

# A Comparative Study on Career Awareness and Career Preference Regarding Nursing between Pre University Students of Selected Colleges of Urban and Rural Areas in Trivandrum

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## Abstract

*Background of the Study:* Nursing is one of the most delightful arts, which needs blending of knowledge, skills and values. A mere desire for nursing does not make a good nurse but it must be built upon knowledge, which is our power. Nursing is a noble profession, which requires loving heart and desire for compassionate care. Today there are numerous vocations and occupations available to an individual to choose. But vocational interest and choice of a career do not appear all of a sudden. They emerge as a result of a developmental process. The profession of nursing is very noble indeed and predominantly a female profession. The increasing number of graduates seeking admission to the nursing programme at the University reveals that the changing image of the profession now makes nursing an appealing career. *Objectives of the Study:* 1. To determine the level of career awareness of nursing among Pre-University students of selected colleges of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum. 2. To determine the career preference regarding nursing among Pre-University students of selected colleges of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum. 3. To compare the career awareness and career preference regarding nursing between Pre-University students colleges of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum. 4. To find out association between career awareness, career preference and selected demographic variables of Pre-University students towards nursing. *Setting:* The study was conducted in selected pre-university colleges of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum. *Sample and Sampling Technique:* The sample for the study comprised of 120 Pre-University college students i.e, 60 female students each from urban and rural colleges. Cluster sampling technique was used to select samples for the study. *Tool:* The tool consisted of an open-ended knowledge, image and opinion rating scale, career preference/non preference checklist and a career choice ranking scale. Validity and reliability of the tool was established. Reliability for knowledge questionnaire was established by Test-retest method and the reliability co-efficient rho for knowledge questionnaire and was found to be 0.824. Split half method using Karl Pearson's coefficient correlation was used to calculate the reliability of image and opinion rating scale and it was found to be 0.823 which has statistically significant. *Major Findings of the Study:* All the students (100%) in the selected pre-university colleges of rural areas and urban areas preferred for the further study. Maximum of the students in the selected pre-university colleges of rural areas (58.3%) and urban areas (61.6%) gave the reason for further study as for securing a good job. Majority of the students in the selected pre-university colleges of rural areas (95%) and urban areas (86.6%) expressed 'Parents' as their influencing persons for selecting a career. There was significant association between career awareness and religion ( $\chi^2_{(2)}=10.36$ ), education of father ( $\chi^2_{(2)}=39.67$ ) occupation of father and

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family income ( $\chi^2_{(1)}=11.6$ ) of PUC students in colleges of rural areas at 0.05 level of significant except for mothers education and occupation. There was significance association between career preference and occupation of father ( $\chi^2_{(2)}=6.96$ ) and family income ( $\chi^2_{(1)}=7.73$ ) of PUC students in colleges in rural at 0.05 level except religion, fathers education and mothers education and occupation. There was significant association between career preference and family income ( $\chi^2_{(1)}=5.45$ ) and mothers' education ( $\chi^2_{(1)}=3.93$ ) of PUC students in colleges in urban areas at 0.05 levels except for religion, mothers occupation and fathers education and occupation. *Interpretation and Conclusion:* The present study shows that the knowledge of PUC students about nursing was very poor. But they had a positive image and opinion about nurse and nursing. Only a minimum percentage of PUC students preferred nursing as their career choice. This study explores the need for a career guidance programme among the potential candidates thus increasing their knowledge about nursing.

**Keywords:** Comparative Study; Career Awareness; Career Preference; Nursing; Pre University Students Urban and Rural Areas.

## Introduction

Nursing is one of the vocations developed out of social needs. A 'nurse' is defined as someone who nourishes or fosters some quality of a person usually a woman, charged or trained for the care of the sick or decrepit.

Career choice is a complex developmental process consisting of distinct stages (Ginzberg et al. 1951). Occupational choice may be viewed as a decision making process involving a series of compromises, balancing interests, preferences, attitudes and capabilities against available opportunity. The expectations of others as well as other dimensions of the social environment affect decisions.

As Susan (1994) suggests the process of selection and attainment of career goals is influenced greatly by factor over which the individual has little, if any control. The opportunity to select a career to receive formal preparation and to work in that occupation is embedded in the culture of a society. The status of women and the value on women's work are major determinants of career opportunities for women and the public images of specific occupations.

In India, the picture of nursing profession is changing day by day. While nursing profession still suffers a mild degree of so called 'stigma' in certain states of the country, the interest in nursing education is on the rise and is pushing the current educational systems to the point of explosion. This increased interest has been attributed to the increasingly positive image of nursing. It is very essential that we must target a younger population. If we have to attract students, we must emphasize life-long learning and possibilities that abound with further education and credentialing (Lea, 1993).

In 1997, Sigma Theta Tau International commissioned a study on the image of nursing in the media. The results showed that "nurses often are invisible in newspaper stories about health care". Because television and movies generally portray only the one-dimensional image of nurses at the bedside, the professions' many facets are tested on the public and potential nursing students. We need to change this image so that nursing is seen for what it is a vital, dynamic, multifaceted profession, grounded in a strong foundation, yet evolving and maturing so meet the future health care needs of the public.

