

Subjectivity for Clinical Practice of Nursing Students

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Abstract

This study aims to figure out subjectivity of clinical practice recognized by nursing students and describe characteristics by type. This study applied Q methodology. 50 students of the Department of Nursing of A University (students of the 3rd and 4th year), who had carried out clinical practice, were invited to classify 50 sentences of statements about clinical practice. The collected data was analyzed based on QUANL PC Program. According to the research result, the recognition of nursing students was classified into 6 types of 3 factors. The subjectivity types of clinical practices are classified into "burden type", "positive type", "proactive participation type", "evasive type", "resigning future-oriented type" and "receptive type". This study provided basic materials for program development of previous education for nursing students starting clinical practices.

Key Words : Clinical Practice, Nurses, Nursing Students, Subjectivity, Q-methodology.

1 INTRODUCTION

Clinical practice is a process of building consideration and understanding, reflection, values, attitude and image of nursing as well as creativity and application ability by directly applying the theoretical knowledge to the object patients in the clinical field. It

is also a process of confirming the quality as a nurse and growing self-confidence as a nurse(Park, 2013; Yee, 2001). However, in spite of this importance, most of current nursing students realize the difference between theory and clinical world and experience embarrassment and confusion, having difficulty with clinical practice(Chung, 2009; Kim et al., 2009). Due to today's trends of clinical environment where patients' safety is emphasized first of all, the opportunity of which nursing students can provide direct nursing care for patients even if it is simple is gradually decreasing. This situation leads students to undertake clinical practices under stress and anxiety, studying faces of others(Shin and Shim, 2010). Like this, nursing students, in the middle of these complex circumstances, not only need to receive education of the essence of working-level nursing work, but also understand that they can encounter unfamiliar and embarrassing experiences in the clinical practice sites. This requires supports from people(Kim et al., 2001).

In particular, the preceding studies show that the first clinical practice brings about the factor of the highest stress for students(Admi, 1997; Jones, 1997; Mahat, 1998; Martyn, 1997), and they feel more severe anxiety and tension than any other situations. This experience of the first clinical practice plays a decisive role in determining motives for future nursing(Moon, 1997).

Thus, to help the first clinical practices of nursing students, nursing educators are required to understand and figure out recognition and coping style of the first clinical practice of students which is subjectively perceived by students(Beck, 1993). Nurses occupy the greatest proportion in the healthcare area and core personnel who contact the patients most. They must provide patients with safe and high-level nursing services in the rapidly changing healthcare environment within a limited time(Dyess, 2012). Therefore, it is inevitable that clinical practice gives great influences on nurses-to-be and this can be directly connected to the future attitudes of nurses.

With this in mind, this study will inquire into awareness (recognition) of clinical practices oriented to nursing students, the nurses-to-be and classify the cases by type. Based on the inquiry into characteristics by type and differences of awareness of clinical practices, this study intends to provide basic materials required for implementing education in accordance with each type.

The purposes of this study consist in providing information for nursing students who start clinical practices and offering basic materials for proposing strategies for educating nursing students who start clinical practices, by clarifying subjective awareness types of clinical practices and characteristics of each type of nursing students based on Q methodology. The purposes of study can be summarized as follows:

- 1) It aims to classify by type the subjective awareness of clinical practices of nursing students.
- 2) It aims to analyze and describe the characteristics of awareness by type regarding clinical practices of nursing students.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research design

To achieve the purposes of study, this study will consider literature, media data and preceding studies with respect to clinical practices and discover subjectivity of viewpoint of subjective awareness type of clinical practices of nursing students who experienced clinical practices.

B. Q population and Q-sample selection

Q population was deduced through considerations of literature from home and abroad, open-ended questions and a one-to-one interview, in order to extract comprehensive statements regarding the effects of clinical practices oriented to current nursing students. Through this process, about 200 Q populations are deduced in 3 areas. In addition to this, about 100 Q populations are extracted by integrating collected literature obtained by relevant literature consideration from home and abroad. After the process of reviewing and modifying the extracted Q-sample of this study, the final 50 samples with high discrimination capacity were selected.

C. Selection method of P-sample

Q methodology is a qualitative research emphasizing individual subjectivity focused on meaningfulness or importance of each individual and not on difference among individuals. This is based on small sample doctrine in that the characteristics are not clearly

manifested because of concentration of many people on one factor if P sample becomes bigger. As for P sample of this study, it selected 51 people in total who agreed to participate in the study, after sufficiently explaining the purposes of study to the nursing students and obtaining spontaneous agreement of object patients as seeds.

