

Study on the Subjectivity of Nursing Students' Perception of Surrogate Mother

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to identify the subjectivity for the categorization of surrogate mother with whom nursing students. The study has utilized Q Methodology. 16 nursing students, with clinical training experience at hospitals, were asked to classify 48 statements on the perception. The collected data was analyzed by Principle Component Factor Analysis of QUANL PC Program. In this study, the types of clinical practice were categorized into 3 types: 'the type recognizing difficulties of implementing the practices of surrogate mother', 'the type emphasizing the adverse effect of surrogate mother', 'the type advocating the practices of surrogate mother' This study has provided the baseline data for education and counseling program development for nursing students who start clinical practice.

Keywords: *Surrogate mother, Nursing student, Subjectivity, Q-Methodology, Nurse*

1. Introduction

1.1. Necessity of study

Depending upon whether surrogate mother is compensated or not, the practices of surrogate mother is categorized into commercial surrogacy and altruistic surrogacy. There is some controversy over the altruistic surrogacy because it is done within the boundary of family or relative and therefore can subsequently cause confusion over the relationship of family or relative [1]. Also, surrogate mother can be categorized into either genetic surrogate mother who provides her own egg or complete surrogate mother who only gives birth through artificial insemination using female spouse's egg [2].

Nurses take the largest portion in the field of the public health and are the core human resources who contact patients most frequently. They should provide high level of nursing services to patients within the limited time frame under the rapidly changing circumstances of public health sector [3]. The subjectivity of nurses' perception in the field of public health greatly influences their nursing services. Therefore, it is important to find out the perceptions of the nurses and the nursing students [4].

There has been no study regarding nurses' perception of surrogacy. Q-methodology is based on the perspectives of the behaving persons rather than researchers and makes it possible to structurally understand the characteristics of individual types of subjectivity [5]. Since the perception of surrogacy is subjective and unique experiences, it is appropriate to use

Article history:

Received (June 17, 2020), Review Result (July 19, 2020), Accepted (August 23, 2020)

the Q-methodology - which is the methodology considering the subjectivity of respondents - to find out the types of nurses' perceptions of surrogacy.

Therefore, this study is intended to find out the subjectivity structure of nurses' perception of surrogacy and use it as the underlying material for development of education program for nursing students which is differentiated based on the characteristics of each type of perception of surrogacy.

1.2. Purpose of study

This study found out the types of the undergraduate students' subjective perceptions of surrogacy and the characteristics of the types so that it can be used as the underlying material when preparing strategy for provision of education to nursing students learning about surrogacy. To reiterate the purpose of this study, they are:

- (1) To categorize the types of nursing students' perception of surrogacy.
- (2) To analyze and describe the types of nursing students' perception of surrogacy.

2. Method of study

2.1. Design of study

To achieve the purpose of this study, I reviewed literatures, media materials and the existing studies and conducted survey to find out the types of nursing students' subjective perception of surrogacy.

2.2. Q Population and Q sample selection

Q-population was drawn through review of domestic and international literatures, open questionnaires, individual in-depth interviews etc. to get comprehensive statements regarding surrogacy from undergraduate nursing students. Through this process, I have drawn about 200 Q populations and have drawn about 100 Q populations by integrating collected literatures. I have selected the final 48 samples which have high level of differentiation through review and correction of Q-samples drawn from this study.

2.3. Method of selecting p-sample

Q-methodology is the qualitative research method which emphasizes personal tendency by focusing on differences in personal implication or significance rather than personal differences. It is based on the small sample doctrine that says if P-sample gets large, too many people get concentrated in one factor, thereby making it hard to find out the characteristics among themselves [6]. I have fully explained the purpose of this study to the undergraduate nursing students of a certain university and selected 16 students out of them who agreed to participate in this study.

2.4. Classification and data analysis method

Q-classification is the process in which the participants belonging to P-sample make voluntary definition of surrogacy by classifying the statements of Q-sample into forced normal distribution [6]. Materials were collected through this process that is conducted for 16 undergraduate nursing students of a certain university by using Q-cards. Most of the students consumed 30-45 minutes to complete the Q-classification. The distribution of Q-sample is

classified into from strong agreement to strong disagreement depending upon the opinions of the participants on the statements selected as Q-samples. The statements on surrogacy were classified on 12-point scale. Subsequent interviews were conducted with concerned participants for the statements classified at both extreme ends. Principle Component Factor Analysis (varimax) was used for Q-factor analysis. Classification of types were determined by considering results - which are calculated by entering various numbers of factors with more than Eigen value 1.0 - and the total explained variance. For collected materials, conversion scores of 1~12 are assigned for scoring based on the cards which have been distributed on Q-sample distribution table. The converted scores assigned were encoded in the sequence of Q-sample numbers and were processed by Principle Component Factor Analysis of QUANL PC Program. Analysis of the materials were done by QUANL PC Program [7][8].