### *Statement of the Problem*

A comparative study on career awareness and career preference regarding nursing between Pre-university students of selected colleges of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum.

### *Objectives*

1. To determine the level of career awareness of nursing among Pre-University students of selected colleges of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum.
2. To determine the career preference regarding nursing among Pre-University students of selected colleges of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum.
3. To compare the career awareness and career preference regarding nursing between Pre-University students colleges of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum.
4. To find out an association between career awareness, career preference and selected demographic variables of Pre-University students towards nursing.

### *Operational Definitions*

#### *Career Awareness*

It refers to the response of the pre-university students to the questionnaire regarding their knowledge about nursing and to the image and opinion rating scale regarding their image and opinion about nurse and nursing.

#### *Career Preference*

It refers to response of the students to checklist regarding their reasons for preference and non-preference to nursing and to a ranking scale regarding their choice of profession.

#### *Image of Nursing*

It refers to the response of the students to the rating scale regarding their beliefs, ideas and attitudes about nurse and nursing.

#### *Selected Variables*

It refers to the religion of students, their parent's education, occupation and income.

#### *Pre-University College Students*

It refers to the female students studying in final year pre-university with science group from selected of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum .

#### *Assumptions*

The investigator assumed that,

1. Students will have some awareness regarding nursing.
2. Students need guidance while choosing a particular career.
3. Students will give frank answers to the questions.

#### *Hypotheses*

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There will be a significant difference between mean scores of career awareness and career preference of pre-university students of selected colleges of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There will be a significant association between career awareness and selected demographic factors among pre-university students of selected colleges of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum.

### *Delimitations*

The study is delimited to final year female Pre-University college students who have chosen science group and in the academic year of 2010.

### **Materials and Methods**

#### *Research Approach*

A comparative survey approach was considered most suitable for the study, as the aim was to find out and compare the career awareness and career preference regarding nursing among pre-university students of selected colleges of rural and urban area.

#### *Research Design*

The study comprised of comparing the level of career awareness and career preference regarding nursing among pre-university college students of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum

#### **Setting**

##### *Variable Under Study*

A variable is any phenomena or characteristic or attribute under study. Variables are the measurable characteristics of a concept and consist of a logical group of attribute (Polit and Hungler 1995). Research variables in the study are career awareness and career preference regarding nursing among pre-university college students.

##### *Extraneous Variables*

Variables such as parents' education and occupation, religion and family income were treated as extraneous variables of the study.

##### *Population*

The target population of the study included the 2<sup>nd</sup> year students (girls only) of pre-university colleges of Trivandrum who have taken science as their optional subject.

##### *Sample*

The sample for the study comprised 120 pre-university college students, i.e. 60 female students each from urban colleges and rural colleges. Cluster sampling technique was used to select samples for the study. List of all the colleges in Trivandrum district was collected from the district Pre-

University college office. Three colleges each with final year Pre-University science group and with girl students were selected from urban and rural areas in Trivandrum district by using simple random sampling. From the six selected colleges, 20 samples were drawn from each college using simple random sampling.

#### *Sampling Technique*

Simple random sampling technique was found appropriate to select the sample for the study.

#### *Sampling Criteria*

Female students who are doing 2<sup>nd</sup> year PUC during the academic year of 2010-2011. Female students who had opted Science group of educational stream.

#### *Exclusion Criteria*

Female students who have health professionals in their families or as relatives.

#### *Findings*

The data collected were organized and analyzed under 6 sections as the following

#### *Section -1*

#### *Sample Characteristics of Subjects*

The data were collected from 120 PUC students of selected colleges of urban and rural areas which were selected using cluster sampling. The data on sample characteristics were analyzed using the descriptive statistics.

The sample characteristics are described under the headings of age, religion, number of family members, order of birth, siblings, educational status and occupational status of father and mother, family income, preference for further study and persons influencing choice of career.

The data in Table 1 show the distribution of subjects according to age, religion, family size, educational and occupational status of mother, educational and occupational status of father and monthly income of family.

#### *Section 2*

#### *Career Awareness of PUC students of selected colleges of rural and urban area*

Knowledge of Pre-university college students in rural and urban area regarding nursing

This section deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data with regard to the knowledge of PU college students in rural and urban areas about Nursing. The areas included were:-

**Table 1:** Frequency and percentage distribution of sample characteristics

N=120

Sl. No	Variable	Classification	Respondents in Rural PU College		Respondents in Urban PU college	
			Frequency (f)	Percentage %	Frequency (f)	Percentage %
1	Age(in years)	14-16	56	93.3	58	96.7
		17-19	4	6.7	2	3.3
		20-22	-	-	-	-
		23 and above	-	-	-	-
2	Religion	Hindu	35	58.3	41	68.3
		Muslim	11	13.3	8	13.3
		Christian	11	18.3	8	13.3
		Buddhist	3	5	3	5
3	Family Size	3-5	40	66.7	50	83.3
		6-8	18	30	9	15
		9-11	1	1.6	1	1.6
		Above 10	1	1.6	-	-
4	Order of birth	First	34	56.6	31	50
		Second	13	21.6	19	31.6
		Third	7	11.6	6	10
		Fourth	2	3.3	4	6.6
		Fifth and above	4	6.6	-	-
5	Educational status of the mother	Illiterate	-	-	-	-