D. Q classification and data analysis method

Q classification process is a process of which an individual, the research participant selected by P sample, creates a spontaneous definition of clinical practices by classifying Q sample statements based on forced normal distribution method. The data was collected by utilizing Q card oriented to 51 students of the Department of Nursing of OO University. It took about 30-45 minutes for each research participant to complete Q classification. As for the distribution map of Q sample, research participants classified the statements selected as Q sample into the range from strong affirmation to strong according to the importance of each one's opinion. The statement (Q1) of clinical practices was classified by 12 point scale. After that, regarding the statements classified in both extremes, follow-up interview was conducted with the target participant. For Q factor analysis, Principle Component Factor Analysis (varimax) method was used. As for the classification of types, it was selected by considering the calculation result obtained after diverse input of the number of factors based on Eigen value superior to 1.0. The collected data was scored with the changed score given to each one by 1-15 points focused on the cards forcedly distributed in the distribution chart of Q sample. By coding the changed score given in order of the number of Q sample, it was treated as a main factor analysis by QUANL PC Program. The data analysis was carried out by using QUANL PC Program

E. Ethical considerations on research participants

Before carrying out the research, the spontaneous agreement of research participants was asked and the participants were instructed that they were allowed to stop any time during the research. To respect the rights of subjects and protect their privacy and personal information confidentiality, Q sorting will be conducted for all data collected for this study and the data will be processed and coded based on the unregistered method during the

overall process of data analysis.

3 RESULTS

A. Subjectivity and characteristics by type regarding clinical practices

- Structure of Q type: According to the results of Q factor analysis of subjectivity regarding clinical practices of nursing students, based on QUANL PC Program, it turned out that there were 6 types in total.

B. Characteristics by type regarding clinical practices

To analyze subjectivity by type regarding clinical practices of nursing students, the characteristics by type were described focused on statements to which each type belongs. As for Q response of P sample (research participants), 3 factors were extracted by classifying into high-rank questions and low-rank questions. In Q methodology, among people belonging to each type, a person with higher factor weight means a more typical or ideal person representing the type.

To analyze the characteristics by type regarding clinical practices, interpretation was made by giving a meaning focused on statements of which z-score is superior to ± 1.00 among the questions of classified statements. In this study, regarding people with factor weight superior to 1.0, there were 24 in type 1, 22 in type 2 and 5 in type 3.

According to the analysis of subjectivity regarding clinical practices based on QUANL PC Program, it turned out that there were 3 factors explaining 40.23% of the total variate. The first factor appeared to be 24.14%, the second factor, 12.22% and the third factor, 3.87%. The first factor has explanation power of 24.14%, therefore, it is considered the factor explaining clinical practice most [TABLE I]. Among 51 research participants, it was confirmed that 24 people belonged to the first factor, 22 to the second factor and 5 to the third factor. Regarding the 3 factors of clinical practice types, this study did not bind high-rank questions and low-rank questions in one group but interpreted factors as 2 different types. It considered Yin and Yang as something similar to the attributes of one nature

in effect (Whang et al., 2006). People who belong to each factor mean a group showing a similar response to clinical practices.

TABLE I
EIGEN VALUE, VARIANCE, AND CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE

	Type I	Type II	Type III
Eigen Value	13.0355	6.5988	2.0921
Variance(%)	.2414	.1222	.0387
Cumulative	.2414	.3636	.4023

C. Analysis by type

The subjective type regarding clinical practices calculated based on the type analysis method can be proposed as follows: - Burden type: The target participants belonging to type 1 are composed of 24 people in total. The statements showing strong affirmation by the participants of type 1 included "It is a big burden for me to prepare assignment and quiz of clinical practices ($Z=1.71$)", "I sometimes feel that nurses ignore me and treat me with rudeness for being a student nurse ($Z=1.52$)" and "I get physically tired because of clinical practices ($Z=1.41$)" [TABLE I]. The object participant with the highest factor weight in type 1 was number 8 (1.8529), and the statements agreed most by the participants of type 1 were numbers 35, 22 and 9. Type 1 was characterized by higher interest in theory classes than clinical practices and strong burden with practices. Therefore, type 1 was denominated as "burden type".

