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**Nursing applicants' desire to work in nursing and related factors: a cross-sectional study**

**Abstract**

**Background:** The desire to work in the nursing profession has recently been identified as an important aspect to consider in the selection process of nursing students but very little is known about nursing applicants' or students' desire to work in nursing.

**Aims:** The study aimed to describe and explain the desire of undergraduate nursing applicants to work in nursing.

**Design:** A cross-sectional study design.

**Methods:** The Desire to Work in Nursing Instrument was used to collect the data. All nursing applicants (N = 974) who took part in an entrance examination organised in six Universities in October 2018 were eligible to participate. 841 applicants (response rate 86%, 102 males) participated in the study. Statistical analysis included the use of descriptive statistics and linear regression was used to assess if dependent variables explained the observed outcomes.

**Results:** A strong desire to work in nursing was demonstrated in all the four areas. The most common reason to desire this work was suitability to nursing and the nature of work, and the least common was the career opportunities. Gender, previous education, and a realistic image best explain the desire.

**Conclusions:** The assessment of desire to work in nursing may assist career choice of nursing applicants, and may enhance recruitment and retention in nursing education. Applicants need to be more aware of the career development possibilities. Further studies are needed to

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investigate if the desire to work in nursing is different to men than to women to inform recruitment strategies.

keywords: education, nursing, baccalaureate; student selection; applicants; school admission criteria; career choice; desire to work in nursing

Impact statement: Understanding applicants' desire to work in nursing may promote further strategies for information provision, career choice and recruitment of nursing students.

Plain language summary: Applicants choose nursing work for variety of reasons. There is, however, little knowledge of the reasons applicants desire to work in nursing. As the nursing workforce is currently struggling to meet adequate staffing levels, it is vital to understand any issues that may be linked to student recruitment and retention. This study aimed to describe and explain the desire of undergraduate nursing applicants to work in nursing. A previously developed questionnaire (Desire to Work in Nursing) was used to describe and explain the desire of nursing applicants. The results revealed that these applicants had a strong desire to nursing but perhaps more information needs to be provided to applicants of the career development possibilities. The results suggest that the desire to work in nursing may be different to men than to women. This will need to be further investigated in the future.

### **Introduction**

The desire to work in the nursing profession has recently been identified as an important aspect to consider in the selection process of nursing students and falls under a wider concept of certainty of career choice (Haavisto et al., 2019). Even though very little is known about nursing applicants' or students' desire to work in nursing (Talman et al., 2023), some studies exist about nursing students' desire to work in nursing (Cilar et al., 2020; Lemiecha &

Leńczuk-Gruba, 2020). Furthermore, studies exist about the certainty of career choice that demonstrate the important link between the application stage, student retention and success in studies (Harding, 2009; Price, McGillis Hall, Angus, & Peter, 2013). Most recent studies demonstrate that having doubts about the career choice is linked to dropout in nursing education (Bakker et al., 2019; Soerensen et al., 2023).

Nursing student retention and attrition are important from the current and future nursing workforce perspectives. The present nursing workforce of 27.9 million represents a global shortage of 5.9 million nurses (WHO, 2021). Recently set global strategies to increase the nursing workforce include priorities for nursing education such as optimizing production of nurses which addresses issues related to student recruitment and selection (WHO, 2021). Limited capacity of institutions to recruit or graduate adequate numbers, regulations restricting admissions or issues related to infrastructure are listed as potential reasons for insufficient production of nurses. Where capacity is not an issue, cultural and societal perceptions of the professions (e.g., work conditions, salaries, career trajectories) can be reasons for insufficient enrolment (WHO, 2021). However, nursing student recruitment, selection or admission policies are scarcely researched (Talman, Hupli, Puukka, Leino-Kilpi & Haavisto, 2018). As nursing student attrition mostly takes place during the first year of studies (Wray, Aspland, Barrett, & Gardiner, 2017), it is important to extend the investigation to student recruitment and selection phase to address issues related to delivery of nursing education from the student selection perspectives.

