


Motivations Driving Career Choices: Insights From a Study Among Nursing Students

SAGE Open Nursing
Volume 10: 1–11
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DOI: 10.1177/23779608241255876
journals.sagepub.com/home/son



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Abstract

Introduction: Globally, the nursing workforce is crucial to the functioning of healthcare systems. The alarming shortage of nursing staff necessitates careful consideration of the challenging aspects related to this issue to develop successful strategies for attracting and retaining nurses.

Objectives: This study aims to explore the motivational factors influencing the decision of students to choose a nursing career and the associated factors.

Methods: In this cross-sectional research, a questionnaire was administered to 308 students studying nursing at the Higher Institute of Nursing Professions and Health Techniques.

Results: The results of this study revealed several factors influencing the decision of nursing students to choose this profession. The desire to contribute to society and have a positive impact on individuals' lives was identified as the primary motivating factor. Economic considerations also played a significant role. Additionally, it was found that the educational level of parents is a factor influencing students' decisions.

Conclusion: This study highlights the importance of various factors in the decision-making process of nursing students. By considering these results, policymakers and healthcare professionals can create an environment conducive to attracting and retaining future nurses.

Keywords

nursing student, motivation, nursing professions, career choice, reasons for choice

Received 3 January 2024; Revised 18 April 2024; accepted 1 May 2024

Introduction

Being a nursing student offers the opportunity to acquire knowledge, skills, and hands-on experience in providing care to patients. The nursing profession is demanding and complex, requiring a deep commitment to learning and a strong desire to improve the health and well-being of the population. It also provides the chance to work in a dynamic and constantly evolving field (Ait Ali et al., 2023).

In all healthcare systems, nurses constitute the largest group of healthcare providers. Meeting the needs of individuals and populations requires the availability of a sustainable and qualified nursing workforce (Ait Ali et al., 2024b; Chirico, 2024; Kurth et al., 2016; Shaffer et al., 2022). However, the shortage of nursing personnel is a very real yet often invisible phenomenon that will only worsen over time (Ait Ali et al., 2024c; Hsu

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et al., 2022; Noordien et al., 2020). In this context, the growth and sustainability of the nursing profession largely depend on the ability to recruit and retain new generations of nurses, particularly in the wake of a post-COVID context that has transformed healthcare systems globally (Ait Ali et al., 2023a, 2023b).

However, an in-depth understanding of the motivations driving the career choices of this new generation of nurses is lacking. Indeed, understanding how these future nurses come to choose this professional path is of crucial importance to the profession. Understanding what motivates students not only to learn but also to embark on a nursing career can provide educators with insights and strategies to retain these students (Ait Ali et al., 2024a; Rose, 2011). This knowledge can also enlighten employers, nursing training institutions, and healthcare sector organizations about the needs and expectations of nurses, contributing to improving the quality of their work and professional satisfaction.

Review of Literature

The decision to become a nurse is a significant and often complex one for students. They must take into account many elements to determine if they are suited for this challenging and rewarding profession (Kader et al., 2017). Among the factors that may influence their choice are their own interests and skills. Some are drawn to the healthcare field in general and are motivated by the prospect of assisting patients in their recovery process. Others are enticed by the challenges and excitement of working in a constantly evolving care environment (Suluhan et al., 2020).

Career motivation is commonly considered the primary factor that propels individuals to make choices and take actions to accomplish both personal and organizational objectives (Cheng et al., 2015). It is seen as a complex concept, shaped by both individual traits and external circumstances. Several studies have been conducted regarding the motivations of nursing students. Numerous external factors, such as the complex healthcare setting, demanding workloads, and employment insecurity, negatively impact nursing undergraduates' eagerness to pursue nursing as a lifelong profession (Elibol et al., 2017; Lyu et al., 2016). Nonetheless, intrinsic factors like the meaningfulness and rapid advancement within nursing practice, altruistic drive, and personal interest have been recognized as more impactful (Halperin & Mashiach-Eizenberg, 2014; Nesje, 2015).