		Primary	5	8.3	11	18.3
		Secondary	13	21.6	13	21.6
		PUC	25	41.6	18	30
		Graduation	17	28.3	9	15
		Post graduation	-	-	4	6.6
		Professional	-	-	5	8.3
6	Occupational status of the mother	Unemployed	41	68.3	46	76.6
		Govt. Employee	6	10	5	8.3
		Private	5	8.3	2	11.6
		Business	-	-	-	3.3
		Unskilled labour	2	3.3	-	-
		Retired	-	-	-	-
7	Educational status of the father	Illiterate	-	-	-	-
		Primary	6	10	8	3.3
		Secondary	20	33.3	8	2.3
		PUC	25	41.6	12	20
		Graduation	2	3.3	11	18.3
		Post graduation	1	1.6	10	16.6
		Professional	6	10	11	18.3
8	Occupational status of the father	Unemployed	3	5	-	-
		Govt. Employee	12	20	23	38.3
		Private employee	15	25	19	31.6
		Business	22	36.6	11	18.3
		Unskilled labour	5	10.3	4	6.6
		Retired	3	5	3	5
9	Monthly income of the family in rupees	>2000	-	-	-	-
		2000-3000	5	8.3	3	5
		3000-4000	7	11	1	1.6
		4000-5000	9	15	7	11.6
		>5000	39	65	49	81.6

1. Nursing courses conducted in India.
2. Minimum qualification for joining nursing.
3. Duration of diploma nursing course.
4. Duration of degree nursing course.
5. Settings of nurses work.
6. Post of a nurse with GNM certificate.
7. Universities offering undergraduate nursing course in Kerala.
8. Subjects taught in Nursing.

The knowledge scores obtained were tabulated in a master data sheet and total score of each sample was obtained. Data regarding knowledge scores were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and are presented in the form of tables and graphs.

The data related to the knowledge of Pre-university

students in colleges of rural and urban areas regarding nursing is presented in Table 2.

The data presented in Table 4 indicates the mean knowledge score of PUC students of colleges in rural and urban areas. All the PUC students in colleges of rural areas (100%) had 'below average' scores. Most of the PUC students in colleges of urban areas (96.6%) had 'below average' scores. This shows the lack of knowledge of both urban and rural pre-university students regarding nursing.

The data is also represented in the form of frequency polygon (Figure 1).

### Knowledge Score

Fig 1: Frequency polygon showing the knowledge score of students in rural and urban pre-university colleges

**Table 2:** Frequency, mean, mean percentage and standard deviation of knowledge scores of PUC students in colleges of rural and urban areas N=120

Knowledge Score	Respondents in Frequency	Mean	Rural PU SD	College Mean	Respondents in Frequency	Mean	Urban PU SD	College Mean
Above Average	-				-			
Average	-	3.32	1.739	553	2	2.7	8.501	4.5
I Below Average	60				58			

Maximum possible score = 20

score of students in rural and urban pre-university colleges are presented in Figure 1. The mean (2.7 and 3.3 respectively) and median (2 and 3 respectively) lie close to each other showing that they are near normally distributed.

The data was further analyzed to determine the knowledge of the respondents in relation to specific content areas of Nursing.

The above Table 3 indicates that highest mean

percentage of knowledge scores of rural and urban pre-university college students was in their knowledge about ‘minimum qualification ‘for joining nursing. Majority of the PUC students in colleges of rural areas and in urban had a mean percentage (70% and 60% respectively) in this area.

*Image and Opinion of the PUC Students of Rural and Urban Area about Nurse and Nursing*

