



## Description of community perceptions of nurse professionalism

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Attention to the professionalism of nursing personnel is increasing in society because it has a close influence on the quality of health services. So it is important to apply the values of professionalism to nurses as a foundation to ensure the quality of nursing care. **Purpose:** This study was to determine the description of community perceptions of nurse professionalism. **Methods:** This study used a descriptive quantitative approach with a cross-sectional approach. The research sample was taken using purposive sampling technique involving 106 respondents. Data collection was carried out through the use of a nurse professionalism questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability to 30 residents in Serang City with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.884. **Results:** Showed that most respondents rated the professionalism of nurses in the low category (56.6%). In the sub-variables, most respondents rated humanity, justice, and humility in the high category. The percentage of respondents who rated the low and high categories on the altruism sub-variable was the same (50%). Meanwhile, on the sub-variables of integrity, advocacy, compassion, inclusiveness, autonomy, courage, and caring, respondents rated the category low. Judging from the hospital, the public gave a high assessment of nurse professionalism in Regional Public Hospitals (43.7%), Official Hospitals (43.3%), and Private Hospitals (43.2%). **Conclusions:** Efforts are needed to increase the value of nurses' professionalism by providing additional support through training, internal career development opportunities by moving to other units, and higher further education.

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### Kata kunci:

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### ABSTRAK

**Latar Belakang:** Perhatian terhadap profesionalisme tenaga keperawatan meningkat di masyarakat karena memiliki pengaruh erat terhadap kualitas pelayanan kesehatan. Maka penting untuk menerapkan nilai-nilai profesionalisme pada perawat sebagai landasan untuk menjamin kualitas asuhan keperawatan. **Tujuan:** Penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui gambaran persepsi masyarakat terhadap profesionalisme perawat. **Metode:** Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kuantitatif dengan pendekatan *cross-sectional*. Sampel penelitian diambil menggunakan teknik *purposive sampling* dengan melibatkan 106 responden. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui penggunaan kuesioner profesionalisme perawat yang telah melalui uji validitas dan reliabilitas kepada 30 warga di Kota Serang dengan nilai *Cronbach's Alpha* sebesar 0,884. **Hasil:** Penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar responden menilai profesionalisme perawat dalam kategori rendah (56,6%). Pada sub-variabel, sebagian besar responden menilai kemanusiaan, keadilan, dan kerendahan hati dalam kategori tinggi. Persentase responden yang menilai kategori rendah dan tinggi pada sub-variabel altruisme adalah sama (50%). Sementara itu, pada sub-variabel integritas, advokasi, *compassion*, inklusifitas, otonomi,

keberanian, dan *caring*, responden menilai kategori rendah. Dilihat dari rumah sakit, masyarakat memberikan penilaian tinggi terhadap profesionalisme perawat di RS Umum Daerah (43,7%), RS Kedinasan (43,3%), dan RS Swasta (43,2%). Kesimpulan: Diperlukan upaya untuk meningkatkan nilai profesionalisme perawat dengan memberi dukungan tambahan melalui pelatihan, kesempatan pengembangan karir internal dengan pindah ke unit lain, dan pendidikan lanjutan yang lebih tinggi.

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## INTRODUCTION

In this era of globalization, the demand for quality health services is getting higher along with increasing public expectations of the quality of health services provided by hospitals. So that it has a positive impact on all professions in the health sector to continue to improve professionalism to the needs of the community. Efforts to maintain the quality of health services in hospitals cannot be separated from the role of the nursing profession which plays a very important role (Putra, 2014). Nursing service is a form of professional service that is an integral part of health services based on nursing science and tips, in the form of comprehensive bio-psycho-socio-spiritual services to individuals, families, and communities both sick and healthy that cover the entire life cycle (Budiono & Pertami, 2015). In addition, nursing services are based on professionalism, science, legal and ethical aspects (Oyoh et al., 2018).

Professional nurses need to have the ability to think critically, build relationships of trust and confidence with patients, adequate knowledge, and good skills and expertise. In addition, nurses must also be open to changes and developments in science and technology, have a sense of humor, interact harmoniously with others, look good and cheerful at work, and have full autonomy and authority in independent practice (Utami, 2016). According to Sumijatun & Sunarsih, (2011) Professional nurses have the responsibility to make decisions and take appropriate steps related to nursing care. There are three important principles in quality nursing services, namely caring attitudes toward patients, efforts to provide the best actions, and the goal of satisfying patients with high service standards.