Applications to nursing have recently increased, for example in 2020, there were 60,130 applicants and the total applications for nursing courses rose by 30 % compared to previous years in the UK (UCAS, 2021). From the societal and institutional perspectives, it is important to retain the selected students in the programmes. To retain the selected students,

strategies are needed to recognise those factors affecting career decisions to improve an understanding of career choices and the recruitment of suitable applicants to nursing (Tayebi, Dehghan-Nayer, Negarandeh, & Shahbazi, 2013; Hamshire et al., 2019). It is suggested that a multi-factorial approach should be used to investigate factors that are related to attrition or progression (Wray et al., 2017). Therefore, it is necessary to recognise the factors that affect career decision such as the desire to work in nursing to develop strategies to support informed career choice decisions by the applicants and to provide information for nursing education student selection.

### **Background**

According to previous studies, the desire to work in nursing can be identified as part of the certainty of career choice and divided into three subcategories, namely, a realistic perception of the nursing profession, characterising oneself as a nurse, and imaging nursing as an ideal career (Haavisto et al., 2019). Furthermore, in a study by Talman et al. (2023), a literature review and data from focus group interviews were utilised to further define the concept, and to develop and evaluate an instrument to assess a desire to work in nursing. Four main categories were identified, namely, the nature of nursing work, career opportunities offered by nursing education, suitability to the nursing profession and previous experiences. These categories are also supported by more recent research undertaken amongst nursing students: nature of nursing work (Messineo et al., 2019; Cilar et al., 2020; Lemiecha & Leńczuk-Gruba, 2020), career opportunities offered by nursing education (Schuller et al., 2018; Messineo et al., 2019; Cilar et al., 2020; Lemiecha & Leńczuk-Gruba, 2020), suitability to the nursing profession (Messineo et al., 2019; Lemiecha & Leńczuk-Gruba, 2020) and previous experiences (Schuller et al., 2018; Messineo et al., 2019). However, there is a lack of studies

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investigating the applicant's desire to work in nursing and the related factors. Therefore, this study proposes to address these issues.

Background factors such as age, gender, previous experience of caring, programme choice (Wray et al., 2017), and a realistic perception of the profession (Başkale & Serçekuş, 2015) are factors that affect programme completion in nursing education (Wray et al., 2017). Older female students are more likely to complete their programme (Behr et al., 2020). In addition, students with previous experiences of caring are more likely to remain on the programme (Cameron, Roxburgh, Taylor, & Lauder, 2011) whereas students with unrealistic perceptions of the profession (Başkale & Serçekuş, 2015) are linked to attrition in the nursing profession.

In summary, from these results, it is important to investigate how background factors explain the desire to work in nursing and to further investigate and suggest interventions (such as more targeted admission policies) for the student selection phase to increase student retention and programme completion.

### **Aim**

The aim of the study was to describe and explain the desire of undergraduate nursing applicants to work in nursing. Two research questions were set for the study: 1) How do undergraduate nursing applicants assess their desire to work in nursing? and 2) What background factors explain the desire of undergraduate nursing applicants to work in nursing?

### **Design**

A cross-sectional study design was utilised. The Desire to Work in Nursing Instrument (DeWoNu-I) was identified as the only available instrument to measure the desire to work in nursing (unpublished). DeWoNu-I is a previously developed and tested self-report instrument

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that is intended for the self-evaluation of nursing applicants' prior to applying to nursing education programme (unpublished).

### **Methods**

#### *Setting and Sample*

In this study, purposive sampling was used to recruit nursing applicants (Bachelor- level) at six Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) in Finland that utilised electronic entrance exams. All nursing applicants who took part in the electronic entrance exam in October 2018 at the six UAS (n = 974) and who gave their consent were eligible to participate. Altogether, the study included the 841 applicants (response rate 86%, 102 males) who gave permission to use their entrance exam results for study purposes.

