Research Article

The Immigration of Albanian Nurses, the Reasons and Importance of Interprofessional Communication

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Abstract

Introduction: Communication between nurses and patient's family members affects the patient's well-being, safety at work and the quality of nursing care. Thus, communication is a linking bridge between the basic elements in practicing the nurse profession. On the other hand, the attraction of nursing immigration, especially from low-income countries to higher-income countries, has become a matter of global interest. This phenomenon has spread to Albania in recent years. Then there is the need to identify what the reasons are for these Albanian nurses to leave their home country and exercise their profession while on immigration.

Purpose: To ascertain that communication in the workplace and support from relevant administrative structures are factors that have hampered working conditions and affected their decision to emigrate?

Material and Method: This study included a group of 117 nurses who have begun their licensing procedures in Germany. The selection was random. The study was conducted through a standard 20-question questionnaire, adapted from a combination of studies, communication, and factors affecting nurse immigration. Data were analyzed by SPSS 21. Statistically significant differences were obtained for $p < 0.05$.

Results: 117 nursing staff participated in the study, 87 (74.4%) were females, 30 (25.6%) males, with significant difference between them ($p < 0.01$). The mean age of participants was 27.3 (SD ± 5.6) years ranging from 21 years to 50 years. Nurses of 21-30 years age group predominate with 90 (76.9%) of total respondents ($p < 0.01$) and 72 (61.5%), with <1 year of work experience ($p < 0.01$). Nurses who worked or practiced in the department of internal diseases and department of different pathologies were 76 (65%), ($p < 0.01$). 70 (59.8%) of the respondents think that the working environment affects their relationship with the patient's family ($p = 0.04$). Half of employees 57 (50%) report that managers and coordinators are rarely supportive and responsive to their requests, ($p < 0.01$). 85 (73.9%) report that often responsibilities and disadvantages at work influence their decision to emigrate ($p < 0.01$). More than half of the employees, 62 (53%) cited "Better Working Conditions" as the reason for practicing a nurse's job in immigration, with significant change ($p < 0.01$). Also, almost all 97 nurses (85.8%) think that training of family members and defining their specific contribution to patient pathology is effective ($p < 0.01$).

Discussions: This study reflects the urgent need to improve working conditions, increase pay, improve relationships between executives and healthcare professionals in Albania.

Conclusions: The Albanian health system needs a qualitative change in the creation of a cooperative and motivational professional environment, as an essential point in motivating nurses to practice their profession in our country.

Keywords: Immigration; Albanian Nurses; Reasons; Interprofessional Communication

Introduction

Communication is the backbone of the art and science of nursing [1]. It also affects the patient's well-being and the quality of nursing care [1,2]. One study shows that distress and anxiety are the consequence of the destruction of communication between family members and health care personnel, resulting in the inability to focus and the inadequacy of the coping mechanism [3]. A safe workplace is a healthy and powerful source of pleasure for nurses [4]. If nurses have a convenient and satisfactory work environment, this will affect the quality of service and patient safety. Studies show that, in the United States, patients in two of the seven hospitals surveyed still suffer from accidents, and about 44% of them are considered preventable [5]. Nursing calmness is an important factor for patient safety, as inadequate nursing care leads directly to negative outcomes for the patient [6]. In one of our studies, we found that 75% of respondents were at risk for HIV transmission, precisely because of the exposure to injection during routine procedures. So carelessness and failure to take proper measures in routine procedures can endanger not only healthcare professionals but also their patients [7]. Therefore, the best way to prevent these exposures, which affect the nurse's well-being and the quality of nursing care, is to properly manage all care steps in the daily professional routine [8,9]. On the other hand, policies developed by host countries lure nurses and are seen as the only current solution to better working conditions and professional growth. The immigration of nurses, especially from low- and middle-income countries to higher-income countries, has become a matter of global concern. The recruitment practices of many of these low- and middle-income countries, particularly African countries, are deteriorating and unable to maintain the number of nurses produced by their colleges and universities [10]. This phenomenon has also spread to Albania in recent years. Then there is the need to identify what are the reasons that compel these Albanian professionals to leave their country and practice their profession in the German state?

Scope

The main purpose of this study is to identify the factors that influence the immigration of Albanian nurses out of Albania.

The objectives of the study include finding reasons that affect immigration, communication between health professionals, support for nurses by administrative structures, and security of working conditions.

The phenomenon of immigration of nurses has spread to alarming numbers in our country. In this case, there is a need to understand and identify, what were the reasons that influenced this choice? Did they have an impact on the quality of service to the patient and their family members? For this, we had to incorporate the strengths of the profession, communication in the professional environment, support from the relevant administrative structures, and security of working conditions. What did the nurses think about the strategies to be taken to change this phenomenon and to practice the profession of nursing in Albania?

