

**READINESS OF FINAL YEAR NURSING STUDENTS FOR THE PROFESSION AND THE AFFECTING FACTORS:
EASTERN BLACK SEA REGION SAMPLE
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ABSTRACT

Objectives: This study aims to examine the readiness of final year nursing students for their profession and the affecting factors.

Method: The population of this descriptive study consisted of 440 final year nursing students at five different universities in Turkey's Eastern Black Sea Region. The sample consisted of 313 students. The data were gathered between January and February, 2015. The researchers prepared and used a questionnaire form in line with the literature to collect the data. The data were evaluated with SPSS 20.0 statistical software using descriptive statistics, the chi-square test and binary logistic regression.

Results: Of the students, 56.2% said that they were ready for the profession. There were statistically significant correlations between students' readiness for the profession and their having selected the profession willingly, being happy to have selected the profession, feeling safe in the profession, self-efficacy for the profession, feeling anxiety concerning working life and thoughts about nursing ($p<0.05$). There is statistically significant correlation between students' readiness for nursing and their finding practical training adequate in undergraduate study ($p<0.05$).

Conclusion: This study found that half of the students were ready for the profession. Their having selected the profession willingly, being happy to have selected the profession, self-efficacy for the profession and feeling anxiety concerning working life were predictor variables for readiness.

Keywords: Nursing students; Nursing; Readiness.

Hemşirelik Son Sınıf Öğrencilerinin Mesleğe Hazır Bulunuşlukları Ve Etkileyen Faktörler: Doğu Karadeniz Bölgesi Örneđi

ÖZET

Amaç: Bu çalışma hemşirelik son sınıf öğrencilerinin mesleki hazır bulunuşluklarını ve etkileyen faktörleri belirlemek amacıyla yapılmıştır.

Yöntem: Tanımlayıcı olarak yapılan çalışmanın evrenini Türkiye'de Doğu Karadeniz Bölgesi'nde beş üniversitede son sınıfta okuyan 440 hemşirelik öğrencisi, örnekleme ise 313 öğrenci oluşturmuştur. Araştırmanın verileri Ocak-Şubat 2015 tarihleri arasında toplanmıştır. Verilerin toplanmasında araştırmacılar tarafından literature doğrultusunda hazırlanan anket formu kullanılmıştır. Veriler SPSS 20 istatistik paket programında tanımlayıcı istatistikler, ki kare testi ve binary logistik regresyon analizi ile değerlendirilmiştir.

Bulgular: Araştırmada öğrencilerin %56.2'sinin hemşirelik mesleğine hazır bulunduğu belirlenmiştir. Öğrencilerin hemşirelik mesleğini isteyerek seçme, mesleđi seçtiđi için mutlu olma, meslekte kendini güvende hissetme, meslek için kendini yeterli hissetme, çalışma hayatıyla ilgili kaygı yaşama ve hemşirelik yapmayı düşünme durumları ile hemşirelik mesleğine hazır bulunuşlukları arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir ilişki olduğu bulunmuştur ($p<0.05$). Öğrencilerin lisans eğitimi uygulamalarını yeterli bulma durumları ile hemşirelik mesleğine hazır bulunuşlukları arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir ilişki olduğu belirlenmiştir ($p<0.05$).

Sonuç: Araştırmada öğrenci hemşirelerin yarısının mesleğe hazır bulunduğu ve mesleđini isteyerek seçme, mesleđi seçtiđi için mutlu olma, meslek için kendini yeterli hissetme ve çalışma hayatıyla ilgili kaygı yaşama durumlarının mesleğe hazır bulunuşlukta yordayıcı değişkenler olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hemşirelik öğrencisi; Hemşirelik; Hazır bulunuşluk.