2.5. Ethical considerations for the subject

I obtained voluntary consents of the participants for our research and explained that any of them may discontinue to participate at any time during the research. All the information collected from this research were processed without identification of participants and were encoded for Q-sorting to protect privacy and guarantee confidentiality of personal information.

3. Results

3.1. Structure of Q-type

As result of the Q-factor analysis of the nursing students' subjectivity regarding surrogacy by QUANL PC Program, the subjectivity was categorized into 3 types.

3.2. Type specific characteristics in surrogacy

Type doubtful of successful implementation of surrogacy: 7 participants belonged to this type. The statements which were strongly agreed by the participants of this category were: "Surrogacy for economic compensation should not be allowed ($z=2.44$)", "The child of surrogacy is likely to be exposed to disputes regarding parental rights ($z=1.81$)", and "Surrogate mother should keep confidentiality during the period of pregnancy and delivery ($z=1.32$)" [Table 1]. No. 5 was the respondent who had the highest factor weight in this 1st type (1.1258) and this respondent strongly agreed with the statement 38 and 39. The statements which were strongly disagreed by the participants of the type 1 were: "Surrogate mother should accept abortion depending upon the gender of child ($z=-2.17$)", "Surrogacy should be legalized ($z=-2.14$)", and "Females in their 20s and 30s take the role of surrogate mother ($z=-1.71$)" [Table 1]. No. 11 (0.2356) was the respondent who had the lowest factor weight in this 1st type and the respondent strongly disagreed with the statement 31 and 37.

Table 1. Q-statements on surrogate mother and Z-scores of factor 1 (N=7)

No	Description	Mean (SD)	Z-score
38	Surrogacy for economic compensation should not be allowed	11.57(0.976)	2.44
39	Child out of surrogacy is very likely to be exposed to disputes regarding the right of motherhood.	9.29(3.147)	1.81

19	Surrogate mother should keep confidentiality during the period of pregnancy and delivery.	9.43(1.988)	1.32
31	Surrogate mother might have to endure abortion depending upon the gender of child.	3.86(2.478)	-2.17
67	Surrogacy should be legalized.	3.14(2.734)	-2.14
34	Females in their 20s and 30s take the role of surrogate mother.	4.86(3.132)	-1.71

Type emphasizing the side effect of surrogacy: 3 participants belonged to this 2nd type. The statements which were strongly agreed by these participants were: “Surrogacy may be harmful to future pregnancy ($z=1.90$)”, “Surrogate mother goes through lots of emotional depletion ($z=1.83$)”, and “Surrogate mother might have to endure abortion depending upon the gender of child. ($z=1.43$)” [Table 2]. No. 5 was the respondent who had the highest factor weight in this 2nd type (1.2547) and the respondent strongly agreed with the statement 13 and 11. The statements which were strongly disagreed by the participants were: “Surrogate mother should be legally included in the family relationship. ($z=-1.97$)”, “Paying compensation to surrogate mother is against the human rights ($z=-1.57$)”, and “Surrogate mother should take the role of motherhood for the baby born out of surrogacy ($z=-1.48$)” [Table 2]. No. 15 (0.4544) was the respondent who had the lowest factor weight in this 2nd type and the respondent strongly disagreed with the statement 46 and 3.

Table 2. Q-statements on surrogate mother and Z-scores of factor 2 (N=3)

No	Description	Mean (SD)	Z-score
13	Surrogacy may be harmful to future pregnancy.	11.33(1.155)	1.90
11	Surrogate mother goes through lots of emotional depletion.	11.00(1.000)	1.83
31	Surrogate mother might have to endure abortion depending upon the gender of child.	9.33(2.887)	1.43
46	Surrogate mother should be legally included in the family relationship.	2.57(0.577)	-1.97
3	Paying compensation to surrogate mother is against the human rights.	3.00(1.732)	-1.57
40	Surrogate mother should take the role of motherhood for the baby born out of surrogacy.	4.00(1.000)	-1.48

Type supporting surrogacy: 6 participants belonged to this 3rd type. The statements which were strongly agreed by these participants were: “Surrogacy is selected by people who prefer biological child to adopted child ($z=2.83$)”, “Legal status same as that of biological child should be stipulated for baby born out of surrogacy ($z=1.72$)”, and “Surrogate mother might suffer physical discomfort, loss of health and physical capability ($z=1.40$)” [Table 3]. No. 9 was the respondent who had the highest factor weight in this 3rd type (1.0676) and the respondent strongly agreed with the statement 41 and 47. The statements which were strongly disagreed by the participants were: “Paying compensation to surrogate mother is against the human rights ($z=-2.41$)”, “Surrogacy is no more than the trade of baby ($z=-1.89$)”, and “Surrogate mother has selfish and egoistic motherhood ($z=-1.72$). [Table 3]. No. 10 (0.3485) was the respondent who had the lowest factor weight in this 3rd type and the respondent strongly disagreed with the statement 3 and 5.