Categorizing students' motivations for selecting a nursing career is essential for gaining insight into the diverse array of reasons driving their choices. In these perspectives, Liaw et al. (2016) identified six themes impacting students' career choices and perceptions of nursing as a profession. These themes are 'personal interest', 'prior healthcare exposure', 'job prospects', 'academic performance', 'perceived nature of work', and 'social influences' (Liaw et al., 2016).

A study conducted in Saudi Arabia examined the reasons that lead students to choose the nursing profession. The most commonly cited motive was the desire to work in the healthcare field as a dedicated professional focused on people's well-being, rather than financial considerations (Suluhan et al., 2020). Similarly, the findings of a survey conducted in Turkey showed that half of the participants (50.5%) opted for the nursing profession because it offered better employment prospects with a nursing degree (Aktaş & Karabulut, 2016). In the same vein, a study conducted by Halperin and Mashiach-Eizenberg (2014) among Israeli Jewish and Arab nursing students revealed that students primarily choose nursing as a profession due to altruistic motives, such as the chance to aid others, followed by a professional interest. Materialistic considerations, like social status and good salaries exerted less influence (Halperin & Mashiach-Eizenberg, 2014).

Another study found that a high number of students (52.5%) included nursing among their top three choices for university, though a smaller number (14.5%) viewed nursing as their ideal career (Kader et al., 2017). Moreover, according to the findings reported by Fang et al. (2018), factors like optimism and educational environment, had a positive relationship with career motivation in nursing. In addition, career adaptability was a partial mediator between personal, situational variables, and career motivation (Fang et al., 2018).

The inherent challenges of the nursing profession, such as disparities in training, financial considerations, cultural and traditional values, gender differences, the work environment, and media representation of nurses, have a negative impact on individuals' motivation to choose this career (Ait Ali et al., 2024c; Jirwe & Rudman, 2012).

In Morocco, the healthcare system is considered among the countries suffering from a severe shortage of healthcare personnel, especially doctors and nurses (Ait Ali et al., 2024c). According to the Moroccan Ministry of Health, there are 9.2 nurses per 10,000 inhabitants across all sectors, a figure that also falls well below the standards set by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (Belyagou & Juridiques, 2022). More than 64000 new nurses will be needed in order to meet the nation's requirements (Azevedo, 2017). Nevertheless, unfavorable working conditions, the absence of specific legislation governing the nursing profession, as well as the societal image of nurses, among other factors, may contribute to making this profession and its training less appealing.

In light of the aforementioned evidence, this study aims mainly to explore the motivational factors influencing the decision of students to choose a nursing career and the associated factors, examining how socio-demographic characteristics such as sex and parental education level may influence these factors. Additionally, the current study delves into students' satisfaction with their chosen career path and their intentions regarding potential career changes.

Methods

Study Design

This study utilizes a descriptive, cross-sectional design to explore the motivational factors influencing students' choice of the nursing profession at the Higher Institute of Nursing and Health Technical Professions in Ouarzazate, Morocco.

Target Population and Sampling Method

The study was conducted at the Higher Institute of Nursing Professions and Health Techniques, which is one of the higher education institutions not affiliated with the university. The primary mission of these institutions is to educate competent nursing professionals. Admission to these institutes requires obtaining a high school diploma (baccalaureate), and student attendance is mandatory. The training program lasts for 3 years (with two semesters each academic year) and includes periods of theoretical training as well as clinical internships. The educational system follows the LMD (License-Master-Doctorate) system, with a modular approach implemented throughout the training.

A census was conducted on all students enrolled in the second, fourth, and sixth semesters of the bachelor's cycle who were active during the study period (complete enumeration sampling). The target population consisted of 441 students. However, students who declined to fill out the questionnaires, those who faced connectivity issues, absentees, and those who dropped out were excluded from the target population. Ultimately, 308 students completed the questionnaire. The study was conducted between February and June 2023.

Data Collection

Data collection was carried out through an online questionnaire developed based on extensive literature reviews. The questionnaire primarily consists of two sections.