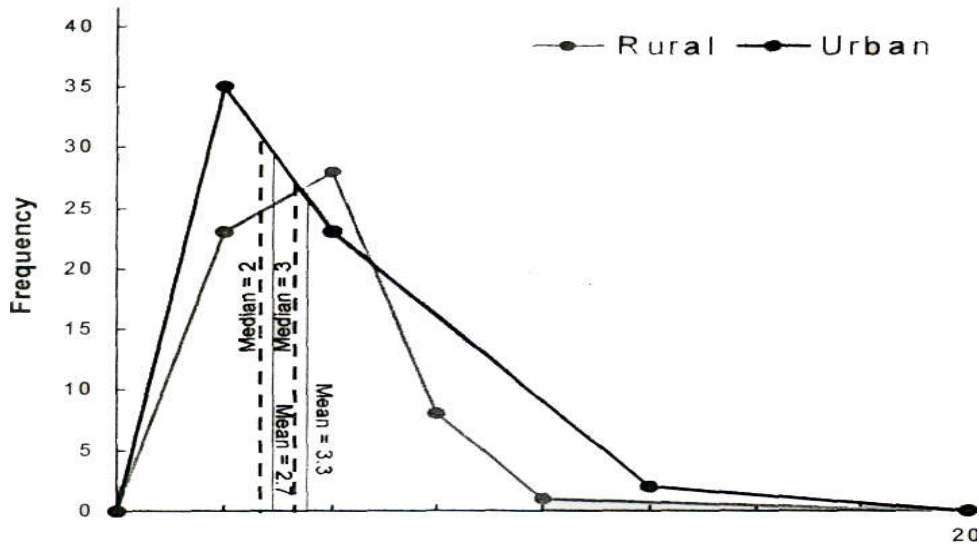


Fig. 1: Frequency polygon showing the knowledge score of students in rural and urban pre-university colleges

Table 3: Area wise distribution of knowledge scores of PUC students in colleges of rural and urban areas regarding nursing N=120

Sl. No.	Specific content Area	Maximum Score	Respondents in Rural PU College		Respondents in Urban PU College	
			Mean Score	Mean Percentage	Mean Score	Mean Percentage
1	Nursing courses conducted in India	6	1.22	20.3	0.33	5.5
2	Minimum Qualification for Joining nursing	1	0.75	75	0.6	60
3	Duration of Diploma nursing courses	1	0.5	50	0.28	28
4	Duration of Degree Nursing Course	2	0.25	12.5	0.13	6.5
5	Nurses work setting in India	4	0.56	14	0.88	22
6	Post of a nurse with GNM certificate	1	0.06	6	0.13	13
7	Universities Nursing Courses in Kerala	2	0.01	5	0	0
8	Subjects taught in Nursing	4	0.16	0.4	0.35	8.75

This section deal with the analysis and interpretation of the data related to the image and opinion of the pre-university college students of rural and urban area about nurse and nursing, based on their scores obtained. Data regarding image and opinion scores were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The data related to the image and opinion of pre-university college students of rural and urban area about nurse is presented in Table 4.

Data in Table 4 show that all the PUC students in rural areas (100%) and most of them in urban

areas (98.3%) had positive image about nurse.

Only one student in urban PU college had negative image and opinion about nurse.

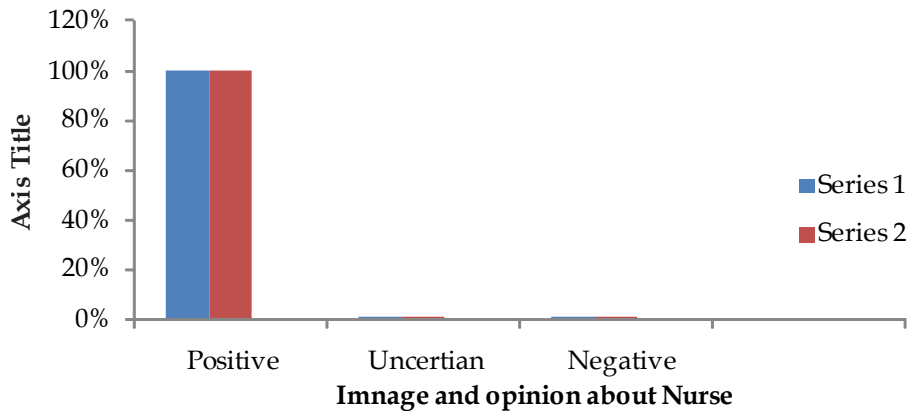
*Section 3*

Career preference of PUC students in colleges of rural and urban to nursing

This section deals with the analysis and interpretation of the career Preference of the pre-University college students of rural and urban areas

**Table 4:** Distribution of PUC students of rural and urban area according to their image and opinion about nurse  
N = 120

Sample characteristics	Rural PUC students		Urban PUC students	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Positive Image	60	100	59	98.3
Uncertain	-	-	-	-
Negative Image	-	-	1	1.7



**Fig. 2:** Image and opinion of PUC students in rural and urban areas about nurse

to nursing. Data regarding career preferences and the reasons for preference and non-preference to nursing were analyzed using descriptive statistics

Data in Table 5 indicates that majority of the PUC students in colleges of rural areas (61.7%) and in urban areas (80%) were not preferring nursing. Only 38.3% of PUC students in colleges of rural area and 20% in urban areas preferred nursing as a career.

