



## SATISFACTION OF THE FUTURE NURSES WITH THE WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE HEALTHCARE ESTABLISHMENTS DURING THEIR PRE-GRADUATION TRAINEESHIP

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### ABSTRACT:

The training of nurses is a key issue on which the provision of access to and quality of medical care depends. The shortage of nurses and the unfavorable ratio between nurses and doctors create problems in the proper organization of the provision of medical care. As health care providers working under stressful conditions, future nurses need a safe working environment for themselves and their patients.

**Aim:** The aim of this study is to establish the level of satisfaction of future registered nurses with the working conditions in healthcare establishments during their pre-graduation traineeship.

**Material and methods:** The study presents the result of a survey of the opinion of 283 fourth-year students majoring in Nursing at the Medical University of Plovdiv, Faculty of Public Health; Trakia University, Stara Zagora, Faculty of Medicine and Haskovo Branch; 'Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov' University, Burgas.

**Results and Discussion:** The students' level of satisfaction with the facilities where they do their pre-graduation traineeship is an important factor in the professional development of future registered nurses. A lower level of satisfaction of the students with the equipment and facilities where they do their pre-graduation traineeship is usually associated with a lack of sufficient personal protective equipment and other consumables in the healthcare establishments.

**Conclusion:** Probably due to difficulties in performing nursing tasks in a real-life environment ensuing from organizational problems connected with the provision of consumables and materials, risks of accidents, the existing outdated facilities are the main reasons for the lower levels of satisfaction of students with the facilities during their pre-graduation traineeship.

**Keywords:** Trainee-nurses, pre-graduation traineeship, level of satisfaction, working conditions,

### INTRODUCTION:

The significance and relevance of the problem of the professional competence of nurses and the role of practical training in its formation and development are determined by a number of objective and subjective factors. The aging of the population in our country raises many health, social and economic problems. Increased health care needs call for greater human resources, including the provision of an adequate number of nurses.

The development of human resources has a crucial role in the effective functioning of the health system in Bulgaria. The training of nurses is a key issue on which the provision of access to and quality of health care depends.

The problems of human resources in health care are mainly related to regional disparities, creating inequalities in access to health care. The shortage of nurses and the unfavorable ratio between nurses and doctors create problems in the proper organization of the provision of medical care. The number of nurses in our country has decreased by almost 50%. The formation of professional competence in future nurses concerns both general issues of medical education and aspects that reflect the specifics of the vocational training of this type of medical specialists.

According to V. Bodrov, the formation of professional competence passes through several stages: education and formation of moral values of the individual; career orientation; choice of a career; vocational training; professional adaptation; professional activities; professional certification; vocational rehabilitation. [1]

The main goal of the training of nurses is the mastering of knowledge, skills and habits for providing quality health care; developing of highly professional consciousness and self-consciousness, views, social position and moral-volitional qualities and system of values, which will allow them to manifest humaneness daily and to realize their creative and professional potential in society.

A highly qualified nurse must possess sufficient knowledge, skills and confidence to plan, implement and evaluate their activities according to the patient's needs.

The concept of satisfaction is related to motivation but is not directly dependent on it, motivation is the pursuit of future goals, and satisfaction is the result of achieving these goals. Satisfaction with the work done is not only a result but also a factor of the future activity of the person, and low satisfaction only suppresses the positive motivation for activity and vice versa. [2] In the field of healthcare, health services and the nursing profession, satisfaction is one of the key determinants of job performance. Nurses' satisfaction contributes directly to patients' satisfaction with nursing care, which is an important performance indicator of the quality of care. The constant investigation of the most important factors influencing the motivation and job satisfaction of healthcare professionals is one of the ways to retain staff and increase the efficiency of healthcare organizations. [3, 4]

According to Markova, Petrova (2021), in the final stage of their studies, after having gained theoretical knowledge and practical experience, students become aware of the specifics of working. The possession of personal qualities alone is not a sufficient condition for the successful accomplishment of professional obligations. There is a need for health care professionals who have decided to work in crèches to have professional qualities - common to the nursing profession and closely specialized in their field of activity. The authors highlight the influence of nurseries as an appropriate and supportive environment of an excellent foundation for early childhood development. The results show that a good foundation for early childhood development is established. The authors highlight the influence of nurseries as an appropriate and supportive environment of an excellent foundation for early childhood development. The results show that a good foundation for early childhood development is established with the nurses' contribution. [5, 6]

The vocational training of student nurses in the conditions of the pre-graduate traineeship is a social category, determining the state and effectiveness of the professional development process and its compliance with the needs and expectations of society, development and formation of professional competencies of future nurses. It is determined by a set of indicators characterizing various aspects of the practical activity, one of which is the state of the facility where the traineeship is held. There are real reasons for providing conditions for increasing the competencies of nurses in order to cope with the new responsibilities and expectations for them. [7]