#### *Data collection*

The DeWoNu-I was used to collect data on applicants' desire to work in nursing. The instrument includes 14 items in total with four subscales (nature of work, career opportunities, suitability to nursing and previous experiences). Items are positively worded and assessed on a four-point Likert-type scale (1=agree, 4=disagree). The DeWoNu-I has previously been tested for its reliability and validity (unpublished). Accordingly, the internal consistency and reliability measured by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient varied in the four subscales from 0.83 to 0.95. Construct validity of the instrument was measured using explorative factor analysis suggesting a one-factor solution. However, a strong theoretical basis for the four-subcales has been established, and thus the four-subscale construct was used (unpublished).

Data collection took place after ethical and institutional approvals. An information sheet was distributed to the participants prior to the entrance exam. Applicants accessed the DeWoNu-I

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individually via the electronic entrance exam system in supervised classrooms at the six Universities. In the entrance exam system, applicants were presented with the key information about the study and asked to give their consent by selecting “I agree to participate” or “I do not agree to participate”. The DeWoNu-I data was presented to applicants as part of the background variables, in other words these scores did not count towards the total score of the entrance exam.

Based on previous literature the following background variables were included: age, gender, previous education, knowledge acquired about the profession prior to application, previous applications to nursing studies, study programme choice, work experience in the field prior to application and a realistic image of the profession (Wray et al., 2017; Talman, Hupli, Engblom, Rankin, & Haavisto, 2019). A realistic image of the profession was established using a four-point Likert scale with a statement: “I have a realistic image of the nursing profession”.

### **Ethical Considerations, and management processes**

This study followed the ethical principles for research (National Advisory Board on Research Ethics, 2012). Ethical approval was obtained from the xxx Ethics Committee (20<sup>th</sup> August 2018). In addition, approval was granted by the six higher education institutions. Applicants received an information letter as an attachment to the entrance exam invitation emailed by the UAS two weeks before the entrance exam. Applicants were informed that participation would not affect the student selection and the research would be anonymous and confidential. Participants consented for the study. The UAS were not provided with information about the applicants who took part of the survey.

### **Data Analysis**

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Data was analysed using an SPSS® 27. The order of the DeWoNu-I scale was reversed for the analysis so that a higher value indicated a stronger desire to work in nursing (4=agree, 1=disagree). Descriptive statistics were calculated for the background variables and for the scale total and subscales. Linear regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between the background variables and the total scale and its subscales. Because the total scale and subscales were left skewed, bootstrapped linear regression and bias-corrected and accelerated confidence intervals were used (Freedman, 1981; Efron & Tibshirani, 1993). For regression analysis, missing data was imputed using a mean of the continuous variables and the mode for categorical variables. Missing responses accounted for 1.3% of the whole sample. Some of the background variables were reclassified based on the data. The variable “Study programme choice” was constructed so that it had two categories: nursing as a first choice and nursing not as a first choice. “Realistic image of the profession” had only three *somewhat disagree* responses, so they were combined with the *somewhat agree* responses. The reliability of the scale was assessed using the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient and an item analysis for the whole scale and its subscales. In the item analysis, corrected item-to-total correlations were used. The criterion of  $\geq 0.8$  was used for Cronbach’s alpha (Lance, Butts, & Michels, 2006) and  $\geq 0.3$  for item-to-total correlations.

## **Results**

### ***Participant demographics***

Overall, 841 (86%) applicants gave their consent and participated in the study. The applicants were aged between 18 and 59 years of age and 88% were female (Table 1). Over half (57 %) had vocational training and work experience in the field prior to their application (60 %) and had previously applied (56 %) to nursing studies. Most of the applicants (77 %) agreed to having a realistic image of the profession.

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-Table 1 about here-

### *Nursing applicants' desire to work in nursing and factors explaining it*

The applicants had a strong desire to work in nursing, as evidenced by the average total score (Mean 46.58, SD 12.35) (Table 2). According to the percentages of the maximum subscale scores, the applicants strongest desired to work in nursing was because of their suitability to nursing (86 %) and the nature of the work (84 %), and their least desire was due to career opportunities (Table 2).

