

Difference in Attitude on Autopsy of Nursing Students According to Presence or Absence of Anatomy Practice

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Abstract: This study aims to provide basic data in building up the positive attitude on autopsy of nursing students by grasping the attitude on autopsy of nursing students and examining whether there is difference in it according to presence and absence of anatomy practice experience or no. This study was conducted for 102 students in the 1st-3rd grade of a nursing department located in C City. The data collection was done from Apr. 15, 2017-Apr. 30, 2017. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS program. As a result, the degree of attitude on autopsy of nursing students was average rating 2.88 out of 5 points and the difference in attitude on autopsy according to presence or absence of anatomy practice. It is considered that it is necessary to prepare the fundamental measures to make nursing students have a positive attitude on autopsy through anatomy practice of them. Furthermore, the positive change in attitude on autopsy of nursing students who would work as nurses will have a positive effect on the decision on autopsy of a deceased family at clinical field.

Key words: Attitude, autopsy, nursing students, anatomy practice, presence, absence

INTRODUCTION

Humans come to meet the death of any kind with the birth of life. When a person dies, it is ultimately related with 'the dignity of life' to clear the doubt of what the cause of death is whether there is doubt on the death in question or not and whether it is related with the crime or not. In this respect what comes to fore is autopsy (Lee, 2005).

Autopsy is to investigate the dead body to clarify the causal relationship with the results obtained by grasping the cause and degree of lesion and damage (Kang, 2010) and is the method with which the cause of death is identified most exactly (Park and Choi, 1992).

However, the percentage of autopsy is not high in Korea as there is a negative emotion of autopsy that is touching the dead body is dual death due to Confucian tradition thought and various institutional systemicity and sophistication are lacking. However, especially when there is a perpetrator of death, to investigate it in detail through an autopsy is necessary to criminal procedure for investigating and prosecuting him or her and the exact investigation on death is necessary to many civil procedures such as insurance, pension, testament and inheritance. Also, autopsy contributes to establishing health care policies of the people and various administrative policies to prevent the recurrence of death

through death statistics according to cause of death and cause analysis and making future-oriented community (Park, 2003).

Recently in Korea, the suicidal, murder, suspicious death and medical accidents which require autopsy are not reduced and it was revealed that the opinions of medical personnel have a significant effect on autopsy decision, however, it is reality that how medical personnel think about autopsy is very limited. However as the survey of recognition and attitude on autopsy is closely related with the frequency with which autopsy is performed, the investigation on that is being conducted in many ways in Foreign countries rather than in Korea.

The studies which briefly investigated, including the study of attitude on death and understanding on dying patients of nurses and nursing students of (Kim *et al.*, 1992) are all about the attitude on autopsy of nursing students who would act in each field of society and clinics after graduating from a university. Anatomy practice with a dead body is a critical curriculum in systematizing the knowledge by system through anatomy theory class (Winkelmann, 2007). In spite of this importance, anatomy practice remains at the existing teaching method such as progression of practice, specimen observation or virtual anatomy practice along with theoretical summary or due to the various conditions

such as faculties, educational facilities and budget, practice teaching is not being well done in anatomy teaching of some departments of allied health and medical science. Especially while the departments and the number of students in life, health and allied medical science are increasing rapidly as the conditions of anatomy practice room are not being improved largely, it is concerned that there might be poor anatomy education. In the case of anatomy, the disciplines on the structures and functions of a human body, theory education and practice education for the dead body are essential for the successful learning and in the case of anatomy practice where anatomy practice is abandoned or where anatomy practice is replaced by other types, it is being reported that there is necessity to return to the anatomy practice. A nurse as a health care provider should have a high degree of understanding on the human body and sensitivity on the life ethics as he or she provides the care for humans. Thus, anatomy is organized in a curriculum as a basic major study which nursing students must necessarily learn. It is required that a nurse should have firm knowledge of the structures and functions of the human body which can be applied to the clinics. Although, there must be difference in the knowledge of the structures and functions of the human body which is needed by work units or in all fields in common, the fact that the graduates who majored in nursing complain of the lack of basic knowledge at the nursing field must be paid attention to by nursing educators. The educational purpose of human anatomy practice is to acquire the knowledge of the structures and functions of the human three-dimensionally using a dead body. Judging from the preceding studies that the knowledge of anatomy has increased after anatomy practice that in anatomy education, if the practice opportunity using a dead body is provided, the exact structures and functions of human anatomy come to be understood and that by touching and observing the actual structures directly they can be vividly remembered, the importance and necessity of anatomy can be known. As human anatomy practice helps students in allied health science understand the majors well and acquire the knowledge which becomes the basis in engaging in professions in each allied health science after graduating, it is certainly a necessary education. Therefore, this study aims to provide basic data in building up the positive attitude on autopsy of nursing students by grasping the attitude on autopsy of nursing students and examining whether there is difference in it according to presence and absence of anatomy practice experience or not.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design: This study is a descriptive survey research to grasp the attitude on autopsy of nursing students according to the presence and absence of anatomy practice.