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INTRODUCTION

Readiness includes the physiological and psychological preparation needed to exhibit behaviors and competencies (Topses, 2003). Readiness for nursing means being able to provide safe patient care, to be familiar with the tools and equipment for nursing practices, and to have certain special and common knowledge, skills, thinking and management to fulfill nursing role (Wolff et al., 2010; Casey et al., 2011). Preparing nursing students for today's rapidly developing and changing health care environment is very important (Duchscher, 2008). Students' readiness for nursing is influenced by educational, personal, internal and external factors (Porter et al., 2013; Jarvinen et al., 2018). Studies indicate that clinic practical training during undergraduate education affects readiness (Wolff et al., 2010; Casey et al., 2011; Jarvinen et al., 2018). Nursing students have to master clinical skills throughout their education to provide competent and safe care. It is important for students to acquire clinical experience during their undergraduate education, and it is difficult for them to master the necessary skills if they do not have opportunities to do so (Şengül, 2010). The problems that the students face, especially in clinical practical training, cause a sense of professional inadequacy and the desire to quit the profession. Therefore, it is very important to determine students' needs before they graduate (Brown, 2016). In addition, it is stated that the lack of clinical skills, communication problems and anxiety about working in a permanent job affect the readiness of nursing students (Missen et al., 2015). However, the views of nursing students about the profession and feeling safe in the profession affect their readiness (Jarvinen et al., 2018; Cooper et al., 2005; Bowdoin, 2014; Morrell and Ridgway, 2014; Numminen et al., 2015; Usher et al., 2015; Woods et al., 2015; Christensen, 2016). Another factor that affects the readiness of students is their self-confidence about bearing the responsibilities imposed by the profession (Duchscher, 2008). It is important to know students' readiness levels and the factors that affect them to ensure effective teaching and learning in nursing (Brown, 2016). Determining the factors that affect readiness and taking precautions are important for nurses to provide a quality and effective service after graduation (Casey et al., 2011). The factors that affect nursing students' readiness may differ by country or culture. Therefore, studies about the subject should be conducted in different countries (Jarvinen et al., 2018). The need to determine the factors that affect the self-confidence of final year nursing students has been emphasized (Porter et al., 2013). Conducting studies to show students' readiness for nursing is important for organizing nursing training programs before graduation (Brown, 2016). This study was conducted to determine final year nursing students' readiness and factors that affect it.

Research Questions

What are the perceptions of final year nursing students about their readiness for the profession?

What are the factors that affect final year nursing students' readiness?

Methods

Design and Sample

The population of this descriptive study consisted of 440 final year nursing students at five different universities in Turkey's Eastern Black Sea Region. No sampling method was used, and the entire population was considered as sample (Erdoğan et

al., 2014). The study was completed with 313 students who agreed to participate. The participation rate was 71.13%. The data were collected between January and February 2015.

Ethical Considerations

The research was conducted in compliance with the Helsinki Declaration. Written permission were obtained from the nursing departments of the universities, and verbal consent from the students was obtained.

Instrumentation

The researchers collected the data in line with the literature using a questionnaire form with three sections (Cooper et al., 2005; Lofman et al., 2006; Nash et al., 2009; Woods et al., 2013; Ishihara et al., 2014; Yang and Jiang, 2014). The first section included nine questions about socio-demographic features (age, gender, income status, family type, parental education, place of residence, high school graduation and preference order for nursing). The second section had nine questions about students' thoughts about nursing (selecting the profession willingly, reason for selecting the profession, being happy to have selected the profession, feeling safe in the profession, self-efficacy for the profession, fear of assignments, feeling anxiety concerning working life, thoughts about nursing and readiness for nursing). The third section consisted of five questions about their undergraduate education (finding practical training adequate, doing internships, wishing to do internships, doing summer internships and wishing to do summer internships). This form was arranged in line with the recommendations of 3 experts in the field of nursing.

Data Collection

While collecting the data of the research, the data collection forms were first applied on 10 senior nursing students and within this framework, the data collection form was finalized and used. The data were collected at the five universities in face-to-face interviews that lasted between 15 and 20 minutes.

Statistical Analysis

The data were evaluated with SPSS 20.0 software using descriptive statistics, the chi-square test and binary logistic regression. The threshold for significance was <0.05.

Limitations

This study contains some limitations. The data of the research were collected with a questionnaire form prepared by the researchers in line with the literature. The nursing student's readiness for the profession was evaluated by their own perceptions. A scale with validity and reliability on the subject was not used. The most important limitation of this study is that the students' responses were based their own perceptions.

Table 1. Distribution of the students' socio-demographic characteristics

		$\bar{x} \pm SD$ (Min-Max)	
Age		22.38±1.36 (21-28)	
Nursing Department Preference Order		4.62±6.12 (1-24)	
		n	%
Gender	Female	230	73.5
	Male	83	26.5
Income Status	Low	30	9.6
	Middle	269	85.9
	High	14	4.5
Family Type	Nuclear family	261	83.4
	Extended family	47	15.0
	Single parent family	5	1.6
Mother's Education	Illiterate	36	11.5
	Literate	47	15.0
	Primary school	176	56.2
	High school	44	14.1
	University	10	3.2
Father's Education	Illiterate	7	2.3
	Literate	29	9.3
	Primary school	141	45.0
	High school	88	28.1
	University	48	15.3
Residence	Village	48	15.3
	District	118	37.7
	Province	147	47.0
High School	General high school	167	53.4
	Medical vocational high school	28	8.9
	Anatolian high school	103	32.9
	Anatolian teacher high school	6	1.9
	Vocational high school	9	2.9