-Table 2 about here-

More precisely, except for two items (4,14), the applicants somewhat agreed or agreed that the items were their reasons for wanting to work in nursing (Table 3). Most of the applicants were interested in matters related to human health and well-being (79.3%), wanted to help others (79.2%), and felt the work would allow them to work with people (78.1%) (Table 3). Less than half took an interest in nursing via stories told by those close to them (42%) and were interested in using the degree to pursue further education (37.4%) (Table 3).

-Table 3 about here-

Linear regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between the background variables and the total score. Overall, gender, previous education and a realistic image best explain the desire to work in nursing. Female applicants (SRC 0.220,  $p = 0.024$ ), those with a background in vocational training (SRC 0.178,  $p = 0.015$ ) and those who somewhat agreed (SRC -0.184,  $p = 0.011$ ) that their image of the profession corresponded to reality had a stronger desire to work in nursing (Table 4).

-Table 4 about here-

Furthermore, linear regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between the background variables and the subscale scores. Overall, several variables explained the subscale scores. Two variables were related to the desire in all four subscales: previous education and applicants' realistic image of the profession. Vocational training and the fact that applicants somewhat agreed/disagreed that their image of the profession corresponded to reality were the strongest explanations in all four subcategories (Table 5). Gender had a strong connection to two subscales: career opportunities and previous experiences. More women than men considered career opportunities (SRC 0.230,  $p = 0,015$ ) and previous experiences (SRC 0.234,  $p = 0.016$ ) as important reasons to work as a nurse. In addition, the applicants who had previously worked in health care considered the nature of the work as a reason to want to work in nursing (SRC 0.160,  $p = 0.048$ ), and similarly, those who had acquired information about the profession wanted to work in nursing because of career opportunities (SRC 0.382,  $p = 0.012$ ).

-Table 5 about here-

## **Discussion**

This study aimed to examine the desire of undergraduate nursing applicants to working in the nursing profession and the related factors. It is known from previous literature that there are several reasons for students to choose nursing (e.g., Schuller et al., 2018; Messineo et al., 2019). Earlier studies have focused on nursing students' career choice or perception of the nursing profession but not on the desire of nursing applicants to work in nursing. Therefore, the results of this study provide new knowledge on this issue. Given the global nursing

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shortage, further understanding is needed to inform future strategies to enhance recruitment, selection, and retention of nursing students.

According to the results, the nursing applicants demonstrated a strong desire to work in nursing evidenced by the average total scores. This result is positive as the respondents were nursing applicants, and therefore should arguably demonstrate strong desire to work in nursing. The strongest reason for wanting to work in nursing was related to the applicant's suitability for nursing (86 %), in other words, wanting to help others and work with people, having a suitable personality and a calling for nursing. It can be considered very positive that most of the applicants perceived themselves suitable for nursing. This result is also in line with other previous studies which have reported that an altruistic desire to help others influences the decision to apply to nursing (Price et al., 2013; Messineo et al., 2019). It is important for nursing applicants to recognise their own personal characteristics as suitable for nursing as this may increase personal commitment, which is essential for student retention and study progress (Wray et al., 2017).

The nature of the work seemed to be the second strongest reason (84 %) to desire to work in nursing. More specifically applicants wanted to work in nursing because it is alternating and versatile, but they agreed less about the work being mentally rewarding. It is possible that applicants do not consider nursing mentally rewarding because of the general perception of nursing where the work is seen as busy and stressful, and nurses being mainly classed as doctors' assistants (Glerean, Hupli, Talman, & Haavisto, 2017). Furthermore, the perception of the profession is probably quite closely related to the desire to work in nursing, since the desire is partly based on the applicants' image of nursing. Thus, it is important to further investigate how the perception of the nursing profession is related to the desire to work in nursing.