The professionalism of nursing personnel is in the spotlight in the community because it closely affects the quality of services to improve and maintain health. This is a challenge for the nursing profession in realizing professional nursing care (Madayani & Alam, 2016). Nursing professionalism involves developing an identity that includes values such as integrity, altruism, inclusiveness, compassion, courage, humility, advocacy, caring, autonomy, humanity, and social justice. The formation of this professional identity requires the development of emotional intelligence to promote social good, engage in social justice, and demonstrate ethical behavior, moral courage, and decisiveness in decision-making and action. Nursing professionalism is also an ongoing socialization process that requires nurses to give back to the profession through mentoring and developing other (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2021).

The values of professionalism have a very important role in the practice of nurses in providing quality nursing care to the community, to build public trust in nurses. According to the Ipsos MRBI, (2021) based on the veracity value, the nursing profession was ranked second, while in the previous

year's Ipsos MRBI survey, the nursing profession was ranked first. This shows that the nursing profession has provided nursing services by the nursing code of ethics, which is a professional standard that is used as a reference in the behavior of nurses when carrying out their duties.

Ipsos, (2021) in *Global Trustworthiness Index 2021* indicates that the nursing profession is not included in the category of professions that are trusted by the public, even though nurses have provided nursing services by the nursing code of ethics. This can be influenced by several factors. According to Maister's theory, four factors influence public trust, namely credibility, reliability, intimacy, and self-interest (Maister et al., 2000). In Indonesia, no survey has been conducted on the level of public trust in professions, including in Banten

According to Nursalam, (2014) the general public still has a considerable distance from nurses and nursing. There is a misperception among the public that nurses are not professionals, but rather health workers who are less friendly and tend to treat patients poorly. Interviews with several individuals from different backgrounds also revealed unpleasant experiences with nurses, some even mentioning that nurses are just assistants to doctors and their services are considered unsatisfactory.

The results of research by Wijaya & Rantung, (2015) regarding patient perceptions of nurses' professional competence showed generally positive results. The most dominant statement item in patients' perceptions is "nurses respect the culture/religion of the patient", which is included in social care and social relations skills. However, the statement item that was perceived as less dominant was "nurses know their field of science (natural, social, political sciences)", which is included in the skill of integrating knowledge. This study is in line with Fabrianti, (2015) which states that the majority of people have a good perception and are satisfied with the services provided by nurses.

Caring is one of the values of nurse professionalism and the basis for professional nursing practice to improve the quality of services that provide satisfaction to clients and families (Kusnanto, 2019). As professional nurses, they need to have a caring attitude. However, nursing services are still found by nurses who are considered not to have caring behavior as expected. In a study conducted by (Lumbantobing et al., 2018), it was found that the perceptions of patients and the general public about nurses' caring in providing nursing care were different. In general, nurses and patients assessed that nurses' caring behavior in providing nursing care was quite good. However, the community, which is the subject of research around the campus of the Faculty of Nursing, Padjajaran University, considers that the caring behavior of nurses in providing nursing care is still lacking.

Based on the results of a preliminary study on 10 residents who have received health services at the hospital

through interviews, show that there are various perceptions of nurse professionalism. Of the 10 residents interviewed, 8 people considered that professional nurses are those who have reliable skills, especially in performing actions such as installing IVs. Meanwhile, 6 people said that professional nurses are those who can communicate well with patients and their families, use language that is easy to understand, are friendly, and polite, have extensive knowledge, and pay attention to the patient's condition.

The perception of the public as patients towards health services provided by nurses is an important indicator in assessing the quality of these services. The view that people have of nurses can reflect a general picture of the nursing profession (Kusumaningsih, 2009). Maka So this is increasingly interesting to study how the description of public perceptions of nurse professionalism in Serang City.