- Positive type: The target participants belonging to type 2 are composed of 24 people in total. The statements showing strong negation by the participants of type 2 included "I feel comfortable during the practice period because I am free from test stress ($Z=-2.17$)" and "I try not to make appointments or do other things to focus on practice and assignments during clinical practices ($Z=-1.85$)" [TABLE II]. The object participant with the lowest factor weight in type 2 was number 38 (0.1802), and the statements with the strongest negation by the participants of type 2 were numbers 44, 14 and 16. The characteristics of type 2 lie in that they try to think positively no matter how hard the work is and they think there is no room for mental and physical energy because of high stress and burden of clinical practices. Therefore, type 2 was denominated as "positive type".

- Proactive participation type: The target participants belonging to type 3 are composed of 22 people in total. The statements showing strong affirmation by the participants of type 3 included "I try to experience as much as possible while I am carrying out clinical practices ($Z=1.48$)", "I realize the sense of responsibility of nurses, so I decide to study harder ($Z=1.44$)" and "During the clinical practices, I try to behave properly according to norms ($Z=1.42$)" [TABLE II]. The object participant with the highest factor weight in type 3 was number 2 (2.0099), and the statements agreed most by the participants were numbers 29, 5 and 13. The characteristics of type 3 lie in that they put emphasis on the learning obtained through clinical practices and they value learning and discipline learned at the Department of Nursing in general. Therefore, type 3 was denominated as "proactive participation type".

- Evasive type: The target participants belonging to type 4 are composed of 22 people in total. The statements showing strong negation by the participants of type 4 included "I feel objections to doctors ($Z=-2.02$), Apprentices are not only ignored by medical staff but also by other professionals ($Z=-1.77$) and "While I am doing clinical practices, I thought of changing my major ($Z=-1.75$)" [TABLE II]. The object participant with the lowest factor weight in type 4 was number 5 (0.3534), and the statements with the strongest negation were numbers 48, 3 and 49. The characteristics of type 4 lie in that they want to reveal the cause of clinical practice and intend to solve this. Therefore, type 4 was denominated as "evasive type".

- Resigning future-oriented type: The target participants belonging to type 5 are composed of 5 people in total. The statements showing the strongest affirmation in type 1 included Practices in various divisions can be helpful for selecting a work division after being employed ($Z=2.02$), I think that my practice depends on the clinical nurses of the placement area ($Z=1.88$).and During the clinical practices, I feel that nurses are respected by patients and other health-related jobs ($Z=1.81$)" [TABLE II]. The object participant with the highest factor weight in type 5 was number 18 (0.7726), and the statements with the strongest affirmation were numbers 50, 36 and 23. The characteristics of type 5 lie in that they have expectation of providing many things for the patients when they become nurses but they do not intend to have the job as a lifetime occupa-

tion because it is very hard. Therefore, type 5 was denominated as "resigning future-oriented type".

- Receptive type: The target participants belonging to type 6 are composed of 5 people in total. The statements showing the strongest negation in type 6 included "I want to work as a nurse for a long time ($Z=-1.76$)", "I gained confidence in working as a nurse after graduation ($Z=-1.74$)" and "I feel objections to doctors ($Z=-1.54$)" [TABLE II]. The object participant with the lowest factor weight was number 36 (0.4741), and the statements with the strongest negation were numbers 46, 2 and 48. The characteristics of type 6 lie in that they think of what they can obtain from clinical practices and accept them. Therefore, type 6 was denominated as "receptive type".

TABLE II
Q- STATEMENTS ON INFERTILITY TYPE OF REPRESENTATIVE ITEMS AND Z-SCORES (N=50)