Study subjects: This study was conducted for 102 students in the 1-3rd grade of a nursing department located in C City.

Study tool: To survey the attitude on autopsy of nursing students, 'Questionnaire comprised of 26 attitude statements on necropsy VAS 100 mm which Botega *et al.* (1997) developed and which Oh Song Yi revised and complemented was used as a tool. This tool is composed of 17 items and Likert 5 point scale was used which means that the higher the score is the more positive attitude on autopsy is shown. In this study, Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.824$.

Data collection method: The data collection was done from Apr. 15, 2017-Apr. 30, 2017. For data collection method, a researcher visited subjects and explained the purpose and method of study to them. After distributing the questionnaire to those who agreed to participate in it and explaining precautions and how to respond to them, this survey was conducted. Before collecting the data, the study purpose and confidentiality were explained to all the subjects and that this survey will not be used for other purposes other than research was done to them and then those who agreed to that participated in the survey.

Data analysis method: The collected data was analyzed using SPSS program. The general characteristics of subjects were analyzed with real number and percentage, the attitude on autopsy was done with mean and standard deviation, the difference in the attitude on autopsy according to the general characteristics and the presence or absence of anatomy practice was done with t-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The general characteristics of subjects are like Table 1. For subjects, there were 34 in 1st grade (33.3%), 34 in 2nd grade (33.3%) and 34 in 3rd grade (33.3%) and for religion, 55 student had no religion (53.9%), followed by 23 christianity (22.5%). In anatomy practice experience, the cases that they responded, 'yes' appeared 68 (66.7%) and in the necessity of anatomy practice, the cases that

they responded, “very necessary” appeared 65 (63.7%) which was highest. Also, in the question whether anatomy practice education is helpful to performing nursing job or not the cases that they responded, “average” appeared 81 (79.4%) which was highest.

The degree of attitude on autopsy of nursing students was average rating 2.88 out of 5 points, the general attitude on autopsy, a sub-item was average rating 2.79, rapport formation with a deceased family was average rating 2.79 and the emotional response on autopsy was average rating 3.18 (Table 2).

There was no statistically significant difference in nursing students’ attitudes toward autopsy according to general characteristics (Table 3).

As a result of surveying the difference in attitude on autopsy according to presence or absence of anatomy practice, not only that there was no difference in the whole attitude on autopsy according to it but also that there was no one in the general attitude on autopsy, a sub-item, rapport formation with a deceased family and the emotional response on autopsy (Table 4).

For in this study, the attitude on autopsy of nursing students was grasped and the difference in the attitude on it according to the presence and absence of anatomy practice was identified. As main results are discussed they are as follows.

Table 1: General Characteristics (N = 102)

Variables/Categories	No. (%)	Mean±SD
Grade		
1st	34(33.3)	2.00±0.821
2nd	34(33.3)	
3rd	34(33.3)	
Religion		
None	55(53.9)	1.79±1.018
Christianity	23(22.5)	
Catholic	14(13.7)	
Buddhism	10(9.8)	
Anatomy practice experience		
Yes	68(66.7)	1.33±0.474
No	34(33.3)	
Necessity of anatomy practice education		
Not necessary at all	1(1.0)	4.42±0.906
Almost unnecessary	4(3.9)	
Average	11(10.8)	
Almost necessary	21(20.6)	
Very necessary	65(63.7)	
Degree that anatomy practice education is helpful to performing nursing job		
Not be helpful at all	13(12.7)	2.74±0.744
Not helpful	5(4.9)	
Average	81(79.4)	
Will be helpful	2(2.0)	
Will be very helpful	1(1.0)	

Table 2: Degree of attitude on autopsy of nursing students (N = 102)

Variables	Categories	Mean±SD	Range
Attitude on autopsy		2.88±0.337	1-5
	General attitude on autopsy	2.79±0.359	1-5
	Rapport formation with a deceased family	2.79±0.650	1-5
	Emotional response to Autopsy	3.18±0.583	1-5

Table 3: Differences in attitude toward autopsy by general characteristics of nursing college students (N = 102)