## METHODS

This research uses a descriptive design with a cross-sectional approach. This research was conducted in March-June in the Serang City Region in 2022 with a sample size of 106 respondents. Samples were taken using a purposive sampling technique. Based on the inclusion criteria: 1) Adult men and women who have received nursing services. 2) Have been hospitalized in the hospital 3) Have interacted with nurses. 4) Willing to be a respondent by signing a letter of consent or informed consent is given. While the exclusion criteria in this study are: 1) People who cannot read and write. 2) People who are sick or physically disabled.

Data collection in this study used a questionnaire. Part 1 of the questionnaire related to questions about demographic data totaling 9 items including age, gender, ethnicity, education, occupation, whether or not they had been hospitalized, the hospital where they were treated, treatment history, length of days hospitalized and last treated. While part 2 of the questionnaire contains questions to determine the public's perception of nurse professionalism. Measurement of perceptions of nurse professionalism researchers developed from the core values of nurse professionalism according to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, (2021) including the values of integrity, altruism, inclusiveness, compassion, courage, humility, advocacy, caring, autonomy, humanity, and social justice which amounted to 30 question items using a Likert scale of 1-4. The questionnaire has been tested for validity and reliability on 30 different respondents in the attack city area with a Cronbach alpha value of  $0.884 > 0.60$ , it is concluded that the questionnaire is valid and reliable.

In the process of collecting data in the first study, the researcher distributed questionnaires by visiting several residents' homes and meeting by chance the inclusion criteria of the study. Then after getting a respondent who fits the criteria, the researcher explains the research then if the respondent is willing the researcher asks the respondent to sign an informed consent. After that, the respondent filled out the questionnaire which was given approximately 15 minutes. Furthermore, after the respondent finished, the questionnaire sheet was returned to the researcher. The questionnaire that has been filled in is then processed and analyzed by the researcher.

This research has obtained an ethical eligibility letter from the ethics committee of Faletahan University with number 111/KEPK.UF/VII/2022.

## RESULTS

### Overview of age, treatment history, and length of stay

Characteristics of respondents based on age, treatment history, and length of stay are presented in Table 1 below:

**Table 1. Distribution of respondents based on age, treatment history, and length of stay In Serang City 2022 (N=106)**

Variabels	Mean/median	SD	Min-Max
Age	35,80/36,00	6,519	23-52
Treatment History	1,92/1,00	1,303	1-7
Length of Stay	5,90/5,00	3,731	2-30

Based on the data in Table 1, 106 respondents showed that the youngest age was 23 years old and the oldest age was 52 years old, the majority of respondents had a history of treatment 1 to 2 times and the average respondent had been treated for 5 to 6 days

### Overview of gender, ethnicity, education, time of last hospitalization, and hospital used

Characteristics of respondents based on gender, ethnicity, education, last time treated, and hospitals used in the Serang City area.

**Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender, Ethnicity, Education, Last Time Treated, and Hospital Used in Serang City 2022 (N=106)**

Respondent Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	21	19,8
Female	85	80,2
Tribal Nation		
Jawa	59	55,7
Sunda	47	44,3
Education		
Elementary School	13	12,3
Junior High School	14	13,2
High School	55	51,9
University	24	22,6
Last Treated		
≤ 1 year	31	29,2
1-3 years ago	38	35,8
≥ 3 years ago	37	34,9
Hospital		
Regional General	32	30,2
Hospital	30	28,3
Official Hospital	44	41,5
Private Hospital		
Total	106	100

Based on Table 2, it was found that the majority of respondents were female as many as 85 people (80.2%), Javanese ethnicity as many as 59 people (55.7%), the last high school education as many as 55 people (51.9%), last treated 1-3 years ago as many as 38 people (35.8%), and hospital agencies that were often used by respondents were private hospitals as many as 44 people (41.5%).

### Overview of the total value of nurse professionalism in community perceptions

Frequency distribution of community perceptions of the value of professionalism possessed by nurses in Serang City

**Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Public Perception of Nurse Professionalism In Serang City 2022 (n=106)**

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low	60	56,6
High	46	43,4
Total	106	100

The results of the study in Table 3 show that the majority of people in the Serang City area have perceptions of the low value of professionalism of nurses as many as 60 people (56.6%) and those who have perceptions of the high value of professionalism of nurses are 46 people (43.4%). The difference between the value of professionalism in public perception between low and high is 13.2%.

