

## ABSTRACT

**Purpose of the study:** The purpose of the study was to examine, and compare the knowledge and attitudes towards the nursing profession among the Eritrean and Ugandan youth living in Kampala.

**Objectives:** To establish the nature of knowledge and attitudes towards the nursing profession among both the Eritrean, and Ugandan youth in Kampala, and to determine whether or not there is a significant difference in the level of knowledge and nature of attitudes of the Ugandan and Eritrean youth in Kampala to towards the nursing profession.

**Method:** The study designs used were both descriptive and causal comparative study designs, employing quantitative method of data collection. Quota non-random sampling and accidental sampling techniques were used to select the target population. The sample size included 256 youth (128 Eritreans and 128 Ugandans). A tool made of three sections (socio-demographic, knowledge, and attitude questions) which were formulated by the researcher through adopting some of the questions from Cockrell (2002), and Kiwanuka Achilles (2009) was used to collect the data. Data was analyzed using SPSS, involving calculation of average, frequency distributions and percentages. Then inferential statistics (univariate and bivariate) was used to assess the statistical significance of the hypotheses.

**Results:** The study found that while majority of the participants 80.7% scored moderate levels of knowledge, 13.4% scored no knowledge, and the remaining 5.9% of the total population scored high knowledge about the nursing profession. The study's findings show that the primary source of information about the nursing professions among the youth was the health care facilities (31.6%).

Among the issues that the youth were not aware of concerning the profession include; nursing having different levels, being capable of making decisions for themselves, working with high technology, follow physicians orders without question, making a lot of money and about feeling good about what they do. Majority of youth (57%) had neutral attitude, while (29.3%) had negative attitude, only 13.7% had positive attitude towards the nursing profession. When asked if they would like to be a nurse; (55.5%) of the youth responded “NO”, and the remaining (45.5%) responded “Yes”.

When the Eritreans’ and Ugandans’ knowledge was compared the study findings show that there was a significant difference, just like the nature of the attitude of the two population group. The Eritreans were found to be more knowledgeable than their Ugandan counterparts, and more Eritreans (18.8%) had positive attitude than the Ugandan participants (8.6%).

**Conclusion:** This study has shown that the youth are at least aware of the profession but they do not want to opt for it due to the image they have of it from the public and due to lack of sufficient knowledge about the profession. The factors that have been addressed in the research have to be put in considerations if at all we are to increase the nursing students’ recruitment in both countries (Eritrea, and Uganda).