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Previous experiences were also a strong reason to wish to work in nursing. From the results, though, it is noticeable that less than 60 % of the applicants had personal experiences of the profession. In previous studies, experiential knowledge (Schuller et al. 2018; Messineo et al., 2019) has been identified as having an influence on the decision to apply to nursing, and previous experience of caring is reported to relate to programme completion in nursing education (Wray et al., 2017). Therefore, it may be important in the future to provide more opportunities for potential nursing applicants to acquire personal experiences of the nursing profession. Current technologies such as 360 virtual tours and virtual reality (VR) experiences could be utilised to promote such experiences as it is challenging to provide experiences in person to a high number of potential nursing applicants.

Career opportunities were assessed as the least reason (80 %) to desire to work in nursing. Applicants indicated the least agreement with the fact that the degree enabled further education. This result is in line with a previous study where nursing applicants mainly described career development horizontally (e.g., changing the practice area or position) rather than vertically (e.g., acquiring positions that require higher level education such as master's degree) (Glerean, Hupli, Talman, & Haavisto, 2019). It may be that applicants do not consider further education possibilities important at the time of the pre-registration selection phase. However, this result raises several questions. Are applicants not aware of the further education possibilities in nursing, and if so, would this unawareness affect their desire to work in nursing or their career choice in nursing? This result is extremely important for HEIs providing nursing education and should be further investigated.

Gender, previous education, and a realistic image mostly explained the desire to work in nursing. Female applicants, those with a vocational background, and those who somewhat agreed/disagreed that their image of the profession was realistic had a stronger desire to work

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in nursing. The results showing that males have less desire to work in nursing is somewhat concerning. More specifically, men considered career opportunities and previous experiences less important reasons to work as a nurse than female applicants. Unfortunately, the results of this study do not provide an answer to why men have a lesser desire. One explanation might be that nursing continues to be seen as a profession for females (Glerean et al., 2017).

Previous literature also describes differences in female and male students' vision of their professional role. Male students' vision includes more management and leadership, and technical aspects of nursing (Prosen et al., 2022). Furthermore, gender differences have also been observed in previous studies, for example, those examining the factors explaining programme completion. It has been noted that male students are less likely to complete the programme than female students (Wray et al., 2017). Further studies should investigate why men desire to work in nursing, and if the reasons are different to female applicants. The results may have important implications to recruitment strategies attracting more men into nursing, to student retention and programme completion.

It is not surprising that a vocational training background explained a stronger desire to work in nursing as most of these applicants in Finland have graduated as enrolled nurses, and would have work experience in healthcare; thus, they are more likely to be able to make a more informed decision to apply to nursing and thus a stronger desire to work in nursing. However, some previous studies indicate that students with a background in vocational training have lower abilities in theoretical skills such as reasoning skills (Vierula et al., 2021). These results have wider implications for the current education system but also need to be recognised by HEIs when planning academic support for students.

There are some strengths and limitations in this study. The strengths include data collection from several geographically spread higher education institutions, the reliability and validity

of the DeWoNu-I had previously been tested, and the observed Cronbach alpha values were acceptable in this study. The data collection took place electronically reducing the risk of manual errors, and the statistical data analysis was undertaken by a statistician. There were also some limitations in this study. The data collection took place in one country which may affect the generalisability of the results. In addition, the DeWoNu-I was in the background section of the entrance exam which means that applicants may not have given their full attention when answering which may affect the trustworthiness of the results. However, the high response rate may indicate that applicants considered the instrument to be relevant. However, the desire to work in nursing has not been studied before, and the current results give a further understanding of which aspects are considered important by the applicants.

### **Concluding statements**

The findings of this study suggest that nursing applicants demonstrate a strong desire to work in nursing which is reflected in all four assessed areas. The findings also suggest that the assessment of desire to work in nursing may assist career choice of nursing applicants which may enhance recruitment and retention in nursing education. Also, understanding career development possibilities is important for applicants to make informed choice of their career. Further studies are needed to investigate why men desire to work in nursing, and if the reasons are different to other applicants. These results may have a direct impact on recruitment policies of pre-registration nursing programmes. Future data collection should also include other countries to further evaluate the validity, development needs, and the cultural sensitivity of the DeWoNu-I. Future studies should also include exploring the relationship between the desire to work in nursing and the perception of nursing as a profession. Moreover, longitudinal studies are needed to establish whether the desire to work in nursing predicts student retention, attrition, or programme completion.

