

Nursing Profession- Portrayal of Nurses in Indian Cinema and its Impact on Public Opinion about the Nursing Profession

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ABSTRACT

Background:

Nursing is an independent health care profession, nurses possess a high level of intellectual knowledge and skills which enable them to take care of sick people in community. However, competencies of nurses are not well recognized by public. Nevertheless, media plays an imperative role to create in building an image of the nurses in public.

Objective: The main objective is to discuss regarding actual portrayal of nurses in Indian cinema and to identify this impact on public opinion about nursing profession

Design: Discussion paper.

Data sources: The movies were searched and evaluated from different video channels such as YouTube Videos, Twitch, The Internet Archive, Netflix and Prime amazon.

Discussion: Majority of movies portrayed the nurses in an unlike and incongruous image. This image was partly created by movie makers, it might be due to a lack of awareness about nursing profession. In this study, 34 movies were evaluated by considering to study certain parameters include nurse's dedication, nurses behavior, dress code of nurses, the approach of the nurses, delivery of dialogues on nursing characters, and depiction of personal habits of nurses. About 64.71 % of movies depicted the nurses with slack behavior, 76.47 % of movies delivered discourteous dialogues about nursing scenes and 73.53 % of movies have presented the nurses in a vulgar dress. Surprisingly only a few movies have depicted the nursing profession as an independent profession.

Conclusion: Media plays an important role to improve the image of nurses in public. Movies makers need to consult various nursing organizations before they present the characters of the nurses in their movies for a better understanding of the nursing profession.

Keywords: Nursing profession, portrayal, nurses, cinema, and public opinion.

Introduction

The nurse's characters in Hollywood and Indian movies depicted in funny roles stressed sexual vagueness. The nurses in movies were presented either they have slack moral beliefs or one gets abused sexually. Nurses have numerous clinical responsibilities in hospitals and they do not even find a little time to relax during clinical hours. But in some movies, real nurses do not even see themselves in the characters of nurses portrayed in movies¹.

Nurses are depicted in movies in such a way that, they usually come from a poor family background, who do this work only for bread and butter while the founder of nursing, honorable Florence Nightingale came to the nursing profession from a royal family. Other media has also depicted that the nurses have loose moral values in their character.¹

Often physicians are depicted in such a way that they perform great clinical work for patients with a lot of dedication and determination where a registered nurse also performs the same in real clinical settings. The majority of nurses exclaim that their family members especially in-laws feel ashamed to express that their daughter-in-law is a nurse. The nursing profession is considered to be a noble profession but why movie makers do not have appropriate knowledge about the nursing profession. The public needs to understand the dynamic roles of nurses that they usually perform in health care settings and comprehend how they are also equally important in providing optimum care to the people when they are sick⁵.

Certifications and Degrees

Based on the qualification, nurses are classified as Auxiliary Nurse and Midwives (ANM), General Nurses and Midwives (GNM), Graduate Nurses, Masters in Nursing, and Ph.D. in Nursing. Graduates and postgraduates in Nursing are paid more as compared to GNMs and ANMs. Comparable to MBBS students, BSc Nursing students also need to study a large number of subjects in their four years of Nursing programme. During these four years, the nursing student has to complete a huge number of assignments, summative and formative evaluation systems. Passing marks in all assignments will be 50 percent. Otherwise, the student will be failed or backlogged³.

Nurses also have numerous opportunities to opt for a particular specialization by choosing any specialty course after completing basic education.

The cost of the education for the nursing programme: Similar to other professional courses, the cost of the nursing education course is also high. The fee is different from private to government institutes. The government institutes provide education with a minimum fee structure. But student gets admission on merit basis. The average fees in private and unaided nursing colleges take the fees around fifty thousand rupees to one lakh eighty thousand rupees per year. Even general nursing and midwifery course have a fee structure of around forty-five thousand rupees to one lakh forty thousand rupees per year⁴.

Job Prospects

Unlike other professions, nurses have better job opportunities globally and nurses never remain jobless. Nurses have an enormous scope to work in industries, various specialized hospitals, military nursing hospitals, navy, community health centers, orphanage homes, old age homes, etc. They can also get job opportunities in trained nurses association, Indian Nursing Council, WHO, Indian Red cross societies, etc. Even axillary midwives get a job easily in primary care health centers after completion of their course⁵.

Nurses are charming up the managerial and educational positions in medical and nursing colleges including all the hospitals. Entrepreneurs have enormous opportunities to start bureaus, they can work under their limitations and policies. Nurses have identical opportunities to migrate abroad after full-filling basic criteria such as IELTS, OET, CGFNS, etc⁶.