		Representative items of type			
Factor	Type	No	Representative items	Mean(SD)	Z-score
Factor1 (N=39)	Type1	35	It is a big burden for me to prepare assignment and quiz of clinical practices.	9.08(2.185)	1.71
		22	I sometimes feel that nurses ignore me and treat me with rudeness for being a student nurse.	8.58(2.586)	1.52
		9	I get physically tired because of clinical practices.	9.00(1.978)	1.47
		45	Nursing students are considered assistant manpower of the hospital.	8.38(3.499)	1.45
		17	Through clinical practices, I am worried of the uncertainty of being a good nurse.	8.63(1.163)	1.42
	Type2	44	I feel comfortable during the practice period because I am free from test stress.	2.67(1.736)	-2.17
		14	I try not to make appointments or do other things to focus on practice and assignments during clinical practices.	8.33(2.180)	-1.85
		16	After experiencing clinical practices, the image of nurses became better.	3.13(1.597)	-1.81
		23	During the clinical practices, I feel that nurses are respected by patients or other health-related jobs.	3.67(2.180)	-1.69
		4	I want to work as a nurse for a long time.	4.08(2.827)	-1.64
Factor2 (N=6)	Type3	29	I try to experience as much as possible while I am carrying out clinical practices.	9.59(1.894)	1.48
		5	I realize the sense of responsibility of nurses, so I decide to study harder.	9.45(1.625)	1.44
		13	During the clinical practices, I try to behave properly according to norms.	9.45(2.604)	1.42
		28	I think I got closer to my classmates during the clinical practices.	8.86(2.210)	1.31
		18	It is interesting to experience works in diverse practice hospitals and placement areas during the clinical practices.	8.82(2.403)	1.21
	Type4	48	I feel objections to doctors.	2.36(1.093)	-2.02
		3	Apprentices are not only ignored by medical staff but also by other professionals.	3.41(1.681)	-1.77
		49	While I am doing clinical practices, I thought of changing my major.	2.59(1.623)	-1.75
		47	The rounding and conference of professors give me a burden.	3.59(2.323)	-1.55
		1	Time during the clinical practices passes slower than theory classes.	3.91(2.287)	-1.49

Factor3 (N=5)	Type5	50	Practices in various divisions can be helpful for selecting a work division after being employed.	10.40(1.817)	2.02
		36	I think that my practice depends on the clinical nurses of the placement area.	10.20(2.168)	1.88
		23	During the clinical practices, I feel that nurses are respected by patients and other health-related jobs.	9.80(2.950)	1.81
		5	I realize the sense of responsibility of nurses, so I decide to study harder.	9.20(1.304)	1.42
		21	By doing clinical practices, I feel that I am really studying nursing.	8.80(1.924)	1.20
	Type6	46	I want to work as a nurse for a long time.	3.40(1.817)	-1.76
		2	I gained confidence in working as a nurse after graduation.	3.20(1.924)	-1.74
		48	I feel objections to doctors.	3.60(2.702)	-1.54
		24	When my professor comes during the clinical practice, I am glad and pleased to see him/her.	3.60(1.517)	-1.54
		40	Clinical practice is an experience that makes me grow and be mature as a nursing student.	4.00(2.828)	-1.52

4 DISCUSSION

According to the research result, The subjectivity types of clinical practices are classified into type 1 "burden type", type 2 "positive type", type 3 "proactive participation type", type 4 "evasive type", type 5 "resigning future-oriented type" and type 6 "receptive type". This study intends to discuss the characteristics by type.

Type 1 appeared in this study was "burden type". The research object participant No. 8 whose factor weight was high with 1.8529 explained the selection reason by "clinical practices are hard both physically and mentally. It seems that apprentices are ignored by nurses and rather work than learn in the placement site". The object participant No. 50 said that "clinical practices are not comfortable, burdensome and difficult".

Nursing students recognize clinical practice as stress and get exhausted by duties and assignments to carry out. The research results coincide with the preceding studies in the sense that nursing students recognized clinical practices as stress(Jang et al., 1999; Park and Ha, 2003). This means that nursing students are highly stressed by clinical practices and it is interpreted that it is necessary to develop the proper coping methods. Thus, the proposal of this study includes the necessity of developing and applying programs facilitating stress coping and smooth and safe completion of clinical practices during the curriculum of Nursing colleges prior to clinical practices.

Type 2 was "positive type". The object participant No. 38 showing the lowest factor weight with 0.1802 explained that "Though I was stressed by duties and tests even during the clinical prac-

tice period, it was helpful because I could confirm what I learned from theory class". The object participant No. 7 explained that "Though I am nervous when there is a conference time with professors, clinical practices are interesting." The object participant No. 28 said that "time flies in the ward when I am carrying out duties ordered by nurses. This is good."

Type 2 intended to positively accept in general though the clinical practices are stress-giving and hard. During the clinical practices, they wanted to look for advantages of the profession of "nurse" and it seems that they preferred clinical practices to lecture-centered classes.

Type 3 was "proactive participation type". The object participant No. 2 showing high factor weight with 2.0099 said that "I put value on learning and study, so I intended to learn what I could learn from clinical practices as much as possible." The object participant No. 4 answered that "by the experience of clinical practices, I gained confidence in working as a nurse after graduation."

