

Student Nurses' changing perceptions of nursing



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Background

Student nurse attrition as a global problem
Most common during the first 2 years

Changing perceptions

Lay image → Professional image

Altruistic views → Biomedical, technological views

Discussions with lecturers/students

The reality of the clinical environment

Nursing education programme in the Netherlands

Four-year Bachelor's programme:

1. Theoretical knowledge, practical work & communication skills
2. Work in complex care situations & clinical placement (10-20 weeks)
3. Clinical placement (20 weeks) & specialist nursing area
4. Working and doing research in clinical practice

Objectives

1. To explore whether student nurses' orientation and attitudes towards nursing change over time; and when these changes occur
2. To explore whether and why they ever considered withdrawing, and what intrinsic and extrinsic factors affected their motivation to stay



Design and participants

A longitudinal quantitative survey design

Four Universities of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands

Students in a Bachelor's of Nursing programme

Survey at four time points (September 2011 – June 2013)

Instruments (1)

The Nursing Orientation Tool (NOT)*

17-item, 5-point Likert instrument

Three concepts:

- **Caring**
- **Nursing Expertise**
- **Life Orientation**

*(Vanhanen, L., Hentinen, M., Janhonen, S., 1999)

Instruments (2)

The Nursing Attitude Questionnaire (NAQ)*

30-item, 5-point Likert instrument

- **Roles, values, professional activities**
- **Responsibilities**

*(Toth, J.C., Dobratz, M.A., Boni, M.S., 1998)

Item Reduction of the NAQ

Reduction: 30 → 18 items

Two core concepts:

- **Nursing Agency**
- **Advocacy & Empathy**

Factorial testing of the NAQ

Confirmatory Factor Analysis / Goodness of Fit

Statistics	Results	Criterium
χ^2/df	3.69	2.0 – 5.0
RMSEA	0.046	< 0.06
CFI	0.90	\geq 0.90
NNFI	0.87	> 0.80

χ^2/df = Chi-square/degrees of freedom
RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
CFI = Comparative Fit Index
NNFI = Non-Normed Fit Index

Cronbach's alpha entire NAQ (.79); Nursing Agency (.74); Advocacy & Empathy (.63)

Data analysis

Friedman Test:

- Changes over time

Post-hoc Wilcoxon Signed Rank Tests:

- When significant changes occur

Results: demographics

T0 September	2011	n = 1244
T1 March	2012	n = 583
T2 September	2012	n = 463
T3 June	2013	n = 403

Completed survey each time (n = 123)

Changes over time NOT (n = 123)

Scale	T0 mean rank (SD)	T1 mean rank (SD)	T2 mean rank (SD)	T3 mean rank (SD)	Sig
NOT - ORIENTATION	2.33 (0.27)	2.26 (0.27)	2.72 (0.30)	2.69 (0.32)	0.004**
Caring	2.51 (0.47)	2.11 (0.44)	2.78 (0.48)	2.59 (0.52)	0.000**
Nursing Expertise	2.45 (0.46)	2.50 (0.38)	2.59 (0.39)	2.46 (0.53)	0.796
Life Orientation	1.58 (0.63)	2.77 (0.53)	2.88 (0.53)	2.77 (0.70)	0.000**

