The Relationship between Nurse Image and Nursing Professionalism according to Nursing Students’ Gender

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Abstract. The aim of this study was to identify the degree and correlations between nurse image and nursing professionalism according to nursing students’ gender. The subjects were composed of 223 nursing students in college using convenience sampling method. There was no significant difference between nurse image and nursing professionalism of male and female students in statistical analysis (t=1.54, p=.124, t=-1.36, p=.174). The nurse image perceived by nursing students was positively related to professionalism (p<.005).

Keywords: Nursing student, Nursing image, Professionalism, Gender

1 Introduction

1.1 Need for the study

In line with changes in social awareness, the systematized professional understanding of nurses is hardening further, and the nursing professionalism which determines the certain conviction and attitude for task execution as professional nurses is also hardening [1]. Nursing professionalism has the tendency of beginning to form during the specialized education, and continually developing through practical career, and the formation of nursing professionalism is most effective between 3~5 years after graduation based on the basic education at the school [2]. Also, it has been stated that the positive awareness from nurses or nursing students about nursing image and also from the subjects, other medical personnel, and health-related persons would further establish the nursing professionalism [3