The facilities and equipment and the conditions in the university clinics/hospitals have a "strong" impact on the adaptation of the students. Specialized centers with state-of-the-art equipment, the availability of qualified and motivated mentors with the necessary professional competencies, good team relations, the application of modern specialized therapeutic methods, the opportunity for independent work, and various pathologies, as well as the organization and conduct of practical clinical training and pre-graduation traineeship, are of paramount importance for professional adaptation. [8]

As health care providers working under constant pressure, future nurses need a safe work environment for themselves and their patients. Just as healthcare professionals have the obligation and responsibility to provide quality healthcare for their patients, employers are primarily responsible for creating and ensuring a healthy work environment for their employees. A friendly and accessible work environment greatly improves the quality of health care. [9]

**Aim:**

The aim of this study is to establish the level of satisfaction of future registered nurses with the working conditions in healthcare establishments during their pre-graduation traineeship.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:**

The study presents the result of a survey of the opinion of 283 fourth-year students majoring in Nursing at the Medical University of Plovdiv, Faculty of Public Health; Trakia University, Stara Zagora, Faculty of Medicine and Haskovo Branch; 'Prof. Dr Asen Zlatarov' University, Burgas. An individual anonymous survey was used to analyze and evaluate the results of satisfaction of students with their work during the pre-graduation traineeship.

**Statistical methods:** the primary information was processed using the statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics 16.0 and the graphs - with Microsoft Office 2007. Statistical analyses used: descriptive statistics at quantitatively measurable values (arithmetic mean and standard error). For comparison of average values with normally distributed quantitative indicators - u criteria. Alternative analysis for the processing of qualitative traits. Spearman correlation analysis - to assess the strength of the relationship between the studied indicators. Graphic analysis - to illustrate processes and phenomena. The level of significance of the Zero Hypothesis (H0) was considered to be - P <0.05.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:**

Regarding the attribute of "age", the analysis of the results shows that a higher proportion of the studied students are in the age groups of 20 to 25 years-81.6%, and over 29 years is 12%.

The students' level of satisfaction with the facilities where they do their pre-graduation traineeship is an important factor in the professional development of future registered nurses. The results of the distribution of students' opinions are presented by means of averages (Table1).

**Table 1.** Level of satisfaction with the facilities and equipment where practical training is conducted

Level of satisfaction with the facilities and equipment	( $\bar{x} \pm S\bar{x}$ ).
Practical Training & Tutorials	3,62±0,06
Clinical practical training	3,42±0,07
Pre-graduation traineeship	3,12±0,07

Students report the highest level of satisfaction with the facilities and equipment where they carry out their practical training and tutorials, followed by the ones where they do their practical clinical training, and then – those of their pre-graduation traineeship. The difference in the assessments of the levels of satisfaction with the facilities and equipment of the practical training and tutorial and those of the pre-graduation traineeship is statistically significant.  $P=0,001(u=5.42)$ . Students are more satisfied with the facilities where they carry out their practical training and tutorials and less satisfied with those of their pre-graduation traineeship.

During the practical training and tutorials, students acquire skills for practical activities and master nursing duties. They practise the respective manipulations first on dummies in specialized rooms and then on patients in their practical clinical training. It is the provision of didactic materials and a workstation for each student during the practical training and tutorials that determines the high level of satisfaction of the students with this form of training.[10]

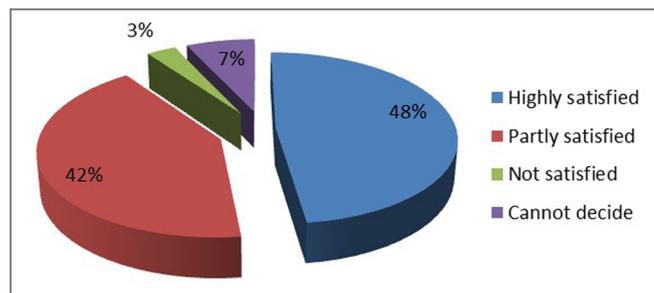
According to Kasnakova (2021), the role of the teacher in strengthening the motivation for learning in students is extremely important and has a direct bearing on successful practical activities. Success will also depend on whether the teacher has managed to synchronize the intellectual level of teaching with that of the learners in order to increase the effectiveness of learning by developing cognitive motives. [11]

A lower level of satisfaction of the students with the equipment and facilities where they do their pre-graduation traineeship is usually associated with a lack of sufficient personal protective equipment and other consumables in the healthcare establishments.

Students are critical of the working conditions in health care facilities due to organizational and financial problems in health care facilities, depreciated and outdated facilities and equipment, inadequate living conditions for patients and their relatives. [12]

During their pre-graduation traineeship, students further develop professional skills and competencies vital for their future careers. Students report the following levels of satisfaction with the opportunities and work conditions offered by the healthcare establishments where they do their practical training: 48,0% of the respondents are completely satisfied, 42,0% are partly satisfied, 7,0% cannot decide and 3,0% are dissatisfied. It is apparent that dissatisfaction is very low, but on the other hand, it is of note that almost half of the students who took part in the survey are “partially satisfied” and critical. This can be accounted for by the long duration of the pre-graduation traineeship, as well as by the fact that it is mandatory for the pre-graduation traineeship to be conducted in health care units where there are no dynamics in medical practice, which is preferred by students, as well as by the impossibility to do a longer traineeship in health care facilities of their choice. /Fig.1/.

