

The Relationship Among Personality, Interpersonal Relations and Stress of Clinical Practice of Nursing Students

Miran Bang¹ and Sunsook Sim²

^{1,2}*Dept. of Nursing, Kyungdong University, 815, Gyeonhwonro, Munmak, Wonju, Gangwondo 26495, Korea*

¹*bmr@kduniv.ac.kr, ²ssshim1003@kduniv.ac.kr*

Abstract

This research is to study the relationship between the personality, interpersonal relations, and stress of clinical practice targeting college students majoring in nursing and to identify the factors that affect stress of clinical practice. A self-report type survey was conducted targeting 221 of nursing students in a city from August 29, 2016 to September 09, 2016. As the results of the study, the relationship between personality and interpersonal relations ($r=.502$, $p<.001$) showed a statistically significant positive correlation in the medium level. The lower level of the satisfaction on clinical practice the nursing students have, it appeared that clinical practice more stressful. It is regarded that it shall need to develop a practice program that can improve the interpersonal relationship and consider the individual personality of nursing students in order to reduce the stress of clinical practice of nursing students.

Keywords: *Clinical, Practice, Interpersonal, Relations, Personality, Stress, Students*

1. Introduction

Nursing students can integrate comprehensive nursing knowledge and practical work through clinical training education, apply communication and basic nursing skill to practice, and have a chance to develop a value system as professional workers [1]. They finally have a basic ability as a professional nurse. However, Park [2] says that curriculum inherent in the nursing practice education includes some negative aspects such as obedience to authority, passive thinking and job performance based on obligation rather than proud, and that there is a gap between the original purpose of practice education and the reality. The stress of clinical practice is reported to affect practice satisfaction, clinical practice ability and views on nursing profession [3].

Nursing students' interpersonal relations are an important factor for effective communication without conflict with patients medical staff and carers [4]. Nurses' work is done through interpersonal relations with various people in organizations, so their interpersonal skills are necessary. The result of precedent studies showed that the interpersonal relation score of nursing students are higher than average [5], but the score is not satisfactory for them to build effective relationship with patients and furthermore to maintain therapeutic relations with patients as nurses [5]. However, interpersonal relations were reported to have a correlation with stress [6], so it is necessary to perform practical education to improve interpersonal skills such as empathy education program [7] for nursing

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students to control stress with confidence about interpersonal relations from nurse education curriculum at nursing schools.

Recently, extended operation of nursing-caring integrated service, many changes of nursing practice environment [8] and social environment that requires people with humanity emphasize the necessity of personality education as well as knowledge and skills in nursing education [9]. In longitudinal case analysis about core ability of nursing students, personality characteristics affect interpersonal relations and cooperation ability [10], and personality is an influence factor on adjustment to college life [11]. In addition, clinical practice education which is the essential course of nursing education during college life of nursing students, what effects personality characteristics have on stress of clinical practice needs to be identified. Studies on clinical practice stress of nursing students are mostly critical thinking traits, clinical performance ability [12], emotional intelligence and communication skills [13], and there is lack of studies on relation with personality that is socially emphasized because in the personality research, personality is tested with the use of personality test [14].

This study is intended to identify the relationship among personality, interpersonal relations and clinical practice stress of nursing students, and to understand the factors that affect stress of clinical practice. Therefore, by developing effective practice education strategy and character cultivation programs for interpersonal skill improvement, the study is intended to provide basic resources for practical interventional strategy to reduce stress of clinical practice.

2. Methods

2.1. Measurements

2.1.1. Personality

Personality was measured with Barom personality scale for college students developed by Lee et al. Al [15]. This device is composed of total 60 questions of 3 Sub-domain including cognitive domain, justice domain and behavior domain. Each question is 6 point Likert range, which is from 1 point of 'never' to 6 point of 'always'. When the device was developed, Cronbach's α was .96, and in the main research, Cronbach's α was .97.

2.1.2. Interpersonal relations

Interpersonal relations were measured with 'Relationship Change Scale' that Schlein and Guerney [16] developed and Moon [17] revised and compensated. The device is composed of 25 questions with 7 Sub-domain. Each question is 5 point Likert range, which is from 1 point of 'very unsatisfactory (or very unamicable)' to 6 point of 'very satisfactory (or very amicable)'. When the device was developed, Cronbach's α was .83, and in the main research, Cronbach's α was .92.

2.1.3. Stress of clinical practice

For stress of clinical practice, a device that Kim and Lee [18] revised and compensated based on precedent studies was used, and it is composed of total 24 questions. Each question was measured with Likert 5 point of 'very applicable' and 'not applicable'. In the study of Kim and Lee [18], Cronbach's α was .91, and in the main research, Cronbach's α was 87.

2.2. Analysis

A difference of personality, interpersonal relations and stress of clinical practice according to general characteristics of objects was analyzed by independent t-test and ANOVA, Mann-whitney U-test, Kruskal-wallis test and posteriori tests were analyzed by Scheffe's test. Correlation between variables was analyzed by Pearson's correlation coefficient.

