

Study About the Ability Improvement of Nursing College Students

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Abstract: As the nurses occupy the largest number of personnels in the hospital and contact the patients at the forefront, they should have diverse abilities. This study is a narrative research study to analyze the relationship between emotional intelligence, communication ability, self-leadership and empowerment which are regarded as the necessary competence for nursing students. Collected data were analyzed according to research purpose using SPSS 20.0 program. In this study, general characteristics which showed common significant difference in emotional intelligence, communication, self-leadership and empowerment were college life satisfaction and general characteristics which showed significant difference in emotional intelligence, communication and empowerment were nursing major and satisfaction in major. This study showed strong correlation between emotional intelligence, communication, self-leadership and empowerment which are major variables. In this study, strong correlation was identified between emotional intelligence, communication, self-leadership and empowerment of nursing students and it is necessary to develop education and program to improve them.

Key words: Communication competence, emotional intelligence, empowerment, self-leadership, nursing student, program

INTRODUCTION

As the interest and knowledge of the public, expectation for the quality of medical services is increasing. The hospital is organized with highly specialized and diverse members and the nurses occupy more than 40% of hospital workforce and contact the patients at the forefront and therefore, the nurses have the greatest impact on the competitiveness and productivity of the hospital.

Especially, nurses deal with the feeling of the human-being when they work. Accordingly, nurses should have correct understanding and sincere ability of empathy on both the other's and their own feelings beside their intellectual capability to communicate with the guardians or the people without medical background as well as to enhance the satisfaction level on the medical services to the patients (Woloshynowych *et al.*, 2007).

Likewise, understanding the other's and their own feelings correctly, utilizing and managing their own emotions are called as emotional intelligence (Wong and Law, 2002) and this works to facilitate the positive thinking as well as to consider the partners with the open communication and to lower the communication conflicts (Silva and Reis, 2011). Communication plays an important function to understand the roles of the members, to

integrate them and to achieve the member's goals. Nurses should perform harmonious communication with a variety of background people, the patients and the guardians and the communication skill is one of the determinant factors for the quality of nursing.

In addition, self-leadership is to lead by himself or herself for motivation and it is the leadership to empathize the autonomy which is the foundation in the internal aspect of the people by influencing himself or herself (Manz, 2015).

To become a leader with self-leadership, he or she should communicate with others on the persuasion and conversation using fine-tuned and considerate language upon listening to them with patience and devotion.

In addition to this, there is a suggestion to increase the competitiveness and productivity of the organization and satisfaction of target subjects at the same time which is considered empowerment (Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998). Empowerment is a concept that includes the ability to do something for oneself and do something with self-confidence (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990) and is a positive self-concept that helps to engage in a role as a nursing student and go forward to changer and growth. Therefore, the methods to improve the empowerment of nursing students are to provide the opportunities for clinical education, support for the education in the

external institutions and lifelong education and to improve creative and critical thinking abilities (Gauthier and Matteson, 1995).

To enhance these variables suggested as the necessary competency during the course of nursing education, it is required to check the correlation among them and to approach with various educational ways. Hence, this study aimed to analyze the correlations among emotional intelligence, communication skill, self-leadership and empowerment in the university students majoring in nursing and to contribute to prepare the programs for them and the fundamental data for the desired culture of nursing organization in the future.

The purpose of this study is to provide the basic data for advanced program to enhance the clinical adaptability by analyzing emotional intelligence, communication competence, self-leadership and empowerment relationship of undergraduate nursing students. The specific objectives of the study are as follows.

First, this study aims to identify the general characteristics of the subjects. Second, this study also analyzes emotional intelligence, communication competence, self-leadership and empowerment of research subjects. Third, this study analyzes the correlation among birth characteristics, emotional intelligence and interpersonal relationship.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Design: This study is a descriptive correlational study for identifying the degree of emotional intelligence, communication competence, self-leadership, empowerment degree and relationship of nursing students.

Participants: Participants of this study were a group of nursing college student located in S city. In order to select study subjects, 126 nursing college students were selected who understood the purpose of this study and agreed to participate in the survey. Data of 120 subjects were used for the final analysis, except for 6 data with insufficient or unrecovered answers.