Friedman test/ ** p-value becomes significant at 0.01

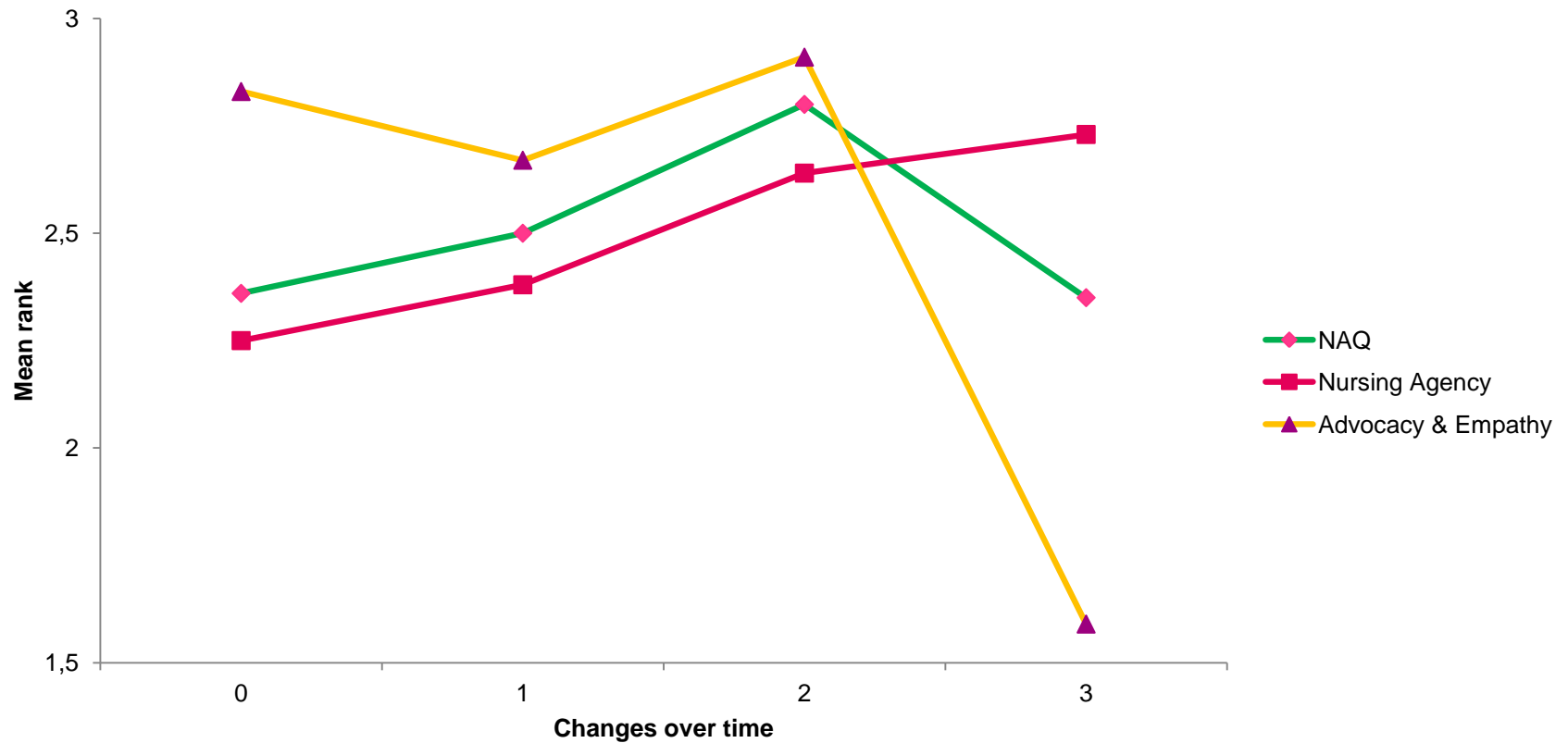


Changes over time NAQ (n = 123)

Scale	T0 mean rank (SD)	T1 mean rank (SD)	T2 mean rank (SD)	T3 mean rank (SD)	Sig
NAQ - ATTITUDE	2.36 (0.27)	2.50 (0.29)	2.80 (0.34)	2.35 (0.31)	0.017*
Nursing Agency	2.25 (0.31)	2.38 (0.39)	2.64 (0.37)	2.73 (0.40)	0.009**
Advocacy & Empathy	2.83 (0.43)	2.67 90.38)	2.91 (0.39)	1.59 (0.35)	0.000**

Friedman test/ * p-value becomes significant at 0.05/** p-value becomes significant at 0.01

Pattern of changes NAQ



Withdrawal and continuation

Withdrawal (n = 123):

- Considered withdrawing n = 30 (24%)
- Related to training programme n = 24 (80%)
- Personal reasons n = 18 (60%)

Continuation (n = 30):

- Intrinsic motivations n = 30 (100%)
- Extrinsic motivations n = 10 (33%)

Conclusion

Nursing students' perceptions of nursing changed from being idealistic and empathic to being more technical

Focus more on knowledge, skills & role development

Disappointment and discouragement during education and clinical placement

Changing perceptions may be predictive of withdrawal from the programme

Recommendations

Lecturers and mentors should pay more attention to individual perceptions and problems in classrooms and during clinical placements

Monitoring and guiding students is essential during the first two years of their programme

Knowledge of students' perceptions may be vital to study success

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