RESULTS

The mean age of the participants was 22.38±1.36, 73.5% were female, and 85.9% had middle incomes. Of them, 83.4% had nuclear families, 56.2% had mothers who had completed primary school, and 28.1% had fathers who were high school graduates. Of them, 47% had lived longest in city center, and 53.4% were general high school graduates. They had a 4.62±6.12 mean preference order for nursing (Table 1).

Of the students, 67.7% said they selected the profession willingly, 48.9% selected it for job guarantee, and 62.9% they felt happy in the profession. Of them, 64.9% did not feel safe in the profession, 63.9% felt self-efficacy for the profession, and 60.4% had fear of assignment. Of them, 73.8% felt anxious about working life, 74.1% thought about nursing, and 56.2% felt ready for nursing (Table 2).

Table 2. Distribution of the students' thoughts about nursing

		n	%
Selecting the profession willingly	Yes	212	67.7
	No	101	32.3
Reason for selecting the profession	My family and friends wanted me to	56	17.9
	It has job security	153	48.9
	I love nursing	59	18.8
	To be beneficial to the public	26	8.3
	My exam score qualified me for nursing	19	6.1
Being happy to have selected the profession	Yes	197	62.9
	No	116	37.1
Feeling safe in the profession	Yes	110	35.1
	No	203	64.9
Self-sufficiency for the profession	Yes	200	63.9
	No	113	36.1
Fear of assignment	Yes	189	60.4
	No	124	39.6
Feeling anxiety concerning working life	Yes	231	73.8
	No	82	26.2
Thoughts about nursing	Yes	232	74.1
	No	81	25.9
Readiness for nursing	Yes	176	56.2
	No	137	43.8

Of the students, 57.5% found practical training during undergraduate education inadequate, 23.3% did internships during undergraduate education, and 73.8% wanted to do internships during undergraduate education. Of them, 48.9% did summer internships, and 77.3% did not want to do summer internships during undergraduate education (Table3).

Table 3. Distribution of some characteristics of the students regarding undergraduate education

		n	%
Finding practical training adequate	Yes	133	42.5
	No	180	57.5
Doing internships	Yes	73	23.3
	No	240	76.7
Wishing to do internships	Yes	231	73.8
	No	82	26.2
Doing summer internships	Yes	153	48.9
	No	160	51.1
Wishing to do summer internships	Yes	71	22.7
	No	242	77.3

There were statistically significant correlations between students' readiness for the profession and their having selected the profession willingly, being happy to have selected the profession, feeling safe in the profession, self-efficacy for the profession, feeling anxiety concerning working life and thoughts about nursing ($p<0.05$) (Table 4).

There was a statistically significant correlation between students' readiness for nursing and their finding practical training adequate in undergraduate study ($p<0.05$). There was no statistically significant correlation between students' readiness for nursing and internships and summer internships during undergraduate study ($p>0.05$) (Table 5).

Table 4. Comparison of the students' readiness for nursing and their views about nursing

			Readiness for the profession			
			Yes	No	Total	Statistics
Selecting the profession willingly	Yes	n	138	74	212	$\chi^2=20.975$ p=0.000
		%	65.1	34.9	100.0	
	No	n	38	63	101	
		%	37.6	62.4	100.0	
Being happy to have selected the profession	Yes	n	132	65	197	$\chi^2=25.075$ p=0.000
		%	67.0	33.0	100.0	
	No	n	44	72	116	
		%	37.9	62.1	100.0	
Feeling safe in the profession	Yes	n	83	27	110	$\chi^2=26.281$ p=0.000
		%	75.5	24.5	100.0	
	No	n	92	111	203	
		%	45.3	54.7	100.0	
Self-sufficiency for the profession	Yes	n	156	44	200	$\chi^2=109.657$ p=0.000
		%	78.0	22.0	100.0	
	No	n	19	94	113	
		%	16.8	83.2	100.0	
Feeling anxiety concerning working life	Yes	n	112	115	227	$\chi^2=14.473$