Sociodemographic Data. This part comprises sociodemographic details of the students such as age, gender, option, and parents' educational level.

Factors Influencing the Choice of a Nursing Profession. This section aims to identify the various factors that motivated students to pursue this professional training. Based on the literature review (Al-Hallak et al., 2018; Khajeali, 2015; Liaw et al., 2016), these factors were categorized into four groups: personal, social, economic, and professional factors. Each category includes a set number of factors, with 7 factors in the personal category, 8 in the social category, 3 in the economic category, and 4 in the professional category. Students were asked to identify the factors motivating their pursuit of professional training and to indicate the level of

importance of each factor using a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1: "not important at all" to 4: "very important."

In the assessment of social factors, students were asked to indicate the degree of importance they assign to statements like "The possibility of training close to family was a determining factor." Regarding personal factors, an example of statements is "The nursing profession has been your dream since childhood." When it comes to economic factors, students were asked, for example, if "the salary of nurses is relatively competitive compared to other fields." Lastly, professional factors were examined through statements such as "The freedom to choose your specialty is an attractive aspect of the nursing profession."

A mean score was computed by summing the scores of the items within each category and dividing it by the total number of factors within that category. The Likert scale points 1 and 2 were combined to create a single level labeled "not important," while the third and fourth points were merged to form a category called "important."

The questionnaire demonstrated a reliability of 0.6 for the personal category, 0.64 for the economic category, 0.65 for the professional category, and 0.7 for the social category. The overall reliability, indicated by Cronbach's alpha, was 0.79.

To evaluate the comprehensibility and clarity of the questionnaire, a pre-test was conducted with 30 students from other nursing institutes (higher institute of Agadir and Kenitra). The pre-testing process involved administering the questionnaire to the selected students and collecting feedback regarding its clarity, relevance, and ease of understanding. The pre-testing results revealed that the questionnaire was generally well-received by the participants, with most indicating that the questions were clear and easy to understand. However, some minor revisions were suggested by the participants, such as clarifying certain terminology and rephrasing ambiguous questions. These suggestions were taken into consideration, and necessary revisions were made to enhance the clarity and comprehensibility of the questionnaire. Additionally, the questionnaire was validated by two nursing educators who reviewed its content, structure, and appropriateness for the target population. Based on their feedback, further revisions were made to ensure the questionnaire's validity and relevance to the study objectives.

Data Analysis

Initially, the collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to provide data characterization. Mean and standard deviation were calculated for continuous data, while percentages were used for categorical data. Comparisons of different scores were analyzed using the independent *t*-test and ANOVA test. The statistical software SPSS version "21.0" was used for data analysis. The level of significance was set at $P < .05$.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to data collection, participants were provided with detailed information about the nature and purpose of the

study and gave their informed consent. Protection of their privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality was ensured throughout the study. It should also be noted that the authors had approval from the Higher Institute of Nursing Professions and Health technics for collecting data. Additionally, the study obtained ethical approval from the Institutional Ethics Review Board of the Department of Applied Psychology of the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences (09/2022).

Results

Sample Characteristics

Out of 441 students, 308 completed the questionnaire, representing a participation rate of 69.84%.

Table 1. Distribution of Students by Socio-Demographic Characteristics and Academic Information.

		Number	%
Sex	Man	97	31.5%
	Women	211	68.5%
Age	Mean: 20, SD : 1		
Residential	Urban	160	51.9%
	Rural	148	48.1%
Semester	First year	155	50.30%
	Second year	76	24.70%
	Third year	77	25.00%
Parental higher education level	Preschool	66	21.40%
	Primary	68	22.10%
	Middle school	44	14.30%
	Secondary: high school	47	15.30%
	Higher education	83	26.90%
Speciality	Emergency and intensive care nurse	74	24.0%
	Family and community health nurse	30	9.7%
	General nurse	140	45.45%
	Nurse in Anesthesia and Intensive Care	64	20.8%
Baccalaureate (Secondary School Certificate)	Excellent	36	11.7%
	Good	129	41.9%
	Satisfactory	90	29.2%
	Fair	53	17.20%

Table 1 presents the sociodemographic data of the participants. A predominance of females, accounting for 68.5% of the participants, was observed. The average age of the participants was 20 years \pm 1 year, ranging from 17 to 25 years. The distribution by semester shows that most students were in their first year, representing 50.3% of the sample. Regarding the parents' education level, higher education was the most represented with 26.9% of parents, while primary and preschool education represented 22.1% and 21.4%, respectively. General nurses made up the largest proportion of specialties, accounting for 45.45% of students. 51.9% of students come from urban areas.