### Summary of Sub-Variable Values of Nurse Professionalism in Community Perception

Based on Table 4, it can be seen that in 3 out of 11 sub-variables, most respondents rated high categories, namely: humanity, justice, and humility, in the altruism sub-variable the percentage of respondents who rated low and high categories was the same (50%). While 7 out of 11 sub-variables most respondents rated the low category, namely:

Integrity, advocate, compassion, inclusiveness, autonomy, courage, and caring.

**Table 4 Frequency Distribution of Sub-Variable Values of Nurse Professionalism in Community Perception In Serang City 2022 (N=106)**

Sub-Variabel	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Humanity	Low	5	4,7
	High	101	95,3
Justice	Low	7	6,6
	High	99	93,4
Humility	Low	51	48,1
	High	55	51,9
Altruism	Low	53	50
	High	53	50
Integrity	Low	57	53,8
	High	49	46,2
Advocate	Low	61	57,5
	High	45	42,5
Compassion	Low	62	58,5
	High	44	41,5
Inclusivity	Low	65	61,3
	High	42	38,7
Autonomy	Low	66	62,3
	High	40	37,7
Courage	Low	70	66
	High	36	34
Caring	Low	75	70,8
	High	31	29,2

**Table 5 Frequency Distribution of Public Perceptions of Nurse Professionalism Based on Hospitals Where Respondents Have Been Treated in Serang City 2022 (N=106)**

Hospital	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Region General Hospital	32	30,2	Low	18	56,3
			High	14	43,7
Official Hospital	30	28,3	Low	17	56,7
			High	13	43,3
Private Hospital	44	41,5	Low	25	56,8
			High	19	43,2

### Overview of Nurses' Professionalism Values Based on Hospitals Where Respondents Have Been Treated

Table 5 shows that regional public hospitals have the highest score for nurse professionalism in public perception (43.7%), followed by official hospitals (43.3%), and private hospitals have the lowest score for professionalism (43.2%).

## DISCUSSION

### An Overview of community perceptions of the Value of nurse professionalism

Based on the distribution table, it shows that of the 106 respondents studied, it is known that most respondents have a perception of the value of nurse professionalism rated low at 60 (56.6%). This is in line with Mulyadi & Hannan, (2015) which illustrates that most of the people of Madura have

received poor service while being hospitalized, thus affecting people's perceptions of nurse professionalism. Another study also stated the same thing that there was a negative perception of professional nurses such as inappropriate actions, lack of skill, lack of communication with patients and not responding quickly to patient complaints (Wijaya & Rantung, 2015). Similarly, research conducted by Saragih, (2013) showed that some nurses are fussy, rigid, bitchy, and lazy. However, this study contradicts research conducted by Fahrianti, (2015) which states that the majority of people have a good perception and are satisfied with the services provided by professional nurses in the Pisangan village area, South Tangerang.

According to Fahrianti, (2015) several things can affect people's perceptions of the nursing profession, one of which is unpleasant past experiences, unsatisfactory health services and not following expectations can make people's perceptions negative. Based on the results of research by Banunaek et al., (2021) there is a relationship between nurse professionalism and the quality of nursing services, the

higher the professionalism of nurses, the higher the quality of nursing services, and vice versa. The lack of professionalism possessed by nurses will result in a decrease in service quality it can cause public dissatisfaction with the services provided by the hospital, where nursing services are the main key holder of success in the health care delivery system because the human resources that are most numerous and can provide health services for 24 hours are nurses (Asih & Trisni, 2015). The quality of nursing services will improve if nurses have a sense of responsibility, are proactive, have a love of work, are loyal, are willing to learn from mistakes, and can also be trusted and honest (Banunaek et al., 2021)

Based on the questionnaire answers, there are several question items related to the value of professionalism that are still considered low according to public perceptions, including integrity, advocacy, compassion, inclusiveness, autonomy, courage, and caring. In the integrity value component, (53.8%) of respondents had a low perception of the value of integrity. It was found that on the statement "Nurses speak with a medical language that is difficult for me to understand", the score was low. This shows that sometimes nurses use medical language that patients do not understand.

