

Thoughts of The Community on Care Provided By Different Generations of Nurses

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to examine the thoughts of the community regarding care provided by different generations of nurses. It is a descriptive research. The research sample consisted of 500 individuals over the age of 18. Average age of individuals included in the research sample was 30.48 (±8.76). The participant profile was 53.2% male, 47.4% graduate, 39.6% self-employed and 80% lived in the city center. The results revealed that 75% of generation Y participants “maintained higher quality care”, 72.6% “were more hygienic in care”, 62.4% “complied with the ethical principles”, 61.4% “informed the patients before the interventions”, 56.8% “managed the time better”, 55% “had a better command of theoretical knowledge”, 53% “were more careful and conscious in drug applications”, 82.2% “used more technology in nursing care” and 84.6% “were more willing to work”. Moreover, the results revealed that 59.2% of generation X nurses “provided better care training to family members” and 49.4% “were more successful in transferring the theoretical knowledge to practice”. Generation Y is more successful in several steps of nursing care process than other generations. Considering the expectations of the society, nursing education and curriculum and in-house business planning which generation of nurses should be considered.

Keywords: Community, generations, nursing care, nurses

INTRODUCTION

Generation is a concept which refers individuals born in certain time periods and grouped together according to certain common characteristics affected from similar environmental factors and events (Polat, 2018). Generation classification can be performed in many areas including social life, education, technology and health. Today's nursing workforce is made up of three generations. Chronologically, generations are classified as Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964), generation X (born between 1965-1979) and generation Y (born between 1980-2000) (Berkowitz and Schewe, 2011). Baby Boomers grew up in a period when people could have more prosperous lives after the Second World War. The society enabled this generation to express themselves better and see themselves as individuals (Hill, 2004). Generation X nurses are skillful, free-spirited, balanced and self-confident people who like working individually. People in this generation try to have a balance between their private lives and work and do not like flexible working hours (Polat, 2018). With the advancement of technology, generation X individuals started to keep up pace with technology. Generation Y is made up of independent, highly self-confident people (Hill, 2004). Individuals in this generation attach importance to sharing thoughts and do not avoid teamwork. Since generation Y is the first generation to grow up with technology, all of them enjoy equal access to technology (Polat, 2018) and have no difficulty using technological devices (Sevinç and Kavgaoglu, 2019). An analysis of generations in nursing shows that for Baby Boomer generation nurses, the nursing job is a very important part of their lives and they have high job satisfaction levels.

Generation X nurses describe themselves as diligent, optimistic and self-confident individuals in working life. It is reported that these two generations can be supported with essentialist and traditional styles of practices for their nursing training and with practices to improve their emotional commitment for their managerial skills. It is stated that generation Y nurses work in teams and use the technology very well (Sevinç and Kavgaoglu, 2019). When we reviewed the studies on working styles of nurses in different generations, we found that Baby Boomer generation primarily preferred working in full-time shifts. Generation Y preferred working in training hospitals while Baby Boomers generation usually wanted to work in community hospitals. Baby Boomer generation was more satisfied with their jobs than generations X and Y. A large number of nurses in generation Y feel more burned out while the Baby Boomers had the lowest burnout levels (Widger et al., 2007). Karasu et al. (2017) found in their study that generation X had higher average job satisfaction scores than generation Y (Karasu et al., 2017). In a study conducted by Durmaz Edeer et al. in 2019, it was found that generation X nurses had higher job satisfaction than generation Y when the job was compatible with their education, personality and skills and when the workplace order and technological opportunities were satisfying (Durmaz Edeer et al., 2019). In another study, it was found that as job satisfaction and cooperation of the healthcare professionals increased, the quality of patient care increased as well (Chang et al., 2009). A review of literature studies show that as a result of being a part of different generations, nurses have different characteristics and expectations in working life. These differences lead to

different expectations from workplaces and a failure to meet these expectations may affect the patient satisfaction. Some studies are available on the job satisfaction and burnout levels of different generations of nurses depending on their units or institutions (Chang et al., 2009; Karasu et al., 2017; Durmaz Edeer et al., 2019). However, in the literature, there are no studies on the perception of patients or community regarding the care provided by different generations of nurses. Therefore, the aim of this research is to examine the thoughts of the community regarding care provided by different generations of nurses.