Research Question Results

Students' Satisfaction With Their Career Choice. Most students (88%) reported being satisfied with the option they had chosen, while only 12% said they were not satisfied with their choice. In addition, around 51.30% of students stated that nursing was their first choice, while 48.70% indicated that it was not their first choice. The results indicated that 25.0% of respondents were contemplating changing their profession, while 75.0% were not. Regarding students' intentions to emigrate, the results showed a balanced distribution between those planning to emigrate after graduation (49.3%) and those who did not (51.7%) (Table 2).

Factors Affecting Students' Decision to Pursue a Career in Nursing. The findings reveal that social factors were the most appealing category to students, with an average score of 2.48, followed by economic factors, which received an average score of 2.26. On the other hand, personal and professional factors were accorded less importance by students, as evidenced by their lower mean scores. This suggests that social and economic reasons were more decisive than personal and professional ones in students' decision to choose a nursing profession. Based on the results of the ANOVA, there were statistically significant differences between the means of the different categories of factors, $F(138.731)$, $P < .001$ (Table 3).

According to the students, the most significant social factor for choosing their training was the encouragement from their parents, followed by the belief that specializing in the nursing field is suitable for both men and women, and that nursing is considered one of the most trustworthy

Table 2. Career Choice, Satisfaction, and Future Intentions Among Nursing Students.

	Yes (%) N	No (%) N
Nursing as the first career choice	(51.3)158	(48.7)150
Satisfaction with the chosen career	(88)270	(12)37
Intentions to emigrate after graduation	(49.3)152	(51.7)159
Contemplating changing profession	(25)77	(75)231

Table 3. Factors Influencing Profession Selection: Mean Comparison Across the Four Domains.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	M(SD)	Mean square	F	P-Value
Social factors	305	1.10	4.00	2.48(0.5)	21.961	138.731	<.001
Personnal factors	308	1.00	4.00	2.01(0.46)			
Economic factors	308	1.00	3.75	2.26(0.5)			
Professional factors	305	1.00	4.20	1.91(0.47)			

and respected professions by the public. However, parental pressure to pursue this career was considered the least important factor (Table 4).

Regarding economic factors, job security, which entails a lower risk of unemployment, was perceived as a highly important factor by a high percentage of participants. However, salary competitiveness and ease of job mobility also played a role in the respondents' choice, albeit to a lesser extent (Table 5).

Additionally, the two most significant personal factors influencing students' decision to pursue nursing education were the desire to develop strong communication skills and positive relationships with others, as well as the aspiration to make a positive difference in people's lives through nursing work. On the other hand, considering this profession as a last resort after being rejected from medical school was seen as less important compared to other factors (Table 4).

In terms of professional factors, two factors emerged as the most significant reasons for choosing nursing. The first factor was their ambition to achieve a respected level in their professional career. The second most important factor was that nurses have the ability to change jobs. This prospect was considered very important or important by 84.8% of students surveyed, with a total of 261 responses combining "Very important" and "Important." On the other hand, flexible working hours was considered the least important factor for choosing a career in nursing (Table 5).

Based on the analysis of mean scores, it appears that the motivation levels of men and women were generally similar. However, women scored slightly higher scores in terms of economic and social factors, while men obtained higher scores for other categories of factors. The observed differences between men and women in all categories of factors were not statistically significant. Furthermore, the analysis of mean scores suggests that there were no significant differences in motivation levels between students coming from urban and rural environments (Table 6).

