

## Study on the Nursing Practice Programs of the Nurses in Small to Medium Sized Hospitals

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### Abstract

*This study was to examine the conditions of nursing practice programs at small and medium-sized hospitals as well as the needs and levels of satisfaction among nurses. The subjects of study were 136 nurses working at the small and medium-sized hospitals in G Metropolitan City of J Province. The data collection period was one month in November 2010, and this data was analyzed using SPSS Program Ver. 19.0 ver. descriptive statistics, Independent T-Test, ANOVA, Duncan Post-Hoc Test, and correlation. Regarding needs, nurses responded that nursing practice programs are most necessary for nursing practice at the professional level, but they had difficulty in receiving nursing practice programs due to their hectic work schedules, and they thought that one hour per month is enough time to spend on nursing practice programs. There were subjects who thought that the nursing practice programs contribute to the provision of quality nursing, utilizing specific skills, developing expertise and supplementing education. There were significant differences in the responses of the subjects. In terms of general attributes, accommodation of and satisfaction levels regarding nursing practice programs were of an adequate level and nurses were overall satisfied with their current position in their careers. The total time elapsed since embarking on their nursing careers was under 1 year, and this seemed to have significant effects on the subjects in that they responded by saying that they could grow as the professionals due to being satisfied with their careers in nursing. Satisfaction levels regarding accommodation and content of nursing practice programs appeared to correlate with quantity. Accommodation was significant to satisfaction regarding practical training.*

**Keywords:** *Nursing practice programs, Needs, Accommodation, Satisfaction*

### 1. Introduction

The majority of nurses working at small and medium-sized hospitals are in need of improved quality to meet the health requirements of diversified and rapidly changing subjects, and the systematic and continuous education which acts as a guiding principle for satisfactorily performing roles as well as maintaining the knowledge and skills already gained in the regular course of education are needed most of all [1]. The practical training is provided entirely on-site by an employment agency for the purpose of improving the employees in the performance of their duties. This is planned for the purpose of maintaining knowledge and skills to meet the requirements of employees' current duties while aiming to conform to self-training conducted in the medical institutions and further make up for deficiencies [2].

In the meantime, the nurses working in small and medium-sized hospitals show a high level of satisfaction regarding nursing as an occupation, but they are not satisfied in terms of prospect, salary, welfare, lack of opportunities for new nursing education, and also have the disempowering belief that they are deficient in ability compared to nurses in general hospitals [3]. In most small and medium-sized hospitals, the reality is that the training itself is an annoyance that cannot be revealed as the nurses working in small and medium-sized

hospitals are always tied up with medical treatment and basic duties, thus even though they try to learn, - feeling their lack of knowledge or technology - they fail to utilize sufficient resources or data [4]. However, in practice there are many real-life medical emergencies, during which it is difficult for the nurses to provide accurate support, and because it is hard for them to determine the priority of their duties, it is required that the nursing organization should develop ways to improve nursing practice and provide them with proper training and guidance [5]. For this practical training to be effective, the practical skills of nurses should be investigated thoroughly, and on this basis a systematic program for practical training should be developed, selection of contents appropriate for the requirements of this era, and evaluation on the results should also be carried out. Furthermore, the nursing education system and programs should be provided continuously via practical training according to the career [6]. Also in addition to the selection of teaching materials appropriate for small & medium-sized hospitals as differentiated from large hospitals, development of a practical training program that reflects the needs of nurses in teaching methods, lecturer, etc. is required [7].

As for studies on practical training so far, there is a study on the practical training status and satisfaction level [8], a study on the practical skills and practical training requirements [6, 9], and a study on effectiveness and evaluation of practical training [10], etc. These are mostly targeted at nurses in general hospitals, and there are few studies on practical training targeted at nurses in small & medium-sized hospitals which have been on an increasing trend recently.