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**Conflicts of interest**

None

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Table 1. Characteristics of applicants (N = 841).

Characteristics	n	fr	%
<b>Gender</b>	837		
male		102	12.2
female		735	87.8
<b>Previous education</b>	839		
High school		358	42.7
Vocational school		481	57.3
<b>Knowledge acquired of the profession prior to application</b>	837		
yes		822	98.2
no		15	1.8
<b>Previous application to nursing studies</b>	836		
yes		467	55.9
no		369	44.1
<b>Work experience in the field prior to application</b>	836		
yes		499	59.7
no		337	40.3
<b>Realistic image of the profession</b>	837		
agree		642	76.7
somewhat agree		192	22.9
somewhat disagree		3	0.4
disagree		0	0
<b>Study programme choice</b>	770		
nursing as 1. choice		549	71.3
nursing as >1. choice		287	28.7

Table 2. Applicants' self-reported desire to work in nursing (n=823-834)

Subscales	Number of items <sup>†</sup> / max score	Mean	SD	% of the max subscale score	Cronbach alpha
Nature of the work	3/12	10.13	2.90	84	0.95
Career opportunities	3/12	9.57	2.67	80	0.83
Suitability to nursing	4/16	13.68	3.96	86	0.97
Previous experiences	4/16	13.20	3.46	83	0.88
Total score	14/56	46.58	12.35	83	0.97

<sup>†</sup>Items were assessed using a four-point Likert scale (reversed scale used for analysis; 4=agree, 1=disagree)

Table 3. Applicants' desire to work in nursing expressed as in percentages (N=841).

Desire to work in nursing	Disagree %	Somewhat disagree %	Somewhat agree %	Agree %
Nature of the work				

## DESIRE TO WORK IN NURSING

1. Work is alternating (n=831)	11.4	5.2	13.8	69.9
2. Content of the work is versatile (n=834)	12.8	4.0	10.6	72.7
3. Work is mentally rewarding (n=820)	10.2	9	24	56.7
<b>Career opportunities</b>				
4. Degree enables further education (n=824)	11.9	19.8	30.9	37.4
5. Degree enables specialisation in advanced training (n=823)	11.9	7.9	21.5	58.7
6. Employment possibilities are good (n=828)	11.8	6.4	17.4	64.4
<b>Suitability to nursing</b>				
7. I want to help others (n=830)	14.1	2.7	4.1	79.2
8. My personality is suitable to nursing profession (n=832)	13.1	4	7.7	75.2
9. The work offers me to work with people (n=830)	14	2.9	5.1	78.1
10. I have a calling towards nursing (n=826)	9.6	8.1	28.9	53.4
<b>Previous experiences</b>				
11. I have my own positive experiences of the work undertaken by nurses (n=828)	9.5	8.9	22.3	59.2
12. The hospital environment interests me (n=826)	9.4	8.6	19.1	62.8
13. I am interested in the matters related to human health and well-being (n=825)	13.8	2.7	4.2	79.3
14. I have taken an interest in nursing via stories told by closed ones (n=827)	9.8	19.6	28.7	42

Table 4. Regression model for background variables explaining desire to work in nursing (n=830)

Variable	SRC	Sig (2-tailed)	BCa 95% (lower-upper)
Gender: female vs. male	0.220	0.024	0.034–0.003
Age (yrs): older applicants vs. younger	-0.003	0.350	-0.011–0.413
Previous education: vocational school vs. high school	0.178	0.015	0.042–0.323
Knowledge acquired of the profession prior to application: yes vs. no	0.249	0.064	-0.070–0.516
Previous application to nursing studies: no vs. yes	-0.048	0.451	-0.173–0.075
Work experience in the field prior to application: yes vs. no	0.126	0.079	-0.016–0.268
Realistic image of the profession: somewhat agree/disagree vs. fully agree	-0.184	0.011	-0.330– -0.036
Study programme choice: 1. choice vs. >1.st choice	-0.036	0.584	-0.163–0.092
SRC = regression coefficient (Beta); SE = standard error; Sig (2-tailed) percentile-based BCa 95% (lower-upper) = bias corrected and accelerated confidence interval level			

