

## ORIGINAL PAPER

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# Nurses' perceptions about the nurse's social role in Greece

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**BACKGROUND:** There is great evidence in nursing literature about the nurses' perceptions on their role. Most studies are focused on nursing practice and the actual role in hospitals, and other skills on basic-, intermediate- and advanced- level patient care. In Greece, there are no studies examining the social role of nurses and nurses' perceptions about it. **AIM:** To assess how nurses in Greece perceive their social role and investigate the factors influencing their social role.

**MATERIAL-METHOD:** 342 nurses working in hospitals in the wider area of Thessaloniki were recruited in this study. Data collection was carried out through one self-completed questionnaire developed by the researchers.

**RESULTS:** 47.5% (n=162) agreed that society expects from nurses a particular behaviour, and almost half of the participants [51.8% (n=176)] totally agreed that nurses are practicing a 'litourgima'. 49.1% (n=165) agreed that nurses are health educators in society and another 46.3% (n=157) totally agreed that nurses undertake actions in order to eliminate patient discrimination. 47.6% (n=160) of the participants totally agreed that nurses should be dedicated to quality improvement and 40.9% of the sample (n=138) agreed that nurses should provide care during an epidemic while 41.3% totally agreed that nurses execute duties of other professionals. 45.7% (n=155) totally agreed that nurses shouldn't deny care for patients with infectious diseases. A high percentage of nurses (60.1%, n=197) agreed that a part of the nursing role is patient advocacy.

**CONCLUSIONS:** The findings of the present study indicate the importance of nurses' social role, which may allow them to empower patients to further recognize the role of nursing during hospitalization.

**KEY-WORDS:** Nursing, social role, perceptions, Greece