Variables/Categories	N	General attitude on anatomy		Rapport formation with a deceased family		Emotional response on anatomy	
		Mean±SD	t or F (p)	Mean±SD	t or F (p)	Mean±SD	t or F (p)
Grade							
1st	34	2.77±0.407	0.505 (0.687)	2.68±0.562	0.379 (0.979)	3.13±0.604	0.337 (1.098)
2nd	34	2.76±0.313		2.79±.789		3.30±.593	
3rd	34	2.85±0.355		2.90±0.574		3.11±0.548	
Religion							
None	55	2.78±0.271	0.949 (0.131)	2.78±0.591	0.590 (0.642)	3.20±0.522	0.159 (1.764)
Christianity	23	2.79±0.454		2.72±0.751		3.35±0.606	
Catholic	14	2.78±0.503		2.75±0.700		3.07±0.781	
Buddhism	10	2.85±0.364		3.05±0.685		2.88±0.445	
Anatomy practice experience							
Yes	68	2.80±0.336	0.635 (0.227)	2.85±0.687	0.217 (1.541)	3.21±0.575	0.550 (0.359)
No	34	2.77±0.407		2.68±0.562		3.13±0.604	
Necessity of anatomy Practice education							
Not necessary at all	1	3.09±0.000	0.255 (0.393)	3.00±0.000	0.549 (0.767)	2.75±0.000	0.945 (0.185)
Almost unnecessary	4	2.75±0.395		2.50±0.408	3.31±0.427		
Average	11	2.60±0.353		2.95±0.688		3.18±0.681	
Almost necessary	21	2.75±0.418		2.93±0.676		3.17±0.634	
Very necessary	65	2.84±0.334		2.73±0.650		3.18±0.570	
Not be helpful at all	13	2.76±0.432	0.902 (0.262)	2.50±0.707	0.903 (0.260)	3.29±0.728	0.927 (0.220)
Degree that anatomy practice education is helpful to performing nursing job							
Not helpful	5	2.91±0.170		2.70±0.200		3.10±0.518	
Average	81	2.79±0.362		2.82±0.644		3.17±0.567	
Will be helpful	2	2.91±0.257		3.50±0.707		3.38±0.884	
Will be very helpful	1	0.64±0.000		3.00±0.000		3.00±0.000	

Table 4: Difference in attitude on autopsy of nursing students according to presence or absence of anatomy practice (N = 102)

Variables/Categories	N	General attitude on anatomy		Rapport formation with a deceased family		Emotional response on anatomy	
		Mean±SD	t or F (p)	Mean±SD	t or F (p)	Mean±SD	t or F (p)
Anatomy practice							
Yes	68	2.80±0.336	0.635 (0.227)	2.85±0.687	0.217 (1.541)	3.21±0.575	0.550 (0.359)
Experience							
No	34	2.77±0.407		2.68±0.562		3.13±0.604	

First, as a result of examining the attitude of autopsy of nursing students, it was revealed that they had a positive attitude on it with average rating 2.88 out of 5 points. This result was similar to study result of Botega *et al.* (1997) that medical students showed a positive attitude on autopsy and that of Oh (2011) that nursing students did on autopsy. Due to Confucian traditional thought, touching the dead body used to be considered a double death in Korea, however, people changed their recognition due to the effect of mass communication, the contents broadcast in various programs such as dramas and documentaries and the development of many health care policies such as insurance and pension, so, this result is judged to be emerged.

Second, as a result of identifying the difference in the attitude on autopsy of nursing students according to the presence and absence of anatomy practice, it was revealed that there is no difference according to that. This study result was different from the study result by Benbow (1991) that there is difference in attitude on autopsy between 3rd graders in a medical university who took part in autopsy and 2nd ones in a medical university who didn't do in it and that of Conran *et al.* (1996) that there is difference in the attitude on autopsy of medical students before and after autopsy. However, this study result is similar to the study result of Kim (1998) that in the survey of recognition of autopsy of medical students, the general university students showed a positive attitude on autopsy while there was no difference when comparing medical students with general students and that of Oh (2011) that there was no difference in attitude on autopsy of nursing students according to presence and absence of autopsy observation. This result is thought to be emerged due to the following reasons that is when the curriculum of nursing department is mainly anatomy practice course, it is organized to the a lower grade, the nursing students don't want to be the subjects of anatomy practice in terms of medical education they feel shame of the body of somebody being exposed and may have high anxiety on the fact that the body of dead body is cut and they recognize anatomy as the simple curriculum which they must learn to be a nurse.

CONCLUSION

As a result, it is considered that it is necessary to prepare the fundamental measures to make nursing students have a positive attitude on autopsy through anatomy practice of them and that, furthermore, the positive change in attitude on autopsy of nursing students who would work as nurses will have a positive effect on the decision on autopsy of a deceased family at clinical field. Therefore, it is considered that it is necessary to perform anatomy practice in nursing curriculum more systematically and that the in-depth anatomy practice education system should be prepared by providing advance education and discussion opportunity for nursing students to talk about their feeling during anatomy practice.

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