Table 3. Q-statements on surrogate mother and Z-scores of factor 3 (N=6)

No	Description	Mean (SD)	Z-score
41	Surrogacy is selected by people who prefer biological child to adopted child.	12.17(1.602)	2.83
47	Legal status same as that of biological child should be stipulated for baby born out of surrogacy.	10.33(1.363)	1.72
22	Surrogate mother might suffer physical discomfort, loss of health and physical capability.	9.17(3.061)	1.4
3	Paying compensation to surrogate mother is against the human rights.	2.50(1.049)	-2.41
5	Surrogacy is no more than the trade of baby.	3.17(1.722)	-1.89
14	Surrogate mother has selfish and egoistic motherhood.	4.17(1.602)	-1.72

4. Discussion

As result of this research, three types of the nursing students' subjective perception of surrogacy were found - the 1st type of respondents who are doubtful of successful implementation of surrogacy, the 2nd type of respondents who emphasize the side effect of surrogacy, and the 3rd type of respondents who supports surrogacy. Let us discuss the characteristics of the types in the following.

The 1st type found in this study was the type of respondents who are doubtful of successful implementation of surrogacy. This type of respondents has the similar conservative views toward surrogacy. They have the opinion that surrogacy is not expected to be easily adapted into our society when considering the overall aspects of social psychology and legal issues. They assumed that confidentiality of surrogacy should be continued as before to minimize the anticipated problems of surrogacy.

The 2nd type found in this study was the type of respondents who emphasize the side effect of surrogacy. They consider the side effect of surrogacy from the point of view of surrogate mothers. They think measures should be implemented to minimize the psychological and physical side effects which surrogate mothers go through. Since surrogate mothers are very likely to be subordinate to the requesting spouses, it is necessary to provide relevant laws and regulations to protect them from unreasonable demands.

The 3rd type found in this study was the type of respondents who support surrogacy. As in vitro fertilization and in vivo artificial insemination have become available thanks to the development of assisted reproductive technology, surrogacy can be the hope for resolution of the issue of infertile spouses. The surrogacy which is conducted unofficially behind the scene has become the social issue that should not be left unattended anymore. Therefore, if our country proceeds with legalization of surrogacy and carefully prepare relevant laws and regulation to prevent or minimize the side effects of surrogacy, surrogacy can be provided as alternative measures to deal with the issue of low fertility.

This study analyzed the subjectivity of nursing students' perception of surrogacy by categorizing them into 3 types. The respondents of this research agreed that surrogacy can be one of the alternatives for the era of low fertility thanks to the relevant medical development. However, they had different views regarding surrogacy and suggested that various social considerations and improvements, changes in our views should be preceded for successful implementation of the practices. As result of this study, the subjectivity of nursing students' perception of surrogacy was categorized into 3 types - the 1st type respondents who are

doubtful of successful implementation of surrogacy., the 2nd type of respondents who emphasize the side effect of surrogacy, and the 3rd type of respondents who support surrogacy.

This study regarding subjectivity of nursing students' perception of surrogacy can be used as basic material for legalization of surrogacy. Also, I anticipate this study can be utilized as the underlying information for development of related education program.

However, this study has limitation in generalization of the results since the research was conducted only one certain university and could not select respondents in consideration of factors influencing the perception of surrogacy. Therefore, it is necessary to subsequently verify the 3 types by drawing Q-sample from various backgrounds.

5. Conclusion

This study was conducted to provide the underlying information for successful implementation of surrogacy by applying Q-methodology. As result of this study, the subjectivity of nursing students' perception of surrogacy was categorized into 3 types - the 1st type respondents who are doubtful of successful implementation of surrogacy., the 2nd type of respondents who emphasize the side effect of surrogacy, and the 3rd type of respondents who support surrogacy.

This study categorized the subjectivity of nursing students' perception of surrogacy and thereby it shall provide the underlying basic information for implementation of policy and enactment for surrogacy. Also, I anticipate that this study can be used as the base for the development of education programs in consideration of the characteristics of the individual types. In addition, I also suggest subsequent studies to further analyze the 3 types by drawing more samples from varied backgrounds and to verify the factors influencing nursing of surrogate mothers.

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