Therefore, this study attempts to be of help in the provision of basic materials for operating efficient practical training for small & medium-sized hospitals differentiated from practical training conducted in general hospitals, by investigating the requirements, accommodation and satisfaction levels regarding practical training conducted in small & medium-sized hospitals with 300 beds or less.\

### **1.1. Purposes**

- 1) To investigate the general characteristics, practical training status and needs.
- 2) To investigate the accommodation and satisfaction level for practical training.
- 3) To investigate the accommodation and satisfaction level by practical training status for practical training.
- 4) To investigate the correlation between accommodation and satisfaction level for practical training.
- 5) To investigate the effects of accommodation on satisfaction for practical training.

## **2. Methods**

### **2.1. Participants**

The data was collected at random from a total of 136 nurses after excluding inappropriate materials of 24 nurses among 160 nurses working in small and medium-sized hospitals in G Metropolitan City in J province, who were notified as to the purpose of this study and agreed to participate in the questionnaire survey.

### **2.2. Measures**

The tools used in this study were as follows: 11 questions on general characteristics, 17 questions on practical training status, 9 questions on the needs of study subjects for practical training, 16 questions on the accommodation of practical training, and 11 questions on satisfaction levels regarding practical training.

- Accommodation of Practical Training

The tool developed by [11] and modified/supplemented by [12] was used in 16 questions after being modified/supplemented under consultation provided by three nursing scholars. This tool is a Likert 5-point scale that measures positive thoughts and the reactions of nurses with regards to practical training, and it means that the higher the score is, the higher the accommodation of practical training is. In a study of [12], the reliability was Cronbach's  $\alpha$  .91, and the reliability in this study was Cronbach's  $\alpha$  .95.

- Satisfaction Levels Regarding Practical Training.

The tool used by [13] and modified/supplemented by [8] was used in 11 questions after being modified/supplemented under consultation provided by three nursing scholars. This tool is Likert 5-point scale that measures attitudes relating to adapting to actual nursing duties, and it means that the higher the score is, the higher the satisfaction levels of practical training is. In a study of [8], the reliability was Cronbach's  $\alpha$  .92, and the reliability in this study was Cronbach's  $\alpha$  .95.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Needs of Practical Training

As for the question on the time when the nurses in small & medium-sized hospitals feel that practical training most required, 43.4% of answers were 'when feeling that nursing duties of a professional level are required' showing the highest, and as for the question on the purpose of practical training, 69.6% of answers were 'the acquisition of knowledge and skills needed to perform nursing duties' showing the highest, and 66.9% of answers were 'always present' which was also high. As for the question on reasons for not-having the practical training, 80.5% of the answers were 'unable to match with working hours' showing the highest, and as for the question on the frequency and hours of practical training they think, 89.5% of answers were 'once a month, and one hour or so each time' showing the highest. The contents of practical training they want were investigated by multiple responses: in practical area, 32.6% of answers were 'emergency nursing' showing the highest, and in theoretical area, 27.8% of answers were 'knowledge about specific diseases'. In addition, as for the question on the way of training they need, 61.0% of answers were 'lectures and demonstrations' showing the highest, and as for the question on training lectures they want, 46.3% of answers were 'external lecturers (professor of a nursing department)' showing the highest, and as for the question on the way of evaluation they want, 77.2% of the answers were 'self-evaluation conducted by the nurses themselves'.

#### 3.2. Accommodation of Practical Training

The score assigned to accommodation of practical training was 3.7 points; and as for reasons to receive practical training, 'contribution providing quality nursing', which was marked at 3.9 points showing the highest score, and 'performance of specific services', 'contribution to improving specific skills', 'supplementation for deficiencies in school education' marked 3.8 points, respectively, and 'opportunities for potential abilities leverage', 'overcoming of differences between theory and practice', 'desire for voluntary participation', 'opportunities for information understanding and mutual cooperation', 'opportunities for increase of theoretical knowledge and technical training', and 'importance of formal education' marked 3.7 points, respectively.

#### 3.3. Satisfaction Levels Regarding Practical Training

The score assigned to satisfaction levels regarding practical training was 3.5 points; and as for reasons to be satisfied with the practical training, 'necessity for performance of

nursing duties' marked 3.8 points showing the highest score, and 'contents of increase in theoretical knowledge' marked 3.7 points, and 'new experience', 'confidence in the job satisfaction', 'contents of increase in technical training', 'emphasis on the enlarged role of nurse', 'helpful for patient and caregiver education', 'equal importance as the regular education courses' marked 3.6 points, respectively. And 'helpful for guidance to other nurses' marked 3.5 points, 'fulfillment of educational requirements and inspiration of loyalty to the company' marked 3.4 points, and 'contents required for ward management' marked 2.3 points, respectively.