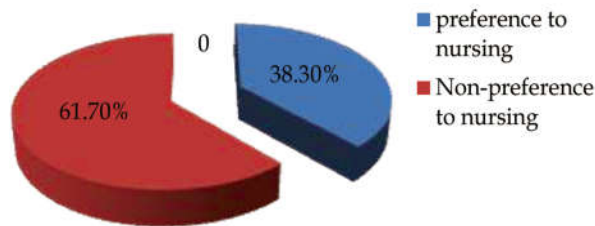
*Reasons for Preference to Nursing among PUC Students in Colleges of Rural and Urban Areas*

Distribution of the rural and urban students according to their reasons for preference to nursing were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

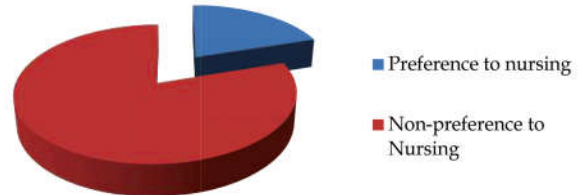
Data in Table 6 indicate that majority of PUC students in colleges of rural areas (60.8%) and in urban areas (75%) stated the reason for their preference to nursing as ‘to serve the sick and needy’. Further the table show that nearly half of PUC students in colleges or rural areas (43.5%) and more than half in urban areas (58.3%) also gave the reason

**Table 5:** Distribution of students in rural and urban pre-university colleges according to their preference to nursing  
N=120

Sample Characteristics	Respondents in Rural PU Colleges		Respondents in Urban PU Colleges	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Preference to Nursing	23	38.3	12	20
Non-Preference to Nursing	37	61.7	48	80



**Fig. 3:** Distribution of pre-university college students of rural according to their preference and non-preference to nursing



**Fig. 4:** Distribution of pre-university college students of urban areas according to their preference and non-preference to nursing

for preference to nursing as ‘nursing is a noble profession’.

Reasons for non-preference to nursing by PUC

students of urban and rural areas according to their reasons for non-preference to nursing.

Data in Table 7 shows that majority of the PUC

**Table 6:** Distribution of pre-university students of urban and rural according to their reasons for preference to nursing.

N (R) =23

N (U) =12

Reasons for Preference	Respondents in Rural PU Colleges		Respondents in Urban PU Colleges	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Nursing is a Nobel Profession	10	43.5	7	58.3
It is a Vocation	3	13.04	1	8.3
I can get job easily	11	47.8	1	8.3
I want to serve the sick and Needy	14	60.8	9	75
I would be good at Nursing	5	21.7	-	-
My Parents want me to join this Profession	3	13.04	-	-
It gives security in service	3	13.04	-	-
I can improve the economic Status of my family	4	17.4	-	-
Nursing is a service to humanity	7	30.43	4	33.3
There is a provision of getting Higher education in nursing	3	13.04	-	-
I can be a mature, responsible Person	3	13.04	-	-
I can have respect from the society	2	8.6	-	-
I can go abroad	2	8.6	-	-

students in rural areas (81.1%) and most of them (95.8%) in urban areas gave their reason for not preferring nursing as 'they are not interested'. Data in the table also shows that more than half of PUC students (59.5%) in rural and nearly in urban areas (43.75%) also give the reasons as 'I am aiming higher than Nursing'.

#### Section 4

##### Career choice of Pre-university students of rural

and urban area according to their choices of various vocations The students were instructed to rank 29 careers listed in the order of 1-29 ranks. A score of 1 was given to the 1<sup>st</sup> rank and a score of 29 to the last rank (30 if a respondent also responded to 'any other'). The cumulative rank order was computed from the cumulative score for each choice. The career with the lowest cumulative score was ranked first.

Data in Table 8 show the cumulative score and

**Table 7:** Distribution of pre-university college students of urban and rural areas according to their reasons for non – preference to nursing

N(R) = 37

N (U) = 48

Sl. no	Reasons for non Preference	Respondents in Rural PU Colleges		Respondents in Urban PU Colleges	
		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	I am not interested	30	81.1	46	95.8
2	Nursing demand hard work	3	8.1	7	14.5
3	Nursing has odd duty hours	3	8.1	8	16.6
4	Nursing gives no autonomy and independence	6	16.2	7	14.5
5	My parents do not want me to join this profession	5	13.5	5	10.5
6	I am aiming higher than nursing	22	59.5	21	43.75

rank order for the different careers as scored by the PUC students in colleges of rural and urban areas. It is evident from the data that 'Doctor' was preferred first by PUC students in college of both urban and rural areas. The career 'Engineering' was preferred second by the students of colleges of urban and rural areas. Nursing got fourth place of preference by the PUC students of colleges of rural areas while it was given seventeenth place by urban PUC students. This reveals that PUC students of colleges in rural areas nursing more to that of urban PUC students.

#### Section 5

Comparisons of career awareness and career preference of PUC students in colleges of urban and rural areas.

This section presents the comparison of career awareness and career preference of PUC students in college of rural and urban areas. In order to find out the significant difference between career awareness and career preference of rural and urban PUC students of rural and urban college students the following null hypothesis were stated.



**H<sub>1</sub>:** There will be no significant difference between the mean career awareness scores of PUC students in colleges of rural and urban areas in Trivandrum.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There will be no significant difference between career preference between PUC students in colleges of rural and urban areas in Trivandrum.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There will be no significant difference between the mean awareness scores and career preference of PUC students in colleges of rural areas in Trivandrum.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** There will be no significant difference between the mean career awareness scores and career preference of PUC students in colleges of urban areas in Trivandrum.