MATERIALS and METHODS

Study design

The study was conducted as a descriptive cross-sectional study.

Study setting and sample

This study was conducted between January and February of 2017 in the Shopping Malls of a city located in the southeast of Turkey. The study sample consisted of 500 individuals aged 18 and above.

Data collection tools

Study data was collected using a data collection tool prepared by the researchers in line with the literature (Hill, 2004; Berkowitz and Schewe, 2011; Adigüzel et al., 2014; Polat, 2018). The form included 17 questions regarding the socio-demographic characteristics such as “*age, gender, education, occupation and area of residence*” and thoughts of the community on care provided by different generations of nurses. While assessing the care provided by different generations of nurses, generations were

classified according to the birth year of nurses as follows: 18-37 age group was in the generation Y (1980-1999), 38-52 age group was in the generation X (1965-1979) and the age group 53 and above was in the Baby Boomers (1946-1964).

Ethical considerations

A permission was received from the institutions where the study was conducted and an informed consent was obtained from the participants after giving information on the informed consent form and the study.

Data collection

Firstly, the individuals were informed by the researchers on the study aim and confidentiality principles in an appropriate setting. Then, each of the patients agreeing to participate in the study filled in a questionnaire form. After the questionnaire form was filled in by the participant, it was given to the researcher. During the fill-in process of the questionnaire, the researchers were present in the room and answered the questions of the participants, if any.

Data assessment

The research data were analyzed using the package software of SPSS 16.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). In accordance with the aim of the study, descriptive statistics such as count, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used in data assessment.

RESULTS

The average age of individuals in the sample was 30.48(±8.76) years. 53.2% of them were male, 47.4% of them were university graduates, 39.6% of them were self-employed and 80.8% of them lived in the city centre (Table 1). Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of participants (*n*: 500)

Variable	Count / Mean	Percentage
Age	30.48±8.76	
Gender		
Female	234	46.8
Male	266	53.2
Education		
Literate	15	3.0
Primary school	28	5.6
Middle school	54	10.8
High school	166	33.2
University	237	47.4
Occupation		
Civil servant	35	7.0
Teacher	66	13.2
Architect, Engineer and Technician	29	5.8
Self-employed	198	39.6
Housewife	65	13.0
Doctor, Pharmacist and Aesthetician	20	4.0
Accountant	10	2.0
Student	54	10.8
Journalist	1	0.2
Lawyer	3	0.6
Salesperson, Cashier and Secretary	19	3.8
Place of Residence		
City	404	80.8
Town	96	19.2
Total	500	100

75% of the participants reported that generation Y “provided higher quality care”, 60.8% said that they were “more humane in the provision of care”, 72.6% stated that they “provided a more hygienic care”, 62.4% reported that they “complied with the ethical principles”, 61.4% said that they “informed the patients better prior to interventions”, 56.8% expressed that they “had better time management skills”, 55% reported that they “had a better command of

theoretical knowledge”, 53% said that they “administered the drugs more carefully and consciously”, 82.2% stated that they “used more technology in nursing care” and 84.6% reported that they “worked more diligently and eagerly”. 59.2% of participants said that the generation X “provided better care training to family members” and 49.4% of them reported that they were “more successful in transferring the theoretical knowledge into practice” (Table 2).

Table 2. Thoughts of the community on care provided by different generations of nurses (*n*: 500)

Variables	Generation Y (aged 18 – 37)	Generation X (aged 38-52)	Baby Boomers (aged 53 and above)
	Count (%)	Count (%)	Count (%)
I think they provide higher quality care.	375 (75.0)	112 (22.4)	13 (2.6)
I think they are more humane in the provision of care.	304 (60.8)	176 (35.2)	20 (4.0)
I think they provide a more hygienic care.	363 (72.6)	121 (24.2)	16 (3.2)
I think they give importance to ethical principles in the provision of care.	312 (62.4)	162 (32.4)	26 (5.2)
I think they inform the patients better before the interventions.	307 (61.4)	173 (34.6)	20 (4.0)
I think they train the family members on the care better.	182 (36.4)	296 (59.2)	22 (4.4)
I think they are better at time management.	284 (56.8)	196 (39.2)	20 (4.0)
I think they have a better command of theoretical knowledge.	275 (55.0)	171 (34.2)	54 (10.8)
I think they are more successful in transferring theoretical knowledge into practice.	217 (43.4)	247 (49.4)	36 (7.2)
I think they are more careful and conscious about the drug administration.	265 (53.0)	202 (40.4)	33 (6.6)
I think they use more technology in nursing care.	411 (82.2)	77 (15.4)	12 (2.4)
They work more diligently and eagerly.	423 (84.6)	62 (12.4)	15 (3.0)