		%	49.3	50.7	100.0	p=0.000
	No	n	63	23	86	
		%	73.3	26.7	100.0	
Thoughts about nursing	Yes	n	141	90	231	
		%	61.0	39.0	100.0	$\chi^2=9.408$
	No	n	34	48	82	p=0.002
		%	41.5	58.5	100.0	

The degree of relationship between dependent variables and independent variables in the logistic regression model was 36.8% according to Cox-Snell and 49.2% according to Nagelkerke. The beta value was -.239, and the Wald value was significant at a $p < 0.05$ significance level concerning the regression of the readiness of some of the characteristics of the nursing regarding students' views on nursing and undergraduate education. Considering Exp (β) value $((1-.787)*100=21.3)$ the views of the students about nursing predicted 21% of readiness for nursing. The students' having selected the profession willingly, being happy to have selected the profession, self-efficacy for the profession and

feeling anxiety concerning working life were predictor variables for readiness for nursing. The other independent variables were unimportant. The students who selected the profession willingly were 1,989 times more ready for the profession than those who did not. The students who were happy to have selected the profession 2,079 times more ready for the profession than those who were not. The students who felt self-efficacy for the profession were 12,851 times more ready for the profession than those who did not. The students who had anxiety concerning working life were less ready for nursing by a factor of 0.486 (Table 6).

Table 5. Comparison of certain characteristics of the students' undergraduate education and their readiness for the profession

			Readiness for the profession			Statistics
			Yes	No	Total	
Finding practical training adequate	Yes	n	87	46	133	
		%	65.4	34.6	100.0	$X^2=8.473$
	No	n	88	92	180	p=0.004
		%	48.9	51.1	100.0	
Doing internships	Yes	n	46	27	73	
		%	63.0	37.0	100.0	$X^2=1.949$
	No	n	129	111	240	$p=0.163$
		%	53.8	46.2	100.0	
Doing summer internships	Yes	n	83	70	153	
		%	54.2	45.8	100.0	$X^2=0.335$
	No	n	92	68	160	$p=0.562$
		%	57.5	42.5	100.0	

Table 6. Regression analysis of students' readiness for the profession and certain characteristics

	β	S.E.	Wald	SD	p	Exp(B)
Selecting the profession willingly	.688	.336	4.200	1	0.040	1.989
Being happy to have selected the profession	.732	.343	4.550	1	0.033	2.079
Feeling safe in the profession	.504	.326	2.380	1	0.123	1.655
Self-sufficiency for the profession	2,553	.322	62.837	1	0.000	12.851
Feeling anxiety concerning working life	-.722	.361	3.993	1	0.046	0.486
Thoughts about nursing	.269	.377	0.509	1	0.476	1.309
Finding practical training adequate in undergraduate study	.429	.303	2.006	1	0.157	1.536
Fixed	-6.585	1.083	36.983	1	0.000	0.001
$\beta = -.239$ Standard error=.114 Wald=4.381SD=1 p=.036Exp (β)=.787						
Cox-Snell R ² =.368, Nagelkerke R ² =.368						

DISCUSSION

This study's findings aiming to identify the readiness and the affecting factors of the final year nursing students are discussed in this section. Of the nursing students, 56.2% said that they were ready for nursing. Yang and Jiang found that nursing students who were in the final stage of clinical practical training had medium professional competence (Yang and Jiang, 2014) and felt well about their profession (Lofmark et al., 2006). They had high readiness rates for clinical practical training (Woods et al., 2013). Nursing students felt a good level of professional competence (Kajander-Unkuri et al., 2014), most of them felt ready for the profession (Nash et al., 2009). They have high readiness perceptions for practical training in nursing (Brown, 2016), and they were not sufficiently prepared for the reality of the clinical setting before starting work (Kajander-Unkuri et al., 2014). On the other hand, Morrell and Ridgway found that lecturers deemed nursing students' readiness for the profession to be insufficient (Morrell and Ridgway, 2014). Our study found that the readiness perceptions of nursing students were at a medium level, which is lower than they are in some other studies. This difference may be due to the lecturers, the students and the practical training schedule.

Students' having selected the profession willingly and being happy to have done so are predictor variables for readiness for nursing. Those who selected the profession willingly were two times more adjusted to nursing than those who did not. Similarly, those who felt happy to have selected the profession were two times more adjusted than those did not. Woods et al. (2015) found that students' being happy to have selected the profession affected their readiness for nursing, and Numminen et al. (2015) found that newly graduated nurses' satisfaction with and commitment to the profession affected their nursing qualifications. Studies of newly graduated nurses indicate that being satisfied to have selected the profession affected their proficiency (Ulrich et al., 2010; Bratt and Felzer, 2011; Tastan et al., 2013). This study also found that the students who selected willingly and were satisfied with the profession were more ready for nursing than the others. This result shows that individual and intrinsic

features of nursing students affected readiness for the profession.