The object participant No. 35 commented that "in the course of clinical practices, I knew nothing at first, but I could build knowledge step by step and I felt that I was studying day by day. While I was attending patients, I could learn good nursing skills. Moreover, while I was forming a proper rapport with patients, I could feel that I was growing further as a nursing student."

Students belonging to this type were willing to actively carry out clinical practices instead of feeling fear or burden, and they thought the vivid practice experience strengthening advantages of clinical practices different from classroom education was very interesting. They enjoy talking with patients and they actively undertook clinical practices adapting themselves to the circumstances of diverse placement sites. They always wanted to think positively and carrying out practices thinking of future as a nurse. For this reason, most of students of this type tend to carry out self-directed learning coming from spontaneousness and not from the surrounding environment and external factors.

Type 4 is "evasive type". The object participant No. 5 showing low factor weight with 0.3534 said that "Through clinical practices, I realized that nurses are not very respected because nurses sometimes receive high-pitched complaints from caretakers (guardians) of patients." The object participant No. 19 expressed that "when

my professor comes to visit the hospital, I feel psychologically stable and pleased as if he/she were my mother, after having been in a hard environment alone without any acquaintance." The object participant No. 20 mentioned that "I am not excited about clinical practices. I am not looking forward to doing them either. I think I am just checking vital signs whenever I am carrying out practices."

For them, clinical practices are considered an education that they want to avoid if possible, and they get mentally tired because the experience obtained from practices is not very pleasing. For this reason, they expressed that they would not opt for clinical practices if they were given any option.

Type 5 was "resigning future-oriented type". The object participant No. 18 showing high factor weight with 0.7726 said that "When nurses give some role to me, as a nursing student, apart from checking vital signs, I have expectation of working for patients when I become a nurse and I feel rewarded." The object participant No. 14 explained that "clinical practices are related to college note, so I try not to arrive late and I am always nervous. During the clinical practices, when they recognize me as a nursing student and give me some role, I feel proud and happy."

They find clinical practices quite difficult and burdensome, but they think they are forced to finish this course to be nurses. Moreover, students also have thinking of passivism and resignation in the sense that their practices depend on the nurses of the placement sites. For students of type 3, it will be required to emphasize that the nurses of the placement sites are educators helping practices of students and the results of practices of students must not be influenced by individual emotions or thoughts of the nurses. Also, it will be necessary to establish educational strategies to improve the quality of relationship between nurses and students.

Type 6 is "receptive type". The object participant No. 43 showing low factor weight with 0.4741 mentioned that "there were some doctors who treat and respect nurses as the same medical staff as they, so I am worried about how to maintain the good image of a nurse in the future." The object participant No. 18 comments that "Though it is very hard, I think that a nurse could be a lifetime profession." Students of this type are willing to accept the profession of a nurse and try to have a positive image of nurses. However, it is still burdensome in the sense that students make ef-

forts to adapt themselves to an unfamiliar placement environment and carry out duties. It is estimated that these students experienced clinical practices as an opportunity of indirect experience as nurses through clinical practices.

This study classified subjective awareness of clinical practices of nursing students into 6 types and analyzed the cases. Through this study, it was possible to figure out that most of nursing students feel burden of clinical practices and are under lots of stress. The degree of experience can vary depending on the period of clinical practices. This study proposes that professors guiding clinical practices should concern about the stress of students and operate programs of coping plans to provide students with a better practice environment. This study has significance in the sense that it provided placement institutions and educational institutions with basic materials for improved clinical practices of nursing students in the future.

5 CONCLUSION

This study applied Q methodology to prepare basic materials required for seeking future directionality of clinical practices of nursing students, based on subjective data analysis through inquiry into subjective awareness of clinical practices of nursing students. According to the research result, the recognition of nursing students was classified into 6 types of 3 factors. The types of clinical practices recognized by nursing students turned out to be "burden type", "positive type", "proactive participation type", "evasive type", "resigning future-oriented type" and "receptive type".

This study figured out the types of subjectivity of clinical practices of nursing students and provided placement institutions offering clinical practices as well as educational institutions with basic materials required for implementing education in accordance with each type. Furthermore, this study will contribute to providing theoretical frame for individualized educational plans in the clinical sites for new nurses and nurses in the future.

Based on the present study, it is required to develop assessment tools regarding recognition types of nursing students who experienced clinical practices. Furthermore, follow-up studies of subjec-

tivity of clinical practices recognized by nursing students will be fundamental, and it is required to develop the concomitant appropriate intervention programs and conduct effect studies as well. .

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