DISCUSSION

In this section, the findings of this study regarding “thoughts of the community on care provided by different generations of nurses” will be discussed in the light of literature. In the present study, most of the individuals in the sample thought that the generation Y provided higher quality care, were more humane in the provision of care, provided a more hygienic care, complied with the ethical principles, gave information prior to any intervention, managed the time more efficiently, had a better command of theoretical knowledge, acted more carefully and consciously in drug administrations, used more technology in nursing care and worked more diligently and eagerly when compared to generation X and Baby Boomers. In the literature, no

studies were available on the perception of community regarding the care provided by different generations of nurses. The characteristics of Generation Y show that they are the most populous generation in Turkey as well as in the world and represent a generation described as the internet generation, that is very interested in technology and uses technology immensely, is open to change, hard to satisfy, self-confident, ambitious, impatient, dislikes taking orders/hierarchy and attaches great importance to education (Widger et al., 2001; Wilson et al., 2008; Chang et al., 2009; Akdemir and Konakay, 2014; Gürbüz, 2015; Karasu et al., 2017; Göksel and Güneş, 2017; Kaplan and Çarıkçı, 2018; Sevinç and Kavgaoğlu, 2019). It was reported that the work schedule of generation Y nurses was a

threat to older generations of nurses in terms of adaptation, performance, learning style, technology knowledge, priorities and occupational image (Haydari et al., 2016). It was revealed in a study that generation Y nurses wanted to work in training hospitals while the Baby Boomers generation usually preferred working in community hospitals (Widger et al., 2007). Individuals in generation Y are open to innovations and like standing out and getting appreciation (Kuşaklı et al., 2019). In a study investigating the generations in terms of innovation which is an important aspect to improve the quality of nursing care, it was detected that generation Y nurses pioneered the innovations while generation X nurses questioned their benefits (Başoğlu and Edeer, 2017). Similarly, it is reported in the literature that, following the involvement of generation Y nurses in working life, there has been a transition from the physician-dependent roles of Baby Boomers and generation X nurses to nurses who produce knowledge, make efforts to maximize their nursing practice skills, question the practices and realize the need to know the accuracy of practices that require consideration (Kuşaklı et al., 2019). A literature review demonstrated that the thoughts of community on the care provided by generation Y nurses were compatible with their characteristics. However, when the literature studies were reviewed in terms of variables such as job satisfaction and liking the profession which were thought to have a positive effect on an individual's quality of care, it was found that generation X had higher job satisfaction scores (Karasu et al., 2017; Durmaz Edeer et al., 2019), had lower scores of intention to leave the profession (Haydari et al., 2016; Esencan and Özdil, 2017) and liked their jobs more than generation Y (Esencan and

Özdil, 2017). Therefore, it is considered that further studies on the community thoughts on the care provided by different generations of nurses will contribute to better interpretation and clarification of the behaviors of nurses depending on generations. The present study revealed that the majority of participants thought that the generation X provided a better care training to family members and was more successful in transferring the theoretical knowledge into practice compared to the generation Y and Baby Boomers. The generation X is known for their leadership, competitiveness, peace with technology and knowledge, entrepreneurship, goal oriented spirit and commitment to their institutions and working in the same place for a long time. It is highlighted that this generation cares about socialization, gives importance to global social problems and gender equality, prioritizes optimism, reliability and health in working life and represents values such as dynamism, diligence and commitment (Widger et al., 2007; Wilson et al., 2008; Chang et al., 2009; Akdemir and Konakay, 2014; Gürbüz, 2015; Haydari et al., 2016; Göksel and Güneş, 2017; Kaplan and Çarıkçı, 2018; Sevinç and Kavgaoğlu, 2019). Likewise, in a number of literature studies, it was reported that the generation X had higher job satisfaction scores (Karasu et al., 2017; Durmaz Edeer et al., 2019), had lower scores of intention to leave the profession (Haydari et al., 2016; Esencan and Özdil, 2017) and liked their jobs more than the generation Y (Esencan and Özdil, 2017). A literature review indicated that such characteristics of generation X nurses as peace with knowledge, goal oriented spirit, commitment to institutional policies, liking their jobs and sensitivity to social problems resulted in providing better care training to family members