Unpaired t-test was computed in order to find out the significant difference between mean career awareness scores of PUC students of rural and urban area.

Data in Table 9 indicate the comparison of mean career awareness scores between rural and urban PUC students. Since the calculated t-value ( $t = 4.23$ ) is greater than the tabbed value ( $t_{118} = 1.980$ ), there is a significant difference between the mean career awareness scores of PUC students of colleges in rural and urban area. Hence the null hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is rejected.

Comparison of career preference between PUC students of colleges in rural and urban area This part deals with the career preference between PUC students of colleges in rural and urban areas.

Chi-square test was computed in order to determine the significance of association between career preference score of rural and urban PUC students.

Data in Table 10 show that the computed chi-square value for career preference to find out the significant association between career preference of

**Table 8:** Ranking of career in terms of the cumulative score N=120

Sl. No.	Career	Respondents in Rural PU Colleges Cumulative Score	Rank	Respondents in Urban PU Colleges Cumulative Score	Rank
1	Nurse	567	4	1001	17
2	Teacher	534	3	680	6
3	Receptionist	991	19	1267	25
4	Accountant	997	18	1073	18
5	Business Person	839	9	838	8
6	doctor	215	1	269	1
7	Agriculturist	1059	22	1150	21
8	Scientists	767	8	679	5
9	Engineer	528	2	428	2
10	Lawyer	918	15	935	14
11	Dentist	621	6	490	3
12	Physiotherapist	711	7	974	15
13	Fashion Designer	864	10	901	10
14	Computer Programmer	897	12	1143	29
15	Librarian	1184	26	1284	26
16	Microbiologist	610	5	676	4
17	Photographer	1139	25	1156	22
18	Musician	955	17	880	9
19	Artist	1192	27	990	16
20	Social Worker	87	11	918	12
21	Modeling	1248	28	1222	23
22	Film Star	910	14	1236	24
23	IAS Officer	1092	24	682	7
24	Marketing Executive	1389	29	1294	28
25	Pharmacist	1328	20	1289	27
26	Journalist	947	16	1101	19
27	Speech Therapist	1083	23	1119	20
28	Airhostess	909	13	902	11
29	Defence Service	1050	21	933	13

**Table 9:** Unpaired t-test showing the significant difference between mean career awareness scores of PUC students of rural and urban area N=120

Variable	Area	Mean	SD	t	df	Inference
Career Awareness	Rural	221.5	9.31	4.23	118	Significant
	Urban	211.9	15.86			

't' value = 1.980

PUC students of rural and urban area. The data indicates that the computed chi-square value for career preference ( $\chi^2_{(1)}=4.9$ ,  $P \leq 0.05$ ) is greater than the tabled value which shows that there is significant association between the career preference of PUC students in colleges of urban and rural area. Hence the null hypothesis ( $H_2$ ) is rejected.

Comparison between career awareness and career preference of rural PUC students.

**Table 10:** Chi-square value computed for career preference between PUC students of rural and urban areas. N=120

Variable	Area	DF	Chi-Square value	Inference
Career Preference	Rural Urban	1	4.9	Significant

$$\chi^2_{(1)}=3.841, P \leq 0.05$$

Chi-square test was computed in order to determine the significant association between mean career awareness scores and career preference of rural PUC students.

Data in Table 11 show that the computed chi-square value between career awareness and career preference of rural PUC students ( $\chi^2 = 0.12$ ) is less than the table value ( $\chi^2_{(1)} = 3.841$ ,  $P \geq 0.05$ ). Hence there is no significant association between career awareness and career preference of PUC students in rural area. Hence the null hypothesis ( $H_3$ ) is accepted.

Data in Table 12 shows that the computed chi-square value between career awareness and career preference of urban PUC students ( $\chi^2=1.64$ ) is less

**Table 11:** Chi-square value computed between career awareness with career preference of rural PUC students N=120

Variables	DF	Chi-Square value	Inference
Career awareness Career Preference		0.12	No Significance

$$\chi^2_{(1)}=3.841, P \geq 0.05$$

**Table 12:** Chi-square value computed between career awareness with career preference of urban PUC students N=120

Variables	DF	Chi-Square value	Inference
Career awareness Career Preference	1	1.64	No Significance

$$\chi^2_{(1)}=3.841, P \geq 0.05$$

than the tabled value ( $\chi^2_{(1)}=3.841$ ,  $P \geq 0.05$ ). Hence there is no significant association between career preference and career awareness of PUC students in urban area. Hence the null hypothesis ( $H_4$ ) is accepted.

### Section-6

#### Association between career awareness, career preference and selected demographic variables

This section presents the association of career awareness and career preference with selected demographic variables such as religion, educational and occupational status of mother, educational and occupational status of these and family income. In order to find the significant association between these variables and career awareness, the following null hypotheses were stated.

**H<sub>5</sub>:** There will be no significance association between career awareness score of PUC students of rural area regarding with variables: religion, educational and occupational status of mother, educational and occupational status of father, and family income at 0.05 level of significance.