The analysis of scores in the economic, personal, professional, and social dimensions based on the parents' level of education was conducted. A significant difference was observed in the professional dimension ($F = 2.46$, $P = .04$), where parents with higher levels of education were associated with higher scores. This observation suggests that the family and educational background may influence students' professional motivation. As for other factors, no significant

difference was observed based on the parents' level of education ($P > .05$) (Table 7).

Discussion

The aim of this research is to gain a deeper understanding of the motivational factors influencing students' choice of a nursing profession and its associated factors, including how socio-demographic factors like gender and parental education level may play a role. The study also investigated students' satisfaction with their career choice and their intentions regarding future career changes.

Choosing a profession is a pivotal event that impacts individuals' happiness, success, and personal fulfillment in their lives. The nursing profession involves significant responsibilities, such as safeguarding and promoting health, as well as healing illnesses. Therefore, factors like interest, abilities, and desires should serve as prerequisites for selecting this profession. Students who make a more conscious career choice are likely to adapt more easily to their field of study and profession (Tarihi et al., 2020).

Predominantly, the sample was represented by females, accounting for 211 individuals (68.5% of the sample). This observation can be attributed to the significant appeal of the nursing profession to women. However, it may also pose a challenge for young men, who constitute only 97 individuals (31.5% of the sample), wishing to pursue this career. This finding aligns with the international trend showing a female predominance in the nursing field (Marcinowicz et al., 2016; Shudifat et al., 2023). In a similar study, it was reported that all participants, except for one man, were female. In Poland, nursing was predominantly practiced by women, which can influence participants' perceptions of the nursing profession (Marcinowicz et al., 2016). The task for nursing authorities, including administrators and educators, is to persist in encouraging greater male participation in the profession and to enhance its overall diversity.

Results indicate that 25.0% of respondents were considering changing their profession, while 75.0% were not. These findings are consistent with a study conducted in India by Patidar et al. (2011), where the majority of participants (93.4%) stated that they would still choose nursing and had no interest in changing their profession (Patidar et al., 2011). These findings suggest that the majority of individuals in the study were content with their choice of nursing career and did not wish to change professions. This may reflect their

Table 4. Social and Personal Factors Influencing Students' Choice of a Nursing Career: Percentage of Importance.

Factors motivating students to choose a nursing career	Important	Not Important	Factors motivating students to choose a nursing career	Important	Not important
Social factors			Personal factors		
- You have a family member who works in the profession, this influenced your decision	N 103 (%) 33.5	205 66.5	- The nursing profession was your dream since childhood	N 123 (%) 39.9	185 60.1
- Your parents encouraged you for this choice	N 233 (%) 75.6	75 24.4	- You like challenges and working in varied environments.	N 221 (%) 71.8	87 28.3
Your parents forced you to choose this profession	N 61 (%) 19.8	247 80.2	- You are curious and have an interest in research, and considering the pursuit of a doctoral degree.	N 245 (%) 79.5	63 20.5
- Most of your friends have applied for medical studies	N 96 (%) 31.2	211 68.5	- Your personal experience at the hospital, whether as a patient, visitor or during an operation, has left its mark on you and reinforced your desire to help others.	N 213 (%) 69.1	95 30.8
- The possibility of training close to family was a determining factor	N 162 (%) 52.6	146 47.4	- You aspire to make a positive difference in people's lives through your work as a nurse	N 281 (%) 91.2	27 8.7
- Specialization in the nursing field is suitable for both men and women	N 230 (%) 74.7	78 25.4	- This profession allows you to develop good communication skills and positive relationships with others.	N 287 (%) 93.2	21 6.8
- The nursing profession is classified among the most reliable and respected professions by the population.	N 230 (%) 74.7	77 25	- Since you were not accepted into medicine, you consider nursing as your last resort	N 121 (%) 39.3	187 60.7
- You are attracted by the prestige and appearance of nurses in our society.	N 160 (%) 52	148 48			

dedication to the nursing profession and overall satisfaction in their role. Additionally, considering the prevalence of women in the field, peer support and the feeling of belonging within the work environment might account for the significant number of individuals expressing a desire to continue in the profession (Clow et al., 2014).