Material and Methods

A quantitative approach was used in this study. Included are a group of 117 nurses who have begun procedures for practicing in Germany. The selection was random. The study was conducted through an anonymous standard questionnaire consisting of 20 questions, combined by two studies, nurse immigration and communication [11,12]. Annex A - demographic data. Annex B - relation of communication and working conditions. Annex C - specific questions.

Statistical analysis methodology

SPSS 21.0 statistical software was used for data analysis. The categorical variables were presented according to their absolute and relative frequency expressed as a percentage and the Hi-square test (χ^2) and Fisher's exact test were used for comparison. Continuous data are presented with mean (M) and standard deviation (SD). Statistical significance was set at $p \leq 0.05$. Statistical tests are two-sided. Tables and graphs are used to visualize the data.

Results

Variables	N	%	P
Sex			
Females	87	74.4	<0.01*
Males	30	25.6	
Age, M (SD)	27.3 (±5.6)	[21-50]	
Age group, years			<0.01*
21-30	90	76.9	
31-40	23	19.7	
41-50	4	3.4	
Experience			

<1	72	61.5	<0.01*
1-10	38	32.5	
11-20	4	3.4	
21-30	3	2.6	
Labor Sector			<0.01*
Pathology and Internal Diseases	76	65.0	
Surgery	13	11.1	
Pediatrics	4	3.4	
Laboratory	2	1.7	
Other	22	18.8	

Table 1: Sociodemographic characteristics.

*significant change.

The study was attended by 117 nurses, the majority of whom 87 (74.4%) were female and 30 (25.6%) male, with a significant difference between them (p < 0.01). The mean age of participants was 27.3 (± 5.6) years ranging from 21 years to 50 years. Nurses of 21-30 years of age predominate with 90 (76.9%) of the total cases (p < 0.01) and those with <1 year of work experience, 72 (61.5%), (p < 0.01). Most of the nurses belong to the Pathology and Internal Diseases sector, 76 (65%), (p < 0.01).

Questions	N	%	P
Managers and coordinators are supportive and responsive to your requests?			
Never	13	11.4	<0.01*
Rarely	57	50.0	
Often	44	38.6	
Responsibilities and disadvantages at work affect your decisions to leave and seek immigration to another country?			
Never	12	10.4	<0.01*
Rarely	18	15.7	
Often	85	73.9	

Table 2

*Significant difference.

The majority of employees 57 (50%) report that managers and coordinators are rarely supportive and responsive to their requests, (p < 0.01) - The majority of employees 85 (73.9%) report that responsibilities and disadvantages at work often influence their decisions to leave and seek immigration to another country, (p < 0.01).

Assertions	N	%
Better working conditions	62	53.0
Higher salaries	21	17.9
Professional dignity	11	9.4
Good behavior of family and patients	7	6.0
Nothing	16	13.7
Total	117	100.0

Table 3: What advantages do you think will change your mind about staying in Albania?

Most of the employees, 62 (53%) mentioned "Better working conditions" as the reason for changing their minds and staying in Albania, with significant change (p < 0.01).

No significant difference was found regarding the advantages of changing opinion by age group (p = 0.4). All ages think alike.

As the statistical data show, the immigration of nurses is currently unavoidable. Working conditions, higher salaries, professional evaluation of interpersonal relationships and patients' families are the determining factors for this decision.

Discussion and Conclusion

Most of the respondents 87 (74.4%) were females and 30 (25.6%) males, with significant difference between them (p < 0.01). According to a study (UNESCAP, 1999), the departure of qualified female nurses is a loss for their country, losing the resources invested in their education. The Philippine government used this fact as one of the main sources of foreign currency for their country. The average age of participants was 27.3 (± 5.6) years, ranging from 21 to 50 years, with over 21-30 year olds nurses predominating. 90 (76.9%) of the total cases (p < 0.01) and 72 (61.5%) those with <1 year of work experience, (p < 0.01). A worrying situation not only in Albania but this is also evidenced by similar studies, where younger nurses are identified as more likely to emigrate, leading