On the value of advocacy professionalism, most respondents (57.5%) had a low perception of the value of advocacy. On the statement "The nurse was not with me when the doctor examined me", the average score was low. This indicates that nurses do not full fill their duties as communication intermediaries between patients/patient families and nurses.

At the compassion value, most respondents (58.5%) had a low perception. This is because nurses do not show compassion to patients. This can be seen in the statement "The nurse was ignorant when I complained of pain" which received a low score.

Similarly, with the value of inclusiveness, the community rated it low at (61.3%). The statement "Nurses only discuss with doctors in making decisions that are important for healing", gets a low mean score. It can be interpreted that nurses do not involve patients or patients' families in decision making

The autonomy component was also rated low according to public perception (62.3%). The statement "The nurse immediately acted without explaining it to me" received a low score. Sometimes nurses skip therapeutic communication to explain the actions that will be performed on the patient.

The public rated courage low (66%). It can be seen in the question item "Nurses do not hesitate when performing actions", getting a low score. This shows that nurses look hesitant and appear less confident when performing actions, so patients think that nurses are not competent in these actions.

Regarding the value of caring, 70.8% of respondents gave the lowest assessment. It can be proven in the statement "Nurses do not check my health condition regularly with thoroughness", getting the lowest score among other professional values.

This study is consistent with previous research conducted by Mailani & Fitri, (2017) regarding the caring behavior of nurses in the inpatient room of RSUD Dr. Rasidin Padang with 84 respondents. The results showed that most nurses, as many as 39 people (46.4%), had insufficient caring behavior. This study also received support from Rizkianti & Haryani, (2020) which stated that most respondents, as

many as 34 people (54.0%), considering that nurses' caring behavior was lacking according to patient perceptions.

However, the results of this study differ from research conducted by Nurmalasari & Haryani, (2017) in the inpatient room of RSUD Dr. Dradjat Prawiranegara Serang with 63 nurse respondents. The results showed that according to nurses' perceptions, most respondents, namely 34 people (54%), had good caring behavior. There is a difference in the assessment of nurses' caring between patients' perceptions and nurses' perceptions, indicating that the assessment of nurses' caring by patients is lower than the assessment of nurses' caring by nurses themselves.

This study supports the results of research conducted by Leyla, (2013) ) by conducting a literature review of 34 studies, showing a significant difference between nurses' perceptions and patients' perceptions in assessing the trusting relationship between nurses and patients. The majority of nurses consider the trusting relationship with patients higher than the assessment made by patients. The caring behavior of nurses that is rated lower by patients reflects the patient's experience of nurse services during hospitalization. Positive experiences felt by patients during treatment can help improve patient well-being. Conversely, one-time poor nurse behavior can affect the patient's perception of the nurse during the treatment period (Hur et al., 2017).

Understanding and internalizing the concept of caring is important and decisive for a nurse. This must be instilled, watered, and nurtured in the heart so that nurses can demonstrate soft skills that include empathy, responsibility, accountability, and the ability to learn throughout life (Hartiti & Zainova, 2018).

Meanwhile, the items that were rated high based on public perception were humanity, justice, and humility, while altruism was rated equally between high and low. The humanitarian value component received the highest percentage, more respondents rated nurses as having high humanitarian values (95.3%). It can be proven by the frequency table where out of 106 respondents, 101 people answered disagreed with the statement "The nurse acted arbitrarily to me". So it can be explained that the respondents' past experiences when interacting directly with nurses made them feel respected towards fellow humans.

The second highest score after a humanitarian value is justice, as evidenced by the statement "Differences in beliefs do not affect my relationship with nurses" Out of 106 respondents, 99 people answered agree while 7 other respondents answered disagree. In this case, it shows that people's perceptions of the value of justice can be said to be high. So the respondents' experience when interacting directly with nurses makes them feel treated fairly in getting nursing services.

The value of humility was also rated high by respondents (51.9%) reinforced by the question "Nurses are friendly and polite to me and my family" rated high by 55 respondents out of 106 respondents. This means that nurses providing services are gentle and friendly to respondents.