3. Results

3.1. Nursing students' personality, interpersonal relations and stress of clinical practice

Table 1. Personality, Interpersonal Relations, and Stress of Clinical Practice of nursing students (N=221)

Variables (range)		M±SD	
Personality (1-6)	Knowing factor	Moral awareness	4.46±0.73
		Knowing moral value	4.22±0.61
		Moral reasoning	4.35±0.72
		Reflective decision making	4.47±0.76
		Self-understanding	4.24±0.78
		Awareness of self-initiated life	4.04±0.85
		Sub-total	4.29±0.58
	Feeling factor	Conscience	4.69±0.73
		Self-respect	4.25±0.83
		Empathy	4.57±0.69
		Loving the good	4.86±0.81
		Self-control	4.17±0.73
		Community spirit	4.09±0.65
		Sub-total	4.46±0.58
	Behaving factor	Will and competence	4.14±0.66
		Habit	3.58±0.81
		Sub-total	3.91±0.65
	Total		4.28±0.54
Interpersonal Relations (1-5)	Satisfaction	3.69±0.59	
	Communication	3.71±0.60	
	Trust	3.56±0.61	
	Friendliness	3.78±0.59	
	Sensibility	3.95±0.59	
	Openness	3.51±0.65	
	Understanding	3.89±0.56	
	Total	3.71±0.48	
Stress of Clinical Practice (1-5)	Clinical environment	3.18±0.55	
	Teachers and nursing staff	2.89±0.67	
	Assignments and workload	3.36±0.66	
	Interpersonal relationships	2.42±0.65	
	Conflict with patients	2.48±0.71	
	Total	2.87±0.47	

The result of measuring nursing students' personality levels with Barom personality scale showed the whole average was 4.28 (range: 1-6 points), which was above middle level. Among 3 subdomains, 'justice domain' was 4.46, the highest score followed by 4.29 of 'cognition domain' and 3.91 of 'behavior domain'. The whole average of interpersonal relations was 3.71 (range: 1-5 points), which was above middle level. Among 7 subdomains, 'sensitiveness' was 3.95, the highest score followed by 3.89 of 'understanding' and 3.78 of 'friendliness'. The whole average of clinical practice stress was 2.87 (range: 1-5), which is middle level. Among 5 subdomains, 'practice work sharing' was 3.36, the highest score followed by 3.18 of 'practice education environment' and 2.89 of 'undesirable role model' [Table 1].

3.2. Relationships among personality, interpersonal relations and stress of clinical practice

The result of correlation analysis too discover the relationship among nursing students' personality, interpersonal relations and stress of clinical practice showed interpersonal relations and personality ($r=.502, p<.001$) have significant amount of correlation [Table 2].

Table 2. The Relationship between the Personality, Interpersonal Relations, and Stress of Clinical Practice of nursing students (N=221)

	Interpersonal Relations $r(p)$	Stress of Clinical Practice $r(p)$
Stress of Clinical Practice	-.100(.138)	1
Personality	.502(<.001)	-.105(.121)

4. Discussion

In this study, the result of measuring nursing students' personality levels with Barom personality scale [15] for college students showed their personality level was over middle level. It was similar to the result that Lim [11] did targeting nursing students with the same scale, but it was higher level than the result of Kim [19] targeting general college students. Basic nursing concepts are caring, protecting and nurturing. Nursing students tend to select their majors by recognizing the essence of nursing and considering the job characteristic of nurse. The subjects of this study were third graders of nursing schools who were doing clinical practice, so they experienced consideration for other people and care in forming interpersonal relations with various patients. That's why their personality level seemed to be higher than general college students. In the subdomain of personality, justice domain was the highest followed by cognition and behavior domains. In the study of Kim [19], justice domain was the highest followed by behavior and cognition domains. Justice domain means conscience, self-respect, empathy, love of virtue, self-control and modesty, and in the above two studies, justice domain was the highest level. This means they feel more difficult in practicing will, ability and habit compared to knowing and feeling what is just in the conceptual frame of personality. Therefore, in various types of personality cultivation education done in college, practice education that can cultivate will and habit for proper behaviors should be emphasized.

In this study, interpersonal relations were over middle level and positive. This is higher than the results of Chae [20], and Jeong and Lee [5] targeting nursing students with the same device. The interpersonal skill is a major factor that nurses fundamentally have in interaction with patients, medical staff and patients' family, and as interpersonal skills are better, self-

respect gets higher, stress gets lower [6], and they get adjusted to college life better [21]. Therefore, interpersonal relations and skills are very important elements for nursing students to manage their lives or jobs. In addition, considering precedent studies that nurses' communication skills and leadership affect interpersonal relation ability [22], interpersonal competence programs of extra-curricular courses should include integrated interventional strategy that can improve communication skills and leadership.

Nursing students' stress of clinical practice was middle level in this study, but it was lower level than the results of Kim and Lee [18]. Among subdomains of clinical practice stress, practice work sharing, practice education environment and undesirable role model showed high scores, which is the same as the result of Kim and Lee [18]. Nursing students' clinical practice education is an essential course to complete their major and has a big percentage. Therefore, it is necessary to seek an active interventional plan including improvement of practice education environment for reduction of stress about clinical practice.

In this study, personality of nursing students had correlation with interpersonal relations. There are rare precedent studies dealing with relationship between nursing students' personality and interpersonal relations, it is impossible to compare directly. Nevertheless, considering the research result of Kim & Chung [23] that nursing students' interpersonal relations are significantly different depending on their personality types, personality is considered to affect interpersonal relations. Therefore, it is necessary to present specific practice strategy to foster ability of communication with others through personality education and social service participation during liberal arts classes and extra-curricular activities since personality education and interpersonal relations are emphasized in the nursing education and clinical fields.

This study is meaningful in researching the relationship among personality, interpersonal relations and clinical practice stress of nursing students. Because the result showed personality and satisfaction with practice are major factors that affect stress of clinical practice, it is important to perform various personality cultivation programs through various activities and to make efforts to reduce stress of clinical practice through multidirectional approaches to enhance satisfaction with practice.

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