Instrument

Emotional intelligence: Emotional intelligence refers to the scores measured by the tools developed by questions (Wong and Law, 2002). The questionnaire is comprised of an aggregate 16 item with four items used in the Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA), four in Other's Emotion Appraisal (OEA), four in Use of Emotion (UOE) and four in Regulation of Emotion (ROE). Likert 7 point scale means that the higher the score, the higher the emotional

intelligence. The reliability of questions (Wong and Law, 2002) was Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.79-0.82$ and Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.85$ in this study.

Communication competence: Communication competence is measured by the Global Interpersonal Communication Competence (GICC) (Papa, 1989). This tool is composed of 15 items of self-disclosure, empathizing in others shoes, social tensions, assertiveness, concentration, interaction management, expressive power, supportability, immediacy, efficiency, social appropriateness, fluency, target comprehension, response skills and noise control. Likert 5 points scale means that the higher the score, the higher the communication competence. The result showed Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.72$ at the time of development) (Papa, 1989) while study showed Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.84$ in this study.

Self-leadership: Self-leadership is measured by the Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) (Houghton *et al.*, 2012). This tool is composed of three sub-factors of behavior-oriented strategy, natural compensation strategy, constructive thinking pattern strategy with Likert 5-point scale. The higher the score, the higher the self-leadership. In this study, Cronbach's α was 0.92.

Empowerment: Empowerment refers to the scores measured by study of Bolton and Brookings (1998) as measures of personal internal empowerment scale. The instrument was a Likert 5-point scale with 16 items for personal competence, 5 items for group recognition and 8 items for self-determination. The higher the score, the higher the level of empowerment. The reliability of the instrument was Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.80$ in study (Bolton and Brookings, 1998). The reliability of the instrument in this study was Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.87$.

Data collection and procedures

Data collection process: This study was conducted with structured questionnaires targeting nursing students in S college from April 17th-April 30th 2017 and the data were collected with self-reporting format. In order to protect the ethical aspects of study subjects, professors and students who are enrolled in the target nursing college were sufficiently informed about the purpose of the research, time required for the survey and the protection of personal information and contents in their participation to get the voluntary and consent.

Ethical considerations: The nursing students who wanted to participate were handwritten by consent and informed they could withdraw at any time they want

during the participation process. In addition, they were informed related data would not be used for any purpose other than the purpose of this research and be treated as secret and confidentiality. They were informed the questionnaire would take approximately 10-15 min and collected data would not be used for any other purpose except research purpose.

Data analysis: The following analysis was conducted on the collected data using the SPSS/WIN 20.0 program.

The general characteristics of subjects were analyzed with number, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Means and standard deviations of the degree emotional intelligence, communication competence, self-leadership and empowerment of the subject were analyzed.

The difference in the degree of emotional intelligence, communication competence, self-leadership and empowerment according to the general characteristics of subjects have used the t-test and one-way ANOVA for the analysis and the Scheffe test was conducted for the post verification.

Correlation between the emotional intelligence, communication competence, self-leadership and empowerment have used the pearson-correlation coefficient for the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General characteristics of the subject: The general characteristics of the subjects are shown in Table 1. The most common age group was 78.3% (94 students) between 19 and 25 years of age and the highest score was 66.7% (80 students). The 63.3% (76 students) of the respondents answered that they had a middle-level of campus life satisfaction with more than half of the subjects and religion was more in the order of Buddhism, Christianity and Catholicism. The motivation for choosing the nursing department was to have a good job to be competent, to consider parents and teacher’s recommendation to consider high school grades to find service oriented jobs to enjoy more job opportunities abroad’. The 48.3% (58 students) answered that they had a high degree of satisfaction with their major and 43.3% (52 students) answered that they were in good health.

