year nursing students (Table 3).

Being a nurse is like being a mother. Because it provides care to its patients with love and compassion without any discrimination. (S, 55, 1st grade)

Being a nurse is like salt. Because food can't be without salt, and the hospital can't be without a nurse. (S, 73, 1st grade)

Being a nurse is like a rainbow. Because it brings together people with different individual characteristics and diseases and ensures harmony with each other. (S, 79, 4th grade)

Category 2: Negative

When this category is examined, it is seen that first and fourth year nursing students perceive the nursing profession negatively and use metaphors according to this perception. The common feature of these metaphors is that the nurse is defined as a person who is exhausted and

worn out due to long and irregular working hours, has limitations in the professional decision-making process, and has a negative professional image.

The metaphors of "Rosary (1), Bee (1), Ant (1), Pen (2), Charger (1), Robot (2), Soldier (3), Chauffeur (1), Clock (1), Mom (1) and Friend (1)" under this category were used by a total 15 first-year nursing students (Table 2). The metaphors of "Texas (1), Robot (1), Bee (1), Boxing bag (1), Gold (1), Fuel (1), Telephone (1) and Theme park (1)" under this category were used by a total 8 fourth-year nursing students (Table 3).

Being a nurse is like a boxing bag. Because everyone hits him/her, there is a possibility of violence. (S, 4, 4th grade)

Being a nurse is like a robot. Because it works 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from morning to night. (S, 34, 4th grade)

Being a nurse is like an ant. Because he has so many responsibilities, he always tries to do more than his own burden. (S, 43, 1st grade)

Being a nurse is like a mom. Because nurses, like mothers, always make sacrifices by compromising

themselves and spend most of their time caring for people in need. (S, 47, 1st grade)

Being a nurse is like a friend. Because nurses usually listen to your troubles like a friend. (S, 51, 1st grade).

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of students

Mean±SS	n	%
Age (20±1.68)		
Gender		
Female	68	78.2
Male	19	21.8
Marital status		
Married	1	1.1
Single	86	98.9
Class of education		
1st	52	59.8
4th	35	40.2
Total	87	100

Table 2. Distribution of metaphors used by 1st grade nursing students regarding the nursing profession according to thematic categories.

Category	Metaphor	# of Metaphor	Rate of positive metaphors to all metaphors (%)
Positive	Family (12), Mother (2), Teacher (1), Medicine (6), Puzzle (1), Hero (3), Sun (2), Water (1), Plaster (1), Friend (4), Book (1), Flower (1), Childhood (1), Salt (1)	14	71.15 %
Negative	Rosary (1), Bee (1), Ant (1), Pen (2), Charger (1), Robot (2), Soldier (3), Chauffeur (1), Clock (1), Mom (1), Friend (1)	11	28.85 %

Table 3. Distribution of metaphors used by 4th grade nursing students regarding the nursing profession according to thematic categories.

Category	Metaphor	# of Metaphor	Rate of positive metaphors to all metaphors (%)
Positive	Hero (2), Family (6), Solar Light (2), Rainbow (2), Walking stick/crutch (4), Tree (2), Sport (1), Book (2), Stethoscope (1), Mirror (1), Search engine (1), Pen (2), Bag (1)	13	77.14 %
Negative	Texas (1), Robot (1), Bee (1), Boxing bag (1), Gold (1), Fuel (1), Telephone (1), Theme park (1)	8	22.86 %

Discussion

In this study, it was concluded that different metaphors were produced by first and fourth year nursing students. The diversity of metaphors produced in metaphor studies determines the diversity of participants' vocabulary. In this context, the fact that first and fourth year nursing students can produce a wide variety of positive or negative metaphors shows that their perceptions of the concept of nursing have improved.

Category 1: Positive

Through the metaphors discussed in the positive category, students; A person who has knowledge of the nurse, is an indispensable and important part of the health sector team, fulfills individual and family-specific counseling roles, has guiding leadership characteristics when faced with problems, treats patients with compassion without discrimination while giving care, and understands the truth from the patient's nonverbal expressions. may be perceived as. It can be said that the basis of these perceptions of the students is the effect of the society's point of view.

Özpancar et al. (2008), the fact that the majority of the students stated that nursing is perceived as a profession that is valued in the society supports this idea. In the study carried out by Kale and Çiçek (2015) with the participation of nurses, tree branches, gloves, tailor metaphors and Özveren et al. (2018), with the participation of first-year nursing students, it was determined that the nurse provided interdisciplinary cooperation with the metaphors of the cornerstone, the finger of a hand, and played an important role in the conduct of patient care within the team. In the study conducted by Yılmaz and Özbek Güven (2021), with third and fourth grade nursing students, it was determined that nursing is a care-based profession, nursing care is continuous from birth to death, and the nurse witnesses every process of an individual's life with the metaphors of spring, soil and gardener. Again, in the same study, it was stated that the metaphor of the mother and the nursing profession include values such as labor, sacrifice and compromise associated with the concept of motherhood (Yılmaz and Özbek Güven, 2021). In addition, when the literature on the subject is reviewed, it is emphasized that the mother metaphor reflects the traditional view (Fagin and Donna, 2000; Wurzbach, 1999). As a result of the study by Saldamlı and Andsoy Işık (2017), in which surgical nurses were included, it was determined that the nurse was evaluated as the person who caught up with people's power situations and gave them hope by establishing trust-based relationships with the superhero metaphor. The studies discussed in this context support the idea of this study finding.