and being perceived to be more successful in transferring theoretical knowledge into practice. Study findings demonstrated that the Baby Boomers were perceived by people to be less successful in all areas of nursing care than other generations of nurses. Individuals in this generation have high sense of loyalty, are contented with what they have and also work in the same workplace for a long time. They are diligent, idealist and consistent in their decisions but also have some negative characteristics such as a sense of control, workaholic and selfishness. This generation of individuals believes in the importance of hard and long hours of work. They can motivate themselves and do not like being appreciated. Their priority in working life is the salary (Widger et al., 2007; Wilson et al., 2008; Chang et al., 2009; Akdemir and Konakay, 2014; Gürbüz, 2015; Göksel and Güneş, 2017; Kaplan and Çarıkçı, 2018; Sevinç and Kavgaoglu, 2019). For Baby Boomer nurses, the nursing job is a significant part of their lives and they have high job satisfaction levels (Sevinç and Kavgaoglu, 2019). Nurses in the Baby Boomers generation primarily prefer working in full-time shifts (12-14 hours a day). Generation Y nurses prefer working in training hospitals, while the Baby Boomers generally prefer working in community hospitals. It is emphasized that the Baby Boomers are more content with their jobs and feel less burned out than the generations X and Y (Widger et al., 2007). Thus, the characteristics of Baby Boomers such as being work-driven and workaholic and not being interested in appreciation enable them to have higher job satisfaction and less burnout levels than other generations. It is considered that due to these characteristics, the community finds the nursing care provided by Baby Boomers less

successful than the care provided by other generations. Another reason can be that the participants met less number of Baby Boomer nurses. It was detected in the literature studies that nurses had different styles of performing the profession and projecting it on the community due to their educational differences, which negatively affected the professional image of nurses. Another important factor for the nursing image is the knowledge of nurses, update of this knowledge and transfer of accurate information (Sabancıoğulları and Doğan, 2011). According to a literature study, as the training duration of nurses increased and working hours decreased, they had improved professional attitudes (Dikmen et al., 2014). Therefore, it is thought that generation X and Y nurses are perceived more positively than Baby Boomers because they are assumed to have higher educational levels and more updated knowledge due to their young age.

CONCLUSION

Study results show that generation Y nurses are found to be more successful in many steps of nursing care process than other generations of nurses. In this study, a great number of participants thought that the generation Y nurses provided a higher quality care, were more humane in the provision of care, provided a more hygienic care, complied with the ethical principles, informed the patients better prior to any intervention, managed the time more efficiently, had a better command of theoretical knowledge, acted more carefully and consciously in drug administrations, used more technology in nursing care and worked more diligently and eagerly when compared to generation X and Baby Boomers. It was found that the generation X was more successful than the other two generations

in giving care training to family members and transferring the theoretical knowledge into practice. It was detected that the Baby Boomers were perceived by people to be less successful in all areas of nursing care than other generations of nurses. Considering the people's expectations, the nursing education and curricula should be planned according to the characteristics of generations in a manner to improve the success of nursing students in classes and nursing care. In order to offer/provide efficient, effective and high-quality care and increase the patient satisfaction in healthcare organizations/institutions, the nursing workforce planning should be made according to the generations to which the nurses belong. It is recommended that healthcare management authorities should take into consideration especially the expectations of different generations of nurses, boost their motivation in accordance with their expectations and thus assess the satisfaction of patients regarding care provided by different generations of nurses. There are a limited number of studies on generation differences in terms of nursing care, management and training. Therefore, it is recommended to conduct further studies on this subject.

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