Feeling safe in the profession affects readiness of the students for nursing. Cooper et al. (2005) found that nursing students felt safe in the profession towards the end of their education, and this affected their readiness for the profession. Usher et al. found that their feeling safe in the profession affected their readiness (Usher et al. 2015). Other studies have found that nursing students' awareness about their future professional responsibilities caused them to feel unsafe (Jarvinen et al., 2018; Ross and Clifford, 2002; Carlson, et al., 2005). Our research finding shows parallelism with the literature. The students who felt well-equipped in terms of knowledge and skills felt safe and thus, ready for the profession. This study found that self-efficacy for the profession was a predictor of readiness for the profession, and those who felt self-efficacy for the profession were nearly three times more adjusted to nursing than those did not. Morrell and Ridgway (2014) and Järvinen et al. (2018) found that one important factor in students' readiness for the profession was professional competence, and that students with high professional competence were more adjusted to nursing (Bowdoin, 2014). Christensen et al. (2016) found that final year nursing students doubted their professional competence, and Usher et al. (2015) found that nursing students' self-efficacy for invasive operations affected their readiness for the profession. Missen et al. (2015) found in their study on the coordinators of graduate nursing students that the lack of clinical skills affects professional readiness. Nursing students' readiness for the profession is also related to the extent to which they think they have the competencies that are expected of them. Consequently, the readiness of nursing students who felt qualified for the profession was found to be high, as it is in the literature.

This study found that students' concerns about professional life were a predictor of their readiness for the profession. The students with concerns about their professional life were about half more ready for nursing than those who did not have concerns. Morrell and Ridgway (2014) and Andrews (2013) found that the concerns of nursing students about their professional life affected their readiness, and Wolff et al. (2010) found that nursing students' worries

about professional life affected their readiness. In addition, Missen et al. (2015) found that the anxiety of working in a permanent job affects professional readiness in graduate nursing students. Like the literature, this study found that feeling anxious affected students' readiness for the profession. Feeling anxiety concerning working life is a student-based internal factor. However, since final year students have had clinical experience during their undergraduate education, the factors that increase anxiety may be due to lecturers, clinical processes, nursing policies and the guidance skills of nurse colleagues. This study found that nursing students' thoughts about nursing affected their readiness for the profession. Nursing students' intention of leaving the profession also affect their readiness (Flinkman, 2014) and their competency (Ishihara et al., 2014). Casey et al. found that one of the reasons for leaving nursing was feeling insufficiently prepared for the profession (Casey et al, 2011). Like the literature, this study found that the students with thoughts about nursing were more adjusted to the profession.

This study found that finding their practical training adequate affected the students' readiness for nursing. Students' lack of professional readiness is about nursing education (Wolff et al., 2010) and the main educational factor that affects their readiness is clinical practical training (Jarvinen et al., 2018). Their readiness is affected by intensive clinical experience (Casey et al., 2011). Since nursing is a clinical profession, students' finding practical training adequate affects their readiness. Their anxiety levels fall and their problem-solving skills increase as their practical training increases. Practical training increases students' self-confidence and sense of belonging to the profession. This study found that the nursing students' internships and summer internships did not affect their readiness for the profession. Students' readiness for nursing in non-traditional education systems is higher than others (Brown, 2016). Students who spend their final year in a clinic are more adjusted to the profession (Watt and Pascoe, 2013), and students who do simulation training are more adjusted to professional life (Woods et al., 2015). Unlike the literature, this study found that internships and summer internships do not affect readiness for the profession, and that the education of most of the study group in a conventional system without internships or summer internships was effective.

CONCLUSION

This study found that half of the students felt ready for the profession. Students' readiness for the profession and their having selected the profession willingly, being happy to have selected the profession, feeling safe in the profession, self-efficacy for the profession, feeling anxiety concerning working life, thoughts about nursing and finding practical training adequate in undergraduate study affected their readiness for nursing. These results suggest that: theoretical courses in the education of nursing students should involve methods and techniques that facilitate learning and support skills acquisition, students should be supported by effective clinical practical training, lecturers should have an active role in clinical practical training, the professional concerns of students and the affecting factors should be identified, measurement and evaluation systems that will evaluate professional readiness levels of final year students after

graduation should be used and accordingly, the training program should be revised.

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