Concerning the intention to emigrate after obtaining the diploma, results indicate that a significant percentage, 159 students (51.6%), have decided to emigrate after graduation. Similarly, another study found that the majority of respondents (92.5%) intended to migrate after completing their nursing studies (Poudel et al., 2018). In a similar context, Portia Mwini-Nyaledzigbor et al. (2014) observed a positive correlation between the intention to travel and the choice of a nursing career. They emphasized that this profession offers numerous opportunities to travel, gain diverse nursing experiences, and care for individuals from different cultures (Mwini-Nyaledzigbor et al., 2014). This finding is supported by the results of the present study, which showed that traveling abroad ranks among the most influential professional factors that motivate students to opt for a career in nursing.

Upon evaluating scores across the four categories of motivations, social factors were the most strongly mentioned,

with a mean of 2.48. Economic factors followed, with a mean of 2.25, followed by personal factors, with a mean of 2.00. Professional factors were given less importance, with a mean of 1.91. According to a study conducted by Salminen-Tuomaala and Herttuala in 2023, elements that could increase the appeal of the nursing profession include the need to evolve the social image of the profession, redefine the roles of nurses at various levels (individual, organizational, and societal), and emphasize the value and significance of nursing tasks (Salminen-Tuomaala & Herttuala, 2023). Unlike the results of the present study, the research conducted by Khajeali in 2015 found that social factors such as "family encouragement to study nursing" and "the social status of the nursing profession" were the least important, with means of 2.94 and 2.86, respectively (Khajeali, 2015).

Among all social factors, parental encouragement, followed by the belief that specializing in nursing is suitable for both genders and that nursing is classified among the most reliable and respected professions by the population, were considered the most determining factors in students' decision-making. In contrast to findings of this study, Salminen-Tuomaala and Herttuala in 2023 found that family opinion only mattered to 13% of the participants. In

Table 5. Economic and Professional Factors Influencing Students' Choice of a Nursing Career: Percentage of Importance.

Factors motivating students to choose a nursing career		Important	Not Important	Factors motivating students to choose a nursing career		Important	Not important
Economic factors				Professional Factors			
- The salary of nurses is relatively competitive compared to other fields.	N (%)	175 57	133 43	- The schedule is flexible is a factor that interested you.	N (%)	174 56.5	134 43.5
- This is a profession offering stability and a secure future with little risk of finding yourself unemployed.	N (%)	252 82	56 19	- The freedom to choose your specialty is an attractive aspect of the nursing profession	N (%)	256 83.1	52 16.9
- The nursing diploma would give you the opportunity to work abroad	N (%)	131 42	177 57	- You have the ambition to reach a respectful level in your professional career.	N (%)	267 86.7	41 13.3
				- Nurses have the ability to change jobs quite easily	N (%)	261 84.8	44 14.2

Table 6. Participants Scores for the Categories of Factors According to the Sex and Origin of the Students.

		Mean	SD	T	P-Value
Sex					
Economic factors	Male	2.19	0.57	1.61	.11
	Female	2.29	0.47		
Personal factors	Male	2.06	0.53	1.33	.18
	Female	1.98	0.43		
Professional factors	Male	1.93	0.59	0.54	.59
	Female	1.89	0.39		
Social factors	Male	2.43	0.55	1.31	.19
	Female	2.51	0.47		
Origin					
Economic factors	Urban	2.26	0.50	0.02	.99
	Rural	2.26	0.51		
Personal factors	Urban	2.01	0.49	0.01	.99
	Rural	2.01	0.44		
Professional factors	Urban	1.88	0.42	0.87	.39
	Rural	1.93	0.50		
Social factors	Urban	2.45	0.48	1.06	.29
	Rural	2.51	0.52		

another study conducted in Malaysia, “community respect for nurses” was ranked among the least influential reasons for nursing students’ choices. On the contrary, the role of parents exerts a significant influence on nursing students’ career choice (Geok Lim & Bin Muhtar, 2016).