Difference of variables according to general characteristics: Table 2 shows emotional intelligence, communication competence, self-leadership and empowerment aligned with general characteristics. The emotional intelligence showed significant difference with scholastic performance ($F = 3.469, p = 0.034$), campus life

Table 1: The general characteristics (N = 120)

Characteristics/Categories	n	Percentage
Age (years)		
19-25	94	78.3
25-30	23	19.2
30-40	3	2.5
Scholastic performance		
High	11	9.2
Middle	80	66.7
Low	29	24.2
Campus life satisfaction		
High	24	20
Middle	76	63.3
Low	20	16.7
Religion		
Christian	34	28.3
Christian	11	9.2
Buddhism	6	5.0
None	69	57.5
Department choice motivation		
To consider high school grades	12	10.0
To be competent	31	25.8
To have a good job	43	35.8
To consider parents and teacher’s recommendation	25	20.8
To enjoy more job opportunities abroad	4	3.3
To find service oriented jobs	5	4.2
Major satisfaction		
High	58	48.3
Middle	55	45.8
Low	7	5.8
Health status		
Very good	23	19.2
Good	52	43.3
Not bad	32	26.7
Bad	13	10.8

satisfaction ($F = 7.380, p < 0.001$), religion ($F = 3.472, p = 0.018$), major satisfaction ($F = 6.956, p < 0.001$). Communication competence showed significant difference with campus life satisfaction ($F = 3.280, p = 0.041$) and Health status ($F = 2.848, p = 0.041$). Self-leadership showed significant difference with scholastic performance ($F = 4.432, p = 0.014$), campus life satisfaction ($F = 5.577, p = 0.005$) and major satisfaction ($F = 6.401, p = 0.002$) and empowerment showed significant difference with campus life satisfaction ($F = 5.008, p = 0.008$), department choice motivation ($F = 2.296, p = 0.050$) and majors satisfaction ($F = 3.478, p = 0.034$).

Degree of the variable of the subject: Table 3 shows the emotional intelligence, communication competence, self-leadership and empowerment in this study. The degree of emotional intelligence, communication competence, self-leadership and empowerment is shown in Table 3. The score for emotional intelligence of subjects were 80.12 ± 0.03 points. It has shown the communication competence of 55.66 ± 6.49 points and self-leadership average of 126.43 ± 16.39 points. The score for empowerment of subjects were 98.21 ± 14.11 points.

Table 2: Difference of variables according to general characteristics (N = 120)

Characteristics/Categories	Emotional intelligence		Communication competence		Self-leadership		Empowerment	
	M±SD	F(p) Scheffe	M±SD	F(p) Scheffe	M±SD	F(p) Scheffe	M±SD	F(p) Scheffe
Age (years)								
19-25	80.46±9.76	1.192	56.06±6.49	0.843	126.45±16.51	0.442	98.33±14.05	0.066
25-30	77.68±10.64	(0.229)	54.35±6.75	(0.443)	125.17±16.34	(0.644)	98.09±15.49	(0.937)
30-40	87.33±12.66		53.33±2.52		134.67±14.84		95.33±2.08	
Scholastic performance								
High ^a	85.73±9.50	3.469	59.27±6.00	2.109	138.18±12.49	4.432	106.64±11.86	2.549
Middle ^b	80.51±9.77	(0.034)	55.53±6.04	(0.126)	126.63±15.41	(0.014)	95.55±16.12	(0.082)
Low ^c	76.79±10.08	a>c	54.66±7.51		121.41±18.32	a>c	98.21±14.11	
Campus life satisfaction								
High	86.25±7.86	7.380	58.63±6.27	3.280	134.92±15.71	5.577	104.63±13.28	5.008
Middle	79.33±10.22	(0.001)	54.84±5.93	(0.041)	125.61±15.99	(0.005)	97.92±13.46	(0.008)
Low	75.70±8.52		55.20±7.90		119.35±15.09		91.60±14.82	
Religion								
Christian	84.15±10.47	3.472	56.85±5.58	0.676	131.59±16.24	1.718	99.21±13.96	0.280
Christian	75.55±6.64	(0.018)	54.00±7.43	(0.568)	123.18±16.07	(0.167)	100.73±13.51	(0.840)
Buddhism	75.00±10.64		55.00±4.05		128.00±17.90		95.83±13.79	
None	79.29±9.66		55.40±6.93		124.26±16.14		97.52±14.51	
Department choice motivation								
A	75.67±10.73	1.866	52.64±8.65	0.858	121.92±19.78	1.692	92.58±16.68	2.296
B	83.77±9.46	(0.106)	57.03±6.67	(0.512)	132.13±15.46	(0.142)	102.32±14.07	(0.050)
C	80.47±9.68		55.95±6.12		122.26±14.82		99.34±11.72	
D	77.88±10.70		55.00±6.36		127.16±18.63		92.20±13.19	
E	74.50±10.72		54.25±6.02		128.50±6.14		98.75±15.63	
F	81.60±4.04		55.80±3.42		132.40±11.55		106.00±21.45	
Major satisfaction								
High ^a	83.41±9.17	6.956	56.75±5.79	2.237	131.59±15.52	6.401	101.59±12.54	3.478
Middle ^b	77.25±10.23	(0.001)	54.33±7.25	(0.111)	121.02±15.67	(0.002)	95.36±14.75	(0.034)
Low ^c	74.50±5.43	a>b	57.29±3.30		126.14±17.47	a>b	92.57±16.57	
Health status								
Very good	83.61±10.95	1.491	58.09±6.82	2.848	131.78±19.00	1.571	104.74±16.68	2.293
Good	80.12±10.77	(0.221)	56.23±6.46	(0.041)	127.04±16.46	(0.200)	97.60±12.29	(0.082)
Not bad	77.91±8.76		53.23±4.30		123.53±12.34		95.22±11.62	
Bad	79.33±6.67		54.92±8.70		121.62±18.80		96.46±19.05	