**H<sub>6</sub>:** There will be no significant association between career awareness score of PUC students of urban area regarding with variables: religion, educational and occupational status of mother, educational and occupational status of father, and family income at 0.05 level of significance.

Chi-square test was computed in order to determine the significant association between career awareness score of rural and urban pre-university college students with religion, educational and occupational status of father and mother and family income.

Chi-square value compared between demographic variables with career awareness scores of rural and urban student regarding nursing

The findings that computed chi-square value between career awareness score and selected demographic variables of PUC students of rural area at  $df_{(2)}$  for religion ( $\chi^2_{(2)}=10.36$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), education of father ( $\chi^2_{(2)}=39.67$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), occupation of father ( $\chi^2_{(2)}=11.6$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) and at  $df_{(1)}$  for family income was significant at 0.05 level of significance.

It is interpreted that career awareness scores of PUC students of rural area are dependent on religion, mother's occupation, educational and occupational status of father, and family income. Hence the null hypothesis  $H_5$  is rejected.

Further, the findings in table show that the computed chi-square value between career awareness score and selected variables of PUC students of urban area at  $df_{(2)}$  for religion ( $\chi^2_{(2)} = 1.71$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), mother's occupation ( $\chi^2_{(2)} = 0.36$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), education of father ( $\chi^2_{(2)} = 1.46$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), occupation of father

( $\chi^2_{(2)} = 0.36, P < 0.05$ ) and at  $df_{(1)}$  for family income ( $\chi^2_{(1)} = 1, P < 0.05$ ) was not significant at 0.05 level of significance.

It is interpreted that career awareness scores of PUC students of urban area are independent of religion, educational and occupational status of mother and father, and family income, but dependent on mother's education. Hence the null hypothesis ( $H_6$ ) was rejected in favor of research hypothesis in relation to the variable mother's education. In relation to other variables null hypothesis was accepted.

#### *Career Preference and Demographic Variables*

This section presents the association between career preference and religion, educational and occupational status of mother and father and family income of PUC students of rural and urban areas. In order to find the significant association between these variables and career preference, the following null hypothesis were stated.

**H<sub>7</sub>:** There will be no significant association between career preferences of PUC students of rural area with variables: religion, education and occupation of father and family income at 0.05 level of significance.

**H<sub>8</sub>:** There will be no significant association between career preference of PUC students of urban area with variables: religion, education and occupation of father and family income at 0.05 level of significance.

Chi-square test was computed in order to determine the significance of association between career preference of PUC students of rural and urban area with religion, education and occupation of father and family income.

Chi-square value compared between career preference and selected demographic variables of pre-university students of colleges of rural and urban area

The findings that computed chi-square value for career preference of PUC students of rural area at  $df_{(2)}$  for occupation of father, ( $\chi^2_{(2)} = 6.96, P < 0.05$ ), and family income ( $\chi^2_{(2)} = 7.73, P < 0.05$ ), was significant at 0.05 level. It is interpreted that the career preference of PUC students of rural area was dependent on occupation of father and family income. Religion, mother's education and occupation and education of father were not associated with career preference of PUC students of rural area. So the null hypothesis ( $H_7$ ) was rejected in favor of the

research hypothesis in relation to the variables occupation of father and family income. In relation to other variables null hypothesis  $H_7$  was accepted.

Further, the chi-square value for career preference of urban PUC students at  $df_{(1)}$  for family income ( $\chi^2_{(1)} = 5.45, P < 0.05$ ) mothers education and occupation ( $\chi^2_{(1)} = 9.03$ ) and ( $\chi^2_{(1)} = 3.93$ ) respectively was significant at 0.05 level.

It is interpreted that the career preference of PUC students of urban areas was dependent on family income, education and occupation of mother. Religion, education and occupation of fathers were not associated with career preference of PUC student's urban area. So null hypothesis  $H_8$  was rejected in favor of the research hypothesis in relation to the variable family income and mother's education and occupation. In relation to other variables null hypothesis  $H_8$  is accepted

#### **Discussion**

The findings of the study were discussed as per objectives and hypotheses with the findings of other studies.

#### *Baseline Proforma*

Majority of the students was in the age group of 14-16 years. But Sudame (1983) in a study on career awareness towards nursing among high school Girls in Bhutan showed that majority of the students were in the age group of 17-19 years. In the present study majority of the students in rural and urban PU colleges were Hindus. Similar findings were found in Uplankar (1989) who studied on educational and occupational aspirations of college students. Majority of the PUC students in rural and urban areas belonged to families with 3-5 members. This finding was in contrast to the findings in the study of Sudame (1983) where majority of the students belonged to families consisting of 6-8 members. Majority of the students in PU colleges of rural and urban area belonged to 1<sup>st</sup> order of birth. Maximum number of mothers of PUC students in rural and urban areas had education up to PUC. This is in contrast to the findings of Sudame (1983).

Majority of the fathers of PUC students in colleges of rural areas had education up to PUC and that of urban areas had education up to secondary. Majority of the mother of PUC students in colleges of rural areas and urban areas were unemployed. This is in consistent with the findings of Sudame (1983).