Given the predominance of women in this study’s sample, placing greater emphasis on social factors for choosing nursing may reflect the broader societal trends observed in Moroccan culture. This may also reflect cultural perceptions of nursing as a nurturing and compassionate profession, which align with traditional gender stereotypes (Clow et al., 2014; Folami, 2017). Moreover, according to the study conducted by Öncü et al. (2022), the possibility of continuing in the profession increases among nursing students who have a higher opinion of the profession’s social status ($P = .010$) (Öncü et al., 2022).

In terms of personal factors, “developing good communication skills and positive relationships with others” as well as altruistic motivation, characterized by the desire to help others, are the most prominently mentioned factors by students. Previous studies have reached similar conclusions to those of the present study. These studies demonstrated that the primary influence on students’ decision to pursue a career in nursing was altruistic motivation. This motivation involves the desire to assist others, contribute to society, and value the profession, as well as self-perception of capabilities and prior experiences (Almutary & Al-Moteri, 2020; Geok Lim & Bin Muhtar, 2016; Halperin & Mashiach-Eizenberg, 2014; Wilkes et al., 2015).

Regarding economic factors, it is observed that a significant portion of students consider job security, implying minimal risk of unemployment, as a factor influencing their choice. This result supports Elibol et al.’s (2017) findings stating that a significant number of students (46.9%) selected nursing due to its perceived job security (Elibol et al., 2017). Conversely, less emphasis was placed on nurses’ salaries and traveling abroad. This result does not align with a previous study conducted in Malaysia, which highlighted that the travel opportunities offered by this training were considered “very important” and “important” by 56.4% and 35% of students, respectively. While only 8.5% thought otherwise (Geok Lim & Bin Muhtar, 2016). Furthermore, it is important to note that the issue of fair remuneration is not specific to nurses but also concerns many other healthcare professions. Healthcare professionals often invest a significant amount of time and effort in their training and professional development. They therefore expect fair and adequate compensation in return for their skills and commitment (dle Zulueta, 2016).

In terms of professional factors, results demonstrated that the ambition to reach a respected level in one’s professional career, and the possibility to change jobs are the two most motivating reasons for students. On the other hand, according to student responses, flexible scheduling was considered the

Table 7. Students' Motivating Factors for Choosing a Nursing Career According Their Parental Education Level.

Parental education level	Preschool	Primary	Middle school	Secondary/high school	Higher education	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i> -Value
Economic factors	2.2	2.29	2.3	2.22	2.28	0.41	.81
Personal factors	1.97	1.95	2.06	2.1	2	0.92	.45
Professional factors	1.76	1.94	2	1.99	1.9	2.46	.04
Social factors	2.52	2.51	2.43	2.45	2.47	0.31	.87

least important factor. Similarly, the study conducted in Malaysia revealed that flexibility in work hours was considered one of the less important reasons (Geok Lim & Bin Muhtar, 2016). Furthermore, the research conducted by Yeager and Wisniewski (2017) unveiled that professional-related factors such as flexibility of work schedule ($P < .001$), autonomy/employee empowerment ($P < .001$), specific duties and responsibilities ($P = .005$), and alignment with the organization's mission ($P = .02$) demonstrated a more pronounced impact on nurses (Yeager & Wisniewski, 2017).

Based on the analysis of mean scores, the levels of scores for men and women were similar in the economic, personal, professional, and social domains when choosing nursing studies. The lack of significant differences in motivational factors between men and women in nursing suggests that both genders are influenced by similar considerations when choosing the profession. This may indicate that perceptions of nursing as a caring and rewarding profession transcend gender stereotypes. Additionally, there were no significant differences in motivation levels between students from urban and rural environments in these same categories. In the same perspective, Mohsen et al. (2022), in their study conducted among high school students, found that there were no disparities between genders regarding the intention to choose a nursing profession. Furthermore, the results of their study did not show variations based on the students' place of residence (Mohsen et al., 2022).