In addition, in the altruism value component, the percentage of respondents who rated the low and high categories was the same (50%). The statement item "The nurse teaches and provides explanations related to health recovery to me" gets the highest mean score, this can be interpreted that the nurse has implemented his role in health promotion to improve and maintain health. Meanwhile, the statement item "The nurse did not provide enough nursing service support to me" received the lowest

mean score, meaning that the nurse did not provide maximum nursing services to patient.

This research is supported by Munira & Kamil (2020) at RSUD Dr. Zainoel Abidin Banda Aceh that the value of altruism is considered good around 24 (48.0%). The attention aspect is the attitude of a nurse in providing nursing services must be patient, willing to provide help to patients, nurses must be sensitive to any changes in patients and patient complaints, understand and understand the patient's anxiety and fear. Nurses treat patients well and sincerely in meeting their needs (Desimawati, 2013).

Developing nurses' professionalism can be done by improving human resources. One of them is through continuing nursing education, both at the D3 and undergraduate education levels. In addition, conducting comparative studies of various model hospitals and increasing the frequency of case discussion activities are also important. This is expected to directly affect nurses' professional attitudes, knowledge, and skills (Fahiqi, 2016).

### Overview of Public Perceptions of Nurse Professionalism Based on Hospitals Where Respondents Have Been Treated

The results showed that the professionalism of nurses in hospitals in Serang City is still low. The researcher observed that many nurses working in the hospital had not undergone nursing professional education (Ners). The formation of nurses' professionalism can be done through education, training, work experience, and high motivation (Innong, 2010). This research is supported by Wildani, (2019) showing the value of nurse professionalism in the low category (78.6%) with the category of education level, more nurses with D3 education level (37 nurses) compared to S1 Ners (18 nurses) and SPK nurses (1 nurse). So that it states that education can affect the professionalism of nurses where the lower the nurse's education, the lower the nurse's productivity which can affect the level of professionalism, therefore the formation of a nurse's professional attitude can be fostered and developed by increasing human resources through continuing nursing education at the professionalism education level.

According to Firdaus, (2021) personality development training is important for prospective nurses. Through training (Training Personality Development), they gain an understanding of career prospects as nurses and the needs of the world of work. This training activity also provides optimism to prospective nurses in choosing a career as a nurse and awareness of the importance of personality development to become a professional nurse. Research by Hudek-Knežević et al., (2011) also supports this, that personality has a significant influence on professionalism. Personality is an aspect that is connected to overall professionalism. Emphasis on friendliness as a protective factor from reducing personal efficacy, especially in jobs involving human services. Since the success of a nurse's work depends largely on their willingness to help and care for patients, friendliness is expected to be associated with good performance.

The work experience factor can also affect the value of nurse professionalism in providing nursing care to patients. This is following research conducted by Jiwanti et al., (2022) explaining that the results of statistical tests on length of work obtained a value of  $p = 0.001 < 0.05$ , which means that there is a significant difference in the average length of work between professional and less professional in providing nursing services. Education and length of work are related the most dominant in the development of a nurse's career

path in the hospital, which has been regulate (Jiwanti et al., 2022)

In addition to education, training, and length of service to increase the value of nurse professionalism, high motivation is also needed to encourage optimal performance. According to Hendrian et al., (2019), motivation is the force that directs individual behavior. This motivation contributes positively to increasing nurses' involvement in providing nursing services to patients and carrying out other activities. According to Saragih, (2016) it is stated that demonstrating the value of one's professionalism is influenced by high ability and motivation.

### Conclusion

The results of research conducted in March-June in the Serang City Region from 106 respondents showed that most people perceived the value of professionalism in nurses was low (56.6%). Looking at the sub-variables of the value of professionalism of nurses, most respondents rated high, namely, humanity, justice, and humility. While 7 of the 11 sub-variables of the value of professionalism of nurses most respondents rated the low category, namely, integrity, advocate, compassion, inclusiveness, autonomy, courage, and caring. In the altruism sub-variable, the percentage of respondents who rated the low and high categories was the same (50%). The results of this study also show that the low assessment of the value of professionalism of nurses by the community can be influenced by education, many nurses who work in these hospitals have not undergone nursing professional education (Ners). Efforts are needed to increase the value of nurses' professionalism to meet the needs and demands of the community for quality nursing services in providing holistic nursing care by providing additional training support, internal career development opportunities by moving to other units, and higher education.

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