Majority of the fathers of PUC students in rural areas were businessmen whereas that of urban PUC students were Govt employees. The findings in urban students are in consistent with the findings of Sudame (1983).

All the PUC students in colleges of rural and urban areas had preference for further study. Similar findings were found by Sudame (1983).

The findings related to reasons for further study and persons influencing choice of career were 'for securing a good job', and 'parents'. These findings are in contrast to the findings of Sudame (1983).

#### *Knowledge about Nursing*

Majority of PUC students in colleges of urban and rural areas had below average knowledge scores, which shows their lack of knowledge about nursing. This finding is similar to the findings of Sudame (1983).

#### *Image and Opinion about Nurse and Nursing*

The findings related to image and opinion about nurse and nursing showed that all the students in PUC colleges of rural areas and majority in urban areas had positive opinion about nurse, and all the students in rural and urban area had positive image about nursing. These findings are similar to the findings of Giri (1988), Grossman and Northrup (1993, Bough and Lentini (1999) who reported that students had favorable image and opinion about nurse and nursing.

#### *Career Preference / Non Preference to Nursing*

In the area of career preference to nursing, only 38.3% of PUC students in colleges of rural area and 20% in urban areas preferred nursing. This shows that urban PUC students had less preference to nursing than rural students. These findings are similar to the findings of Brown and Foskett (1999).

#### *Reasons for Preference of Non Preference to Nursing*

Majority of the PUC students in colleges of rural areas (60.8%) and urban areas (75%) stated the reason for their preference to nursing as to 'serve the sick and needy'. Nearly half of the students in rural PUC colleges (43.5%) and more than half in urban areas (58.3%) also gave the reasons for preference to nursing, as 'nursing is a noble profession'. These findings are similar to the

findings of Sudame (1983), Grossman and Northrop (1993), Brown and Foskett (1988), and Williams, Wertemberger and Gushaliak (1997).

Reasons for non preference to nursing show that majority of the PUC students in rural areas and in urban areas gave their reason for non preference as 'they are not interested'. These findings are, consistent with the findings of Hemsley and Foskett (1999).

#### *Career Choice of Various Vocations*

While ranking among the 29 careers listed, 'doctor' got the first rank of preference by PUC students in colleges of rural and urban areas. Nursing got fourth place of preference by the PUC students of colleges of rural areas. This finding is consistent with that of Sudame (1983). Nursing was given seventeenth rank by the urban PUC student. This shows that rural PUC students gave better status to nursing as a career than the urban students.

Only 30% of the rural PUC students and 13.3% of urban PUC students preferred nursing as their first three preferences among 29 careers listed. This finding is in contrast to the findings of Sudame (1983).

#### *Comparison of Career Awareness and Career Preference of PUC Students in Colleges of Rural and Urban Areas*

There was significant difference between the mean career awareness scores of PUC students of colleges in rural and that of urban areas. This reveals that the rural students are more aware about nursing than urban students.

There was a significant association between career preference of rural and urban PUC students at 0.05 level of significance.

There was no significant association between career awareness and career preference of PUC students in rural area.

There was no significant association between career preference and career awareness of PUC students in urban area.

#### *Association between Career Awareness and Career Preference*

There was significant association between religion, education and occupation of father and family income of the PU college students of rural area.

There was no significant association between career awareness and selected variables like religion, education of father, occupation of father and family income of PUC students of urban areas. These findings indicate that the career awareness of PUC students in urban areas is independent of religion, education of father, occupation of father and family income. There was significant association between career preference and occupation of father and family income. These findings indicate that the career preference of PUC students of rural area were dependent on occupation of father and family income, whereas the career preference of PUC students of urban colleges was dependent only on family income. Similar findings were reported by Sudame (1983) and she found out that there was significant association between career preference and father's occupation and family income.

#### *Limitations of the Study*

- The study was confined to specific geographical areas (PUC colleges of urban and rural areas in Trivandrum), which imposes limits on generalization.
- The data collection tools used in the investigation were prepared for this purpose and used for the first time; available time did not permit extensive standardization of the tool.
- The present study is limited to career awareness and career preference of girl students in PU colleges of rural and urban area

#### *Recommendations*

- A similar study may be replicated in a larger sample.
- A study can be conducted among nursing professionals to find out their preference of sending their children for nursing.
- An experimental study can be undertaken on PUC students to find out the effect of planned guidance and counseling programme on choice of career.
- A study can be carried out to find out the public image of nursing in Trivandrum.
- A study can be taken up to find out the opinion of parents of PUC students towards nursing as a profession.
- A comparative study on career awareness and career preference to nursing can be conducted between adolescent boys and girls.

## **Conclusion**

The present study shows that the knowledge of PUC students about nursing was very poor. But they had a positive image and opinion about nurse and nursing. Only a minimum percentage of PUC students preferred nursing as their career choice. This study explores the need for a career guidance programme among the potential candidates thus increasing their knowledge about nursing

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