Roles And responsibilities of a Registered Nurse

Registered nurses are accountable for the care of their patients. Nurses are extremely engaged in inpatient care for 24 hours so that they can note the improvement of the health status of the patients. Based on the response of the patients they will be able to act immediately to recover the patients' health soon. Nurses majorly play an important role in saving the life of the patients in health care settings⁷.

However, nurses are not meant for providing only physical care. They also provide psychological and emotional support to the patients to keep the patient healthy at an optimum level. Nurses provide health education to patients on different health promotive aspects to motivate and care for them selves⁸.

Nurses also act as an advocator for patients' health. For example, if a doctor prescribes a wrong medication or delivers wrong advice to the patient, nurses are liable to interfere and right to oblige the doctors for such acts legally.

Nurses' Illustration in the Media

The image of the nursing profession is determined by how nurses themselves and the public think about the nursing profession. The image of nurses is different from the nurses' image of nursing. The public image about the nurses is mainly dependent on fallacies and stereotypes, this image is mainly created by media. Media is representing the nurses in cinema in such a way that nurses are assistants to the doctor. Due to this image, the public assumes the nursing profession as feminine and caring, they never consider that this profession is also one of the independent professions in the health care system. Usually, nurses are appreciated for the care provided to the patients, not for their knowledge and intellectual work.⁹

This paper aims to discuss regarding actual identity of nurses in Indian cinema and to identify this impact on public opinion towards the nursing profession.

Data Sources

The movies were searched and evaluated from the channels of Youtube Video, Twitch, The Internet Archive, Netflix, and Prime amazon. The main aim was to retrieve suitable movies taken from 1980 to 2020. The search terms

used were movies related to nurse's dress code, the character of nurses in movies, nurse's approach to the patients, the dedication of nurses, the relationship of doctors and nurses in working set up, Personal habits of nurses, and competencies of nurses. The suitable movies were searched in the languages of Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Hindi, and Marathi.

Search Outcome

Movies related to the portrayal of nurses in movies resulted in 341. After watching, 80 suitable movies were included in our study for further discussion and evaluation. These 80 movies were viewed and reviewed by authors. Finally, 34 movies were finalized to include in our discussion paper

Data Abstraction and Synthesis

The movies were watched to check the suitable parameters to be included in this study. The quantitative keyword exploration was done based portrayal of nurses in movies. The next step was content analysis which was done systematically to identify the main characteristics such as public image and professional identity. By considering the main characteristics of the depiction of nurses in movies included were 34 showed in above table.

The following are the parameters searched in the movies; ie. Portrayal of;

- Nurses dedication (professional role) towards patient care
- Depiction of slack character
- Dress code of the nurses
- Nurses approach the patients and others in public
- The opinion of society about nurses showed in movies
- Relationship between nurses and other health care professionals, especially doctors
- Creation of dialogues when a nursing character appears on the screen.
- Doctors' attitude towards nurses.
- Personal habits
- Nurses are commercial; eg exchanging babies in the labour room, disclosing confidential matters for some monetary benefits, etc.

Table 2: Distribution of nursing roles portrayed among movies in various languages. n= 34

S. No	Parameters Searched	Frequency	%
1.	Nurses dedication	3	8.82
2.	Slack character	22	64.71
3.	Vulgar dress code of the nurses	11	32.35
4.	Nurses approach to the patients in with slack behavior	23	67.65
5.	Maintaining professional behavior between nurses and other health care professionals	11	32.35
6.	The respectable opinion of society about nurses	25	73.53
7.	Discourteous dialogues delivered by nurses in movies	26	76.47
8.	Unhealthy Personal habits	5	14.71
9.	Nurses are commercial-in exchanging the reports of the patient to others, exchanging of babies in labour room.	13	38.24

DISCUSSION OF MOVIES AS PER THE PARAMETERS CHECKED IN MOVIES:

Depiction of Vulgar dress code:

In one of the Tamil movie called Pokiriraja (2016), one of the scenes, nurse depicted in bad-mannered dress code, in this movie a nurse carries a huge number of files by wearing a short frock, a massive wind was formed on her uniform, which made the frock to flew from knees to towards chest where inner garments were visible.

Dialogues of the scene as following in the Tamillanguage:

Jeeva: Yawning.....

Yogi Babu(fat person) - Nice kottavi.....wow once more

(Doctor walking.....) Doctor: Intha alavuku irukumnu naan ninaikala. kottavi intha alavukku force aa irukumnu naan ninachu kuda parkala

Jeeva(Thin person) : Ama doctor. Ipdi thaana , half houruku oru thadava vanthuttu poguthu.

Yogi Babu (in Jeeva's ear whispering): dai.. office pogura neram poga matta neram un kuda thaane jatti podama chuttidu irukken. ini kottavi vantha signal kudu da... risk ellam edukka mudiyathu.