**Fig. 1.** Levels of satisfaction with the work in healthcare establishments



About 10% of the students cannot decide and are not satisfied with the working conditions in the healthcare establishments for practical training. Probably due to the difficulties in the implementation of nursing activities in real practice, related to organizational problems in the supply of consumables and materials; the existing facilities and equipment, which are outdated and amortized to a certain extent; the inadequate living conditions for the patients in some health units; the organization of work and other factors are the main reasons for the lower levels of satisfaction of students with the facilities for practical training ( $2.62 \pm 0.08$ ). There is a clear relationship between good working conditions and high levels satisfaction of pre-graduate trainees  $P<0,001(r= 0,80)$  /Fig.1/.

The analysis of the results of the survey shows that about one-third of the students -32.6% define the pre-graduate traineeship as very risky in terms of accident risk ( $2.13 \pm 0.09$ ), as well as stressful for the trainees both physically and mentally. ( $1,88 \pm 0,1$ ).

However, a small number of nurses believe that unfamiliarity with the existing equipment in the workplace was an important factor affecting stress. [13]

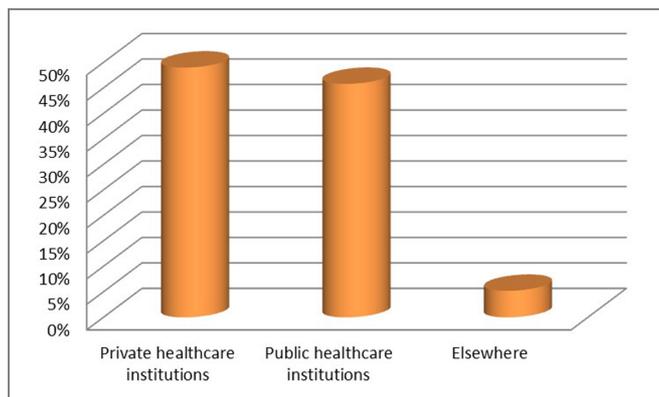
The survey results show that the following factors cause trainees the greatest stress: psychological or physical abuse in the workplace, being confronted with death, shortage of staff, nightshifts, long working hours, low salaries, working with difficult patients, poor organization of the process of work, lack of material resources. [14]

The practical training is generally risky from the point of view of the hospital environment in which it is conducted. This poses serious threats to the health of students /work with biological materials, drugs, patients with various diseases / and is a source of various stressful situations. These characteristics of the environment affect the level of satisfaction of trainees during the pre-graduate traineeship.

There is a moderately expressed relationship between the risks of accidents and the low levels of satisfaction of undergraduate students  $P < 0.01$  ( $r = 0.47$ ). Probably this is one of the reasons why the trainees from MU-Plovdiv propose the exclusion of the Infectious Diseases Department from the list of units where they conduct their pre-graduation traineeship.

The condition of the facilities and living conditions in the healthcare establishments where the pre-graduation traineeship is conducted is a prerequisite for the students' preferences for work in private healthcare institutions, where the living conditions are better. 49% of the trainees answered that they want to work in a public health institution, 45.8% - in a state one, and 5.2% - elsewhere /Fig. 2/. The number of research suggest that healthcare workers are more satisfied with a positive work environment. Poor working conditions and limited resources reduce job satisfaction and motivation among nurses, which can affect service quality. [15]

**Fig. 2.** Preferences for work in healthcare establishments



In a survey of student opinion of health care professionals during the pre-graduate traineeship, P. Kasnakova (2019) found that 51.12% of respondents believe that medical equipment is modern and adequate in its nature with a capacity suitable for training purposes, whereas the other half, 48.88%, have higher expectations of the facilities and equipment. [16]

### CONCLUSION:

Probably due to the difficulties in the implementation of nursing activities in real practice, related to organizational problems in the supply of consumables and materials; the existing facilities and equipment, which are outdated and amortized to a certain extent; the inadequate living conditions for the patients in some health units; the organization of work and other factors are the main reasons for the lower levels of satisfaction of students with the facilities for practical training.

The conducted survey among trainee nurses provides sufficient grounds for the following conclusions to be made:

1. The condition of the facilities and equipment is a prerequisite for the adaptation of trainees to their profession and hospital environment.
2. During their pre-graduation traineeship, future nurses develop flexible skills and competencies connected with taking proper care of patients, be they ill or healthy.
3. Private healthcare establishments, where the facilities and equipment are better, are preferred by students.

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