Regarding the intention to emigrate after obtaining the diploma, individuals with the intention to emigrate obtained slightly higher scores in the economic, personal, and social domains. However, the significance levels indicated the absence of statistically significant differences between those considering emigration and those who do not, in terms of scores obtained for each category of factors. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the prospect of emigrating abroad remains a determining factor in students' choice, being considered the primary professional motive.

Furthermore, the scores in the economic, personal, professional, and social domains were examined based on the parents' level of education. A statistically significant difference was observed in the professional dimension ($F = 2.46$, $P = .04$), where higher levels of parental education were associated with higher scores in this dimension. These results suggest that family and educational background may have an influence, particularly on the students' professional

motivation. This is because highly educated parents often prioritize career advancement and the pursuit of professional fulfillment, potentially shaping their children's career aspirations.

Implications for Practice

The study of the factors for choosing the nursing profession holds considerable importance. Firstly, it can shed light on recruitment strategies aimed at attracting individuals possessing the necessary qualities for a successful nursing career. Efforts should be made to promote the nursing profession, highlighting its rewarding aspects such as job security, opportunities for career advancement, and the chance to make a meaningful impact on society. This can help attract more individuals, including men, to consider nursing as a viable and fulfilling career option. Additionally, creating a more male-friendly environment in nursing is essential. Understanding the motivations behind males entering the profession and their educational journey can be beneficial.

Secondly, it can contribute to the development of targeted interventions and support programs for nursing students, thereby enhancing their satisfaction and retention rates, while addressing the shortage of qualified nurses (Ait Ben Ali et al., 2024; Tusha et al., 2024). Healthcare organizations can implement strategies to improve the working environment for nurses, professional development opportunities, and overall professional satisfaction. Policies should be developed to address the concerns of nursing students who intend to emigrate after obtaining their diploma. This may include creating incentives for them to stay in the country, such as career advancement opportunities and competitive salaries. However, the results presented in the study can be understood within the framework of conditions specific to each country, especially in the healthcare sector. This interpretation is applicable to countries facing similar circumstances. It underscores the significance of considering local contexts and healthcare systems when applying these findings to different regions or nations. This tailored approach is crucial for effectively addressing the unique challenges and opportunities that exist within diverse healthcare landscapes.

Strengths and Limitations

This study has notable limitations that should be recognized. It primarily employs a quantitative research method heavily

dependent on self-reported statements. To gain deeper insights into the matter of career choice, future research endeavors could enrich their approach by integrating qualitative methods. Moreover, given the single-center focus of this study, it is advised to exercise caution when generalizing the findings.

Conclusion

Nurses undeniably play a pivotal role in healthcare, offering essential care and support to patients while also promoting health and preventing diseases. However, the shortage of nursing personnel is a pressing and often overlooked issue that will only worsen over time. Therefore, understanding the motivations behind career choices among nursing students is of paramount importance to ensure recruitment appeal and retention within this profession.

Remarkably, the findings revealed that the strongest impetus behind students' choice of nursing lies in their desire to contribute to society and make a positive difference in the lives of others. Additionally, economic factors emerged as significant influencers in their career decisions.

To effectively support and empower nursing professionals, it is essential to address several critical areas. Firstly, there is a pressing need to enhance training conditions and offer competitive salaries to attract and retain talented individuals in the field. Moreover, providing flexible work arrangements can foster job satisfaction and improve the overall well-being of nurses.

Furthermore, efforts should be directed towards reshaping public perceptions of nursing as a rewarding and esteemed profession. Collaborating with career counselors and educational institutions to dispel misconceptions about nursing and highlight its fulfilling aspects can aid in attracting more individuals to the field. By emphasizing these crucial aspects, the development of a robust and sustainable nursing workforce capable of meeting the dynamic demands of the healthcare landscape can be ensured.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Ethical Statement

This study received ethical approval from the Institutional Ethics Review Board of the Department of Applied Psychology of the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences (09/2022).

Funding

The authors disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This research funded by the "Le Centre National de Recherche Scientifique et Technique, Maroc" (grant number Cov/2020/28).

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