to an older workforce [13]. At a press conference, German Health Minister Spahn stressed that the recruitment of nurses from Albania and Kosovo through a "coordinated action in the health care sector" program should be beneficial to both parties. Albania has been sending nurses to Germany for three years now. Currently, only from the Tirana branch there are approximately 1000 nurses preparing to leave via DEKRA Academy Students and so far, there have been sent around 1200 licensed nurses to Germany from 2016 - 07.2018. Currently, the number is increasing [14]. How interested are our nurses in improving the factors that adversely affect their practice? The study found that only 1/3 of them (35.9%) participated in communication-based science activities, most often with 1 -10 years of work (57.9%) and (75%) having 11-20 years of work with significant difference with other categories, (p < 0.01). But studies show that attending these conferences or trainings yields positive results, especially in the interactions between nurse-patient, nurse-patient relationships, and the elimination of barriers to promoting patient well-being [15]. Also, nurses emigrating from developing countries, have a cultural level different from that of domestic professionals, which influences their social behavior, e.g. the lower the cultural level of an individual, the higher the risk for stress in a relationship or conflict with family members and colleagues. According to a German nurse, a major stressor impeding the cooperation of immigrant colleagues is language. Experiencing communication difficulties with their immigrant counterparts is severe and this adversely affects their work [16]. Despite their low attendance at communication conferences, 97 (85.8%) think that, training family members and specifying their contribution to patient pathology is effective (p < 0.01). Statistics revealed 70 (59.8%) nurses report that the work environment affects their relationship with the patient's family (p = 0.04). in some cases it is also evidenced by family violence against professionals [17]. Studies have shown that physical and psychological safety of nurses is an important priority in health organizations [18]. Based on the studies reviewed, a safe workplace, a healthy and comfortable working environment, were positively associated with the nurses' psychological health, and negatively related with the emotional stress of the nurses [19,20]. This has been evidenced in other studies where, the stress levels of the nurses were directly related to their workload, the number of patients assigned per nurse [21]. Also, satisfaction and healthy work environments are the determining factors for nursing retention, positively influencing perceptions of their autonomy, control over practice, relationships

between nurses, and healthy organizational support [22]. Poor working conditions are negatively associated with nurse burnout syndrome, dissatisfaction, and intention to leave [23]. The majority of 57 (50%) employees report that managers and coordinators are rarely supportive and responsive to their requests, (p < 0.01. Negative workplace relationships can intensify nurses' intent not only to leave work units as clinical nurses, but also quit nursing as a profession [19,24]. Of the respondents, 85 (73.9%) report that responsibilities and disadvantages at work often influence their decisions to leave and immigrate to another country (p < 0.01). Difficulties in working conditions are encountered not only in Albanian hospitals but also in Germany, where our nurses immigrate more often, and the nurses' workplace is characterized by physical and psychological duties leading to musculoskeletal pain and job dissatisfaction. It is also noted that immigrant health workers experience additional stressors, such as discrimination practices and stress from changing cultures. 62 (53%) (p < 0.01) mentioned "Better working conditions". The most problematic was the fact that no significant difference was found regarding the advantages of changing age group opinion (p = 0.4), therefore, all ages thought the same way, immigrating abroad. No significant change was found in terms of the advantages of changing opinion according to work experience, (p = 0.3). That is, work experience does not affect the decision to leave the country. All young and experienced professionals had the same goal, immigration.

Recommendations

These recommendations would be useful for health, educational institutions, especially in health education, scientific research and health training programs. Study statistics can be used to inform health and healthcare decision makers about what needs to be done to improve communication patterns between healthcare providers and patients' families, and to promote nurse performance and productivity [19]. The following should be achieved: impact on internal and external factors. External factors include, nurse work environments, work communications, personal benefits, transit, and teaching/learning opportunities. Intrinsic factors include nurses, memory, quantity and quality of sleep, perceived workload and stress [26]. An optimal work environment is one that values employee strengths and contributions, at times encouraging effective communication and support between staff and organizations [27], staff empowered for active decision making, teamwork involvement [28].

Authors' Contribution

- Anila CAKE 1, Conception, design and drafting of the article.
- Joana MIHANI 2, Reviewing the data with the literature.
- Alketa HOXHA 1,2, English language support and adaptation.
- Ergys RAMOSAÇO 2, Administrative and logistic support for data collection.
- Rovena Stroni 2 Data collection and literature review.
- Approach AVDAJ 3, Review of literature and structure of the paper.
- Gentian STRONI1, Data collection and literature review.
- Agron Bytyci3 Reviewing the design of the paper and the drafting of the article.
- Artan SIMAKU4 Data analysis and interpretation.

Highlights

- Female and very young nurses have the greatest tendency to practice the profession while on immigration.
- The training of family members on the pathology of the patient and the specific determination of their contribution is effective in communicating between the patient and his family.
- Responsibilities and disadvantages at work influence their immigration decisions.
- Better working conditions, high salaries, professional evaluation, good behavior of patients and family members are the main reasons for the immigration of Albanian nurses, regardless of age and work experience.

Declaration of Competing Interest

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Declaration of Competing Interest

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