### **3.4. Accommodation and Satisfaction Level by Practical Training Status**

The accommodation of practical training by practical training status showed a statistically significant difference in the way of participation in practical training ( $t=2.842$ ,  $p=.039$ ) and whether or not teaching materials are used ( $t=5.508$ ,  $p=.006$ ). As for in the way of participation in practical training, 'voluntary participation' marked 3.7 points on average showing a high level of accommodation of practical training, and 'compulsory participation' marked 3.5 points on average. In addition, as for whether or not teaching materials are used, institutions using the teaching materials marked 3.7 points showing a high level of accommodation of practical training, and the institutions not using the teaching materials marked 3.5 points on an average. The satisfaction level of practical training by practical training status showed a statistically significant difference in the way of participation in practical training ( $t=0.788$ ,  $p=.024$ ) and whether or not teaching materials are used ( $t=5.994$ ,  $p=.007$ ). As for in the way of participation in practical training, 'voluntary participation' marked 3.7 points on average showing a high level of satisfaction in practical training, and 'compulsory participation' marked 3.4 points on average. In addition, as for whether or not teaching materials are used, the institutions using the teaching materials marked 3.6 points showing a high level of satisfaction in practical training, and the institutions not using the teaching materials marked 3.4 points on an average.

### **3.5. Correlation between Accommodation and Satisfaction Levels Regarding Practical Training**

As a result of analysis on the correlation between the practical teaching accommodation and satisfaction level for subjects of this study, a significant positive correlation ( $r=0.766$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was shown to exist.

### **3.6. Factors influencing Satisfaction Regarding Practical Training**

The explanatory power of Accommodation was about 62% ( $F=225.48$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

## **4. Conclusions**

The nurses in small & medium-sized hospitals answered that practical training was most required when performing nursing duties on a professional level, and did not receive practical training sufficiently due to the difficulty in matching with working hours. They also believed that practical training for one hour or so once a month was suitable. As for the contents of practical training, they desired most 'emergency nursing' in the practical area, and 'knowledge on special diseases' in the theoretical area. As for the way of training, they desired 'lectures and demonstration'; and as for training lecturers, they desired 'external lectures (professors in nursing department)'; and as for the way of evaluation, they desired 'self-evaluation'. A significant difference existed between the subjects who answered 'the practical training for nurses contributed to qualitative nursing' and the subjects who answered 'performance of specific services', 'contribution to establishment of profession' and 'supplementation on deficiencies in school education'. In addition, satisfaction levels regarding the contents required for performance of nursing duties was shown to be the

highest, and a significant difference existed between ‘opportunities to increase theoretical knowledge’ and ‘new experience of receiving practical training’. As for the accommodation and satisfaction levels regarding practical training by general characteristics, a significant difference existed among the subjects who answered that they were satisfied with their current nursing profession with a total career less than one year and who answered they saw potential growth as a professional job as the reasons for satisfaction in nursing profession. The accommodation and satisfaction levels regarding practical training was represented as high in voluntary participation in practical training and institutions using teaching material. Accommodation was significant to satisfaction regarding practical training.

In accordance with the above results, the following is suggested for the efficient operation of practical training for the nurses in small & medium-sized hospitals. First, through the provision of dedicated rooms for practical training, the annual training plan shall be established and evaluated to meet the changing educational needs of nurses. Second, because personnel responsible for practical training are also needed, it would be ideal to endow nurses with a variety of practical experience in each unit with the responsibility. Third, the practical training, audio-visual materials, and teaching materials for the uniqueness and special departments of the hospital should be developed and distributed for positive utilization. Fourth, in the nursing department, the practical training organization shall be organized with a section chief of each unit and head nurses, and a method to enforce practical training for nurses should be reviewed, planned and evaluated. Finally, even if training is for just a small number due to shift work, practical training program should be developed to fulfill the requirements.