Table 5. Regression model for background variables explaining the desire to work in nursing related to the subscales (n=830)

Subscales/ Variables	SRC	Sig (2-tailed)	BCa 95% (lower-upper)
<b>Nature of the work</b>			
Gender: female vs. male	0.203	0.059	-0.001-0.420

## DESIRE TO WORK IN NURSING

Age (yrs): older applicants vs. younger	-	0.756	-0.010-0.007
	0.001		
Previous education: Vocational school vs. high school	0.198	0.015	0.042-0.353
Knowledge acquired of the profession prior to application: yes vs. no	0.237	0.129	-0.131-0.551
Previous application to nursing studies: no vs. yes	-	0.916	-0.144-0.551
	0.007		
Work experience in the field prior to application: yes vs. no	0.160	0.048	0.003-0.320
Realistic image of the profession: somewhat agree/disagree vs. fully agree	-	0.049	-0.322- -0.004
Study programme choice: 1. choice vs. >1.st choice	0.161		
	-	0.612	-0.173-0.100
	0.037		
<b>Career opportunities</b>			
Gender: female vs. male	0.230	0.015	0.047-0.422
Age (yrs): older applicants vs. younger	-	0.323	-0.011-0.003
	0.004		
Previous education: Vocational school vs. high school	0.162	0.025	0.020-0.302
Knowledge acquired of the profession prior to application: yes vs. no	0.382	0.012	0.034-0.682
Previous application to nursing studies: no vs. yes	-	0.496	-0.167-0.083
	0.044		
Work experience in the field prior to application: yes vs. no	0.382	0.114	-0.029-0.255
Realistic image of the profession: somewhat agree/ disagree vs. fully agree	-	0.025	-0.317- -0.029
Study programme choice: 1. choice vs. >1.st choice	0.172		
	-	0.887	-0.138-0.120
	0.009		
<b>Suitability to nursing</b>			
Gender: female vs. male	0.212	0.057	0.003-0.431
Age (yrs): older applicants vs. younger	-	0.492	-0.011-0.005
	0.003		
Previous education: Vocational school vs. high school	0.203	0.012	0.048-0.355
Knowledge acquired of the profession prior to application: yes vs. no	0.251	0.085	-0.100-0.543
Previous application to nursing studies: no vs. yes	-	0.303	-0.211-0.069
	0.073		
Work experience in the field prior to application: yes vs. no	0.119	0.139	-0.037-0.278
Realistic image of the profession: somewhat agree/ disagree vs. fully agree	-	0.020	-0.360- -0.039
Study programme choice: 1. choice vs. >1.st choice	0.196		
	-	0.486	-0.194-0.087
	0.051		
<b>Previous experiences</b>			
Gender: female vs. male	0.234	0.016	0.053-0.425
Age (yrs): older applicants vs. younger	-	0.140	-0.013-0.002
	0.005		
Previous education: Vocational school vs. high school	0.151	0.031	0.018-0.283
Knowledge acquired of the profession prior to application: yes vs. no	0.155	0.244	-0.112-0.426
Previous application to nursing studies: no vs. yes	-	0.341	-0.183-0.067
	0.058		
Work experience in the field prior to application: yes vs. no	0.118	0.088	-0.018-0.257
Realistic image of the profession: somewhat agree/ disagree vs. fully agree	-	0.005	-0.337- -0.067
Study programme choice: 1. choice vs. >1.st choice	0.200		
	-	0.542	-0.161-0.083
	0.039		

SRC = regression coefficient (Beta); SE = standard error; Sig (2.tailed) Percentile based  
 BCa 95% (lower-upper) = bias corrected and accelerated confidence interval level