Category 2: Negative

Through the metaphors discussed in the negative category, students; Community and team friends who feel burnout due to intense work tempo due to the long and irregular working time of the nurse, who get tired psychosocially by taking care of each individual individually in order to be individual, who are assigned for many tasks other than their own duties, who are used as a buffer support element in the health sector. It can be thought that they perceive it as a person who does not see the value they deserve. In the study carried out by Kale and Çiçek (2015) with the participation of nurses, metaphors of bee, robot, machine, patience stone, and Yılmaz and Güven Özbek (2021) in the study carried out by the inclusion of nursing students, it was found that nursing, which is a professional profession, has a negative professional image with the metaphors of bee / ant, candle, patience stone. It is stated that the job description is not clear, the working conditions are heavy and the professional boundaries are violated. In addition, when the literature on the subject is reviewed, it is stated that nurses are exposed to violence by the society (Er et al., 2021; Yeşilbaş, 2016). The studies discussed in this context support the idea of this study finding.

In addition, this study shows that fourth-year nursing students often produce more positive metaphors regarding the concept of nurse compared to first-year nursing students. Since the theoretical courses in the nursing education curriculum are supported by applied programs in the following grades, It can be thought that they can

develop more positive perceptions towards the concept of nurse by observing individuals, contacting individuals and establishing interpersonal relationships. In addition, it can be said that first year nursing students produced more negative metaphors based on concepts reflecting their social perspective, social experiences and cultural backgrounds. In a prospective study examining the change in nursing students' perceptions of their profession according to the class of education; It has been determined that first-year nursing students have perceptions based on settled altruistic beliefs, while fourth-year nursing students have perceptions based on theoretical, theoretical and technical skills (Safadi et al., 2011). Çıtak Tunç et al. (2010) with first-year nursing students, the nursing profession was evaluated as physician assistant. In the study carried out by Çakıcı (2021), with the first and fourth year nursing students, it was concluded that the professional images of the senior students were more positive than the first year students. The studies discussed in this context support the idea of this study finding.

It is suggested by Yıldırım and Şimşek (2018) that the answers to the why question should be analyzed well and independently in order to understand which category metaphors belong to. It is emphasized that the expressions after the word "because" are important in determining the category (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018). In this study, when the question "Why?" is asked to the metaphors produced by first and fourth year nursing students, meanings belonging to both categories can be obtained. For this reason, some metaphors produced by students (mom, friend, etc.) were discussed under both positive and negative categories (Table 2, Table 3). In a study conducted on the subject and involving first-year nursing students, it was concluded that the participants perceived the nursing profession as an extension of traditional mother functions and produced the mother metaphor according to this perception (Özveren et al., 2018). On the other hand, when the historical process is examined, it is stated that the caregiving role is associated with the concept of mother (Hoeve ve et al., 2014). In this context, it can be thought that in this study, different participants evaluated the concept of nursing as a person who helps, does good and shows compassion, and produced positive metaphors according to this evaluation, and that they were perceived only as a caregiver with a sexist perspective and produced negative metaphors according to this perception.

Limitations

Since the creation of metaphors and themes in this study was based on the ability to interpret, the individual characteristics of the researchers may have affected the interpretation of metaphors. The participants included in the study also have different social experiences and cultural backgrounds; may cause subjectivity in terms of defining and explaining metaphors. Due to the nature of qualitative studies, the inability to generalize the results of the study and the fact that it is limited to the sample group studied are considered as another limitation.

Conclusion

According to the results of this study, which was conducted with a qualitative research design in order to determine the profession perceptions of first and fourth year nursing students using the metaphor analysis method; It was observed that fourth-year nursing students frequently produced more positive metaphors regarding the concept of nurse than first-year nursing students.

In this context, in order to eliminate the negative perceptions of nursing students regarding the concept of nurse, various informative trainings should be provided to students about the duties, powers and responsibilities of nursing, which is a professional profession; Since the concept of perception may change depending on cultural factors, lived experiences and the culture to which one belongs, it is recommended that the studies should be repeated intermittently and that the professional perceptions of students studying in different classes regarding the concept of nurse should be examined in depth by conducting qualitative and quantitative studies in order to keep the relevant subject up to date.

Nurses; should be aware of their own negative perceptions towards students, and should plan in-service trainings on the subject for risky groups in terms of having a negative attitude. In order to positively affect the perceptions of the students in clinical practice about the nursing profession, they should use effective communication techniques and have good observation skills. In addition, various seminars should be organized in university institutions that transparently convey the duties, authorities and responsibilities of the nursing profession and emphasize the importance of the profession.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors report no actual or potential conflicts of interest.

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