Doctor: ennathu.....

Yogi babu: athu ila doctor ...namma nurse aa irukka poi broad mindaa, leg piece therunjalum paravai ilanu vittunga...athaan chonnen.. enna sister?

Sister: slapped him

Doctor: paathingala

Depiction of Slack Behavior

In one of the Telugu movies called *Nandini Nursing Home (2016)*, a nurse will be abused by a male fourth-class employee. In another scene, a nurse was posted for night duty to take care of a patient who is in a coma but actually, he was not. The nurse will come to this patient wearing a lot of gold on her neck. She seemed to be an irresponsible nurse, grumbles that she does not have a little time to sit for a while. She feels sweaty and unbuttons her uniform in front of a coma patient where cleavage could be exposed but she does not bother because she assumes that the patient is in a coma. This nurse also smokes and steals two rings from the patient. At that time a Doctor and the ward boy visit the patient. They asked this nurse that what she is doing there. She lies and says that she came to check the patient's blood pressure. In this scene, the ward boy and nurse both use abusive language at each other and there was no respect shown towards the nursing profession.

In another scene of the same movie, when the nurse takes care of the same patient, he was sexually aroused. The Nurse-only does the bed making and the changing of the patient's position. The important technical care, analysis, critical thinking, and decision-making about the patient care was done by a doctor. The nurse was not involved in the patient's technical care and decision-making. In this movie, the nurses were shown as non-professionals, irresponsible, careless, and insipid.

Patient (one who is acting as he is in a coma); Edhanti idhi nadhaggaraku vasthundi. Malli body ni thudusthunda enti ??

Nurse : chha e nursing home lo okka nimashamu kooda kali dhorakadu

Poddunnunchi nilchuni nilchuni kallu pekestunnai

Patient: eppake naaku anni kanipisthunnai. Medanunda golde . edantha ammithe 90000 thakkuva raadu

Nurse: coma lo unnavadiki rings avasarama ?

Ward boy (Just he enters the this coma patient room): emai sonu, emichesthunnavu ?Nannu chuddaniki vachchaava ?

Nurse: ninna chuddani entha dhuram ravali mari

Ward boy: emai nuvvu sigaretlu kuda modhalu pettasava ? (vulgar language)

Nurse: pallu raluthai.

Nevertheless, some movies have portrayed the nursing profession withholding good moral values. In one of the short film movies called *Hiccups a letter from Florence Nightingale (2019 Director:Rohit Mengar)*, was written and directed by Rohit Mengar. In his movie, an inspiring nurse character was shown. This short film was based on a

letter received from Florence Nightingale to a sincere Nurse. The story of this film is about Miss Ruby sister, one who is very dedicated and passionate about patient care. Meeting the needs of the patient is her priority during her duty hours. She has a friend, who is working as a nurse along with a ruby sister. Her working nature and behavior were quite opposite to the Ruby Sister's behavior. She works only for earning money and she was not empathetic for sick people. She always complains that nurses do not get adequate pay for their hard work and she tries to influence the Ruby sister. She says to Ruby sister that, she does not have to work sincerely and just work for pay. Initially, Ruby sister did not listen to her, but slowly she was influenced by her friend and she also started behaving like her colleague by showing irritation and ignorance towards the patients. One day, suddenly Ruby sister had terrible hiccups, a servant gave a glass of water to Ruby. The servant said to her, someone is missing her and due to this you have hiccups endlessly. On the same day, Ruby sister had received a letter from Florence Nightingale, in that letter it was mentioned that **"Public service is the service of God"/ "Jan Seva hich, ishwar seva"**. Nurses were chosen by God to provide care to sick and needy people. Ruby sister realizes her mistake and started taking care of the patients with a lot of dedication like before.

IMPACT OF MEDIA DEPICTION ABOUT NURSES AND OPINION OF PUBLIC

The vision of honorable Florence Nightingale was to see nursing as an independent profession, nurses are not subsidiary to the medical profession. However, the medical profession is a strongly dominating nursing profession since ancient. This has immensely impacted in dropping the image of nurses in public. Moreover, the media is taking advantage to portray the nurses in such a way that, nursing services are not officially demanded, they perceive nurses are servants to the doctors and they are feminine objects in the hospitals. It has created an immense wicked impact on the view of the public about how nurses seem to be viewed as womanly and caring but not as independent health care providers. Moreover, the nursing career was shown in such a way that, this profession has limited career opportunities where in real life it has numerous career opportunities in India as well as abroad.¹¹

Conclusion

Media plays an important role to improve the image of nurses among the public. Movies makers need to consult various nursing organizations before they present the characters of the nurses in their movies for a better understanding of the nursing profession.

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