Department choice motivation (A = To consider high school grades; B = To be competent; C = To have a good job; D = To consider parents and teacher's recommendation; E = To enjoy more job opportunities abroad; F = To find service oriented jobs)

Table 3: Degree of the variable of the subject (N = 120)

Categories	M±SD	Min	Max
Emotional intelligence	80.12±10.03	53	102
Communication competence	55.66±6.49	31	73
Self-leadership	126.43±16.39	81	168
Empowerment	98.21±14.11	82	141

Table 4: Relationships among the study variables (N = 120)

Variables	EI r(p)	CC r(p)	SL r(p)	EW r(p)
EI	1	0.596 (p<0.001)	0.584 (p<0.001)	0.537 (p<0.001)
CC		1	0.541 (p<0.001)	0.698 (p<0.001)
SL			1	0.678 (p<0.001)
EW				1

EI = Emotional Intelligence, CC = Communication Competence, SL = Self-Leadership, EW = Empowerment

Correlation between subject variables: The results of verifying the correlation between the degree of emotional intelligence, communication competence, self-leadership and empowerment of subjects are shown in Table 4. Emotional intelligence has shown a significant positive correlation with the communication competence (r = 0.596, p<0.001), self-leadership (r = 0.584, p<0.001) and empowerment (r = 0.537, p<0.001). Communication competence has shown a significant positive correlation

with the self-leadership (r = 0.541, p<0.001) and empowerment (r = 0.698, p<0.001). Self-leadership has shown a significant positive correlation with the empowerment (r = 0.678, p<0.001).

CONCLUSION

Nursing education should enable the nurses to form their values and attitudes that they should have in order to maximize the potential of the students. To achieve these nursing education objectives, education environment and programs should be provided that the nurses could identify their abilities necessary for clinical practice, improve their competence and show their performance.

First, the satisfaction level on the university life among the general characteristics showed the significant differences from emotional intelligence, communication, self-leadership and empowerment and the satisfaction level on the major of nursing did the significant differences from emotional intelligence, communication and empowerment. Therefore, it should be sought to improve the satisfaction level on the university life.

Second, this study showed strong correlation between emotional intelligence, communication, self-leadership and empowerment that are major variables. The students who satisfy their major demonstrated high level of academic achievement and active attitude to their lives, ultimately enhancing their own competency and values by university life.

Based on the results of this study, the followings are suggested for further studies. First, this study has the limitation to generalize the study results, since, it was conducted in one university in S city. For more generalized results, expanded investigations are proposed. Second, more clarification is proposed on various factors used in this study and path validation.

Third, it is proposed to develop the educational programs and validate their efficacy to enhance the variables in this study considering the characteristics of the university students majoring in nursing.

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