## Appendix

**Table 1. Needs of Practical Training**

(N=136)

| Domain                                      | Categories  | n (%)     |
|---|---|-----------|
| Nursing practice program is most necessary  | Nursing business of the professional level          | 59(43.4)  |
|   | Shortage of work accomplishment                     | 53(39.0)  |
|   | Self-development                                    | 11(8.1)   |
|   | Specific nursing                                    | 7( 5.1)   |
|   | Patient education                                   | 6( 3.4)   |
| Purpose                                     | Acquire the necessary knowledge and skills          | 95(69.6)  |
|   | Perform specific tasks                              | 17(12.6)  |
|   | Confidence in the nursing work                      | 8( 5.9)   |
|   | The nurse maintains an equal quality across         | 7( 5.2)   |
|   | Information exchange, understanding and cooperation | 7( 5.2)   |
|   | As a professional career growth                     | 2( 1.5)   |
| Attendance                                  | At all times attendance                             | 91(66.9)  |
|   | At times attendance                                 | 22(16.2)  |
|   | At times nonattendance                              | 21(15.4)  |
|   | Nonattendance                                       | 2( 1.5)   |
| Nonattendance cause                         | Working time and duplication                        | 107(80.5) |
|   | Work stress   | 16(12.0)  |
|   | Not wanted program                                  | 10( 6.0)  |
|   | Shortage of effort                                  | 3( 1.5)   |
| Nursing practice program frequency and hour | One hour for once in a month                        | 121(89.5) |
|   | Two hour for once in a month                        | 9( 6.7)   |
|   | One or two hour for twice in a month                | 6( 3.8)   |

|   |   |           |
|---|---|-----------|
| Wanted education contents<br>(practice)†    | Emergency nursing                         | 130(32.6) |
|   | CPR                                       | 98(24.6)  |
|   | Drug therapy                              | 94(23.6)  |
|   | Communication(interpersonal relationship) | 31( 7.8)  |
|   | Unconsciousness patient nursing           | 25( 6.3)  |
|   | Hospice and elderly nursing               | 19( 4.8)  |
| Wanted education contents<br>(theoretical)† | Knowledge about the special disease       | 110(27.8) |
|   | Nursing record                            | 104(26.3) |
|   | Nursing incident                          | 101(25.5) |
|   | Nursing process                           | 80(20.2)  |
| Teaching methods                            | Lectures and demonstration                | 83(61.0)  |
|   | Audio-visual materials                    | 39(28.7)  |
|   | Workshop                                  | 10( 7.4)  |
|   | Seminar and others                        | 4( 3.0)   |
| Education instructor                        | Adjunct instructor(Professor)             | 64(46.7)  |
|   | Director of nursing                       | 29(21.5)  |
|   | Head nurse                                | 20(14.8)  |
|   | Doctor                                    | 17(12.6)  |
|   | Nurse and other                           | 6( 4.4)   |
| Assessment methods                          | Self-assessment of nurse                  | 105(77.2) |
|   | Report                                    | 13( 9.6)  |
|   | Assess by supervisor                      | 12( 8.8)  |
|   | Oral test                                 | 6( 4.4)   |

**Table 2. Accommodation of Practical Training**

(N =136)

| Variables  | M ± SD     |
|--|------------|
| Total score  | 3.7 ± 0.56 |
| Qualitative providing nursing  | 3.9 ± 0.70 |
| Specific business conduct  | 3.8 ± 0.62 |
| Contributing to establish expertise                                  | 3.8 ± 0.62 |
| Supplement of lack of school education                               | 3.8 ± 0.75 |
| Take advantage of the potential opportunities                        | 3.7 ± 0.67 |
| Overcoming the difference between theory and practice                | 3.7 ± 0.71 |
| Wanting to attend voluntary  | 3.7 ± 0.80 |
| Information, understanding and mutual cooperation opportunities      | 3.7 ± 0.73 |
| Increases the chance of theoretical knowledge and technical training | 3.7 ± 0.70 |
| The importance of regular education, as                              | 3.7 ± 0.77 |
| To promote an active business conduct                                | 3.6 ± 0.81 |
| Promotes smooth ties with colleagues                                 | 3.6 ± 0.80 |
| The nurse maintains an equal between skills                          | 3.6 ± 0.61 |
| Due to the increased confidence and satisfaction                     | 3.6 ± 0.79 |
| Adapted to the situation by recognizing the role                     | 3.6 ± 0.75 |
| Internal reward opportunities  | 3.5 ± 0.75 |

**Table 3. Satisfaction Levels Regarding Practical Training**

(N=136)

| Variables   | M ± SD     |
|---|------------|
| Total score   | 3.5 ± 0.53 |
| Necessary contents for nursing work                             | 3.8 ± 0.74 |
| Opportunity to increase theoretical knowledge                   | 3.7 ± 0.72 |
| New experience  | 3.6 ± 0.77 |
| Job satisfaction and confidence                                 | 3.6 ± 0.74 |
| Increased technical training content                            | 3.6 ± 0.79 |
| Expanded role of the nurse with an emphasis on                  | 3.6 ± 0.78 |
| To help educate patients and careers                            | 3.6 ± 0.73 |
| Regular curricula and equal importance                          | 3.6 ± 0.79 |
| To help other nurses on a map                                   | 3.5 ± 0.78 |
| Educational needs and inspires selfless altruism                | 3.4 ± 0.78 |
| The rights that are required to administer the ward information | 2.3 ± 0.70 |

**Table 4. Accommodation and Satisfaction Level by Practical Training**

(N=136)

| Nursing Practice Program State   | Categories             | Accommodation |  | t or F(p)       | Satisfaction |                 |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|--|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
|                                  |                        | M ± SD        |  |                 | M ± SD       | t or F(p)       |
| Instructor                       | Yes                    | 3.5 ± 0.55    |  | 2.082<br>(.238) | 3.4 ± 0.55   | 0.948<br>(.354) |
|                                  | No                     | 3.6 ± 0.45    |  |                 | 3.5 ± 0.52   |                 |
| How to attend                    | Voluntary              | 3.7 ± 0.42    |  | 2.842<br>(.039) | 3.7 ± 0.49   | 0.788<br>(.024) |
|                                  | Compulsory             | 3.5 ± 0.52    |  |                 | 3.4 ± 0.54   |                 |
| Time to education                | On duty                | 3.7 ± 0.44    |  | 1.574<br>(.167) | 3.5 ± 0.53   | 0.039<br>(.572) |
|                                  | Off duty               | 3.5 ± 0.55    |  |                 | 3.5 ± 0.54   |                 |
| Reward                           | Working day recognized | 3.7 ± 0.50    |  | 2.009<br>(.116) | 3.6 ± 0.53   | 2.310<br>(.079) |
|                                  | Allowance paid         | 3.4 ± 0.40    |  |                 | 3.3 ± 0.54   |                 |
|                                  | On the promotion       | 3.7 ± 0.40    |  |                 | 3.6 ± 0.51   |                 |
|                                  | Have no                | 3.7 ± 0.56    |  |                 | 3.5 ± 0.52   |                 |
| Educational material provided by | Yes                    | 3.7 ± 0.38    |  | 5.508<br>(.006) | 3.6 ± 0.43   | 5.994<br>(.007) |
|                                  | No                     | 3.5 ± 0.55    |  |                 | 3.4 ± 0.57   |                 |

p < .05

**Table 5. Correlation between Accommodation and Satisfaction**

(N=136)

| Accommodation | Satisfaction |
|---------------|--------------|
|               | .766(<.001)  |

**Table 6. Factors influencing Satisfaction Regarding Practical Training**

| (N=136)               |      |      |                       |        |      |
|-----------------------|------|------|-----------------------|--------|------|
| Predictors            | B    | SE   | $\beta$               | t      | p    |
| constant              | .715 | .190 |                       | 3.759  | .000 |
| Accommodation         | .757 | .050 | .793                  | 15.016 | .000 |
| R Square : 0.629      |      |      | Adj. R Square : 0.626 |        |      |
| Std. Error : 0.329    |      |      | F : 225.48            |        |      |
| Durbin-Watson : 1.908 |      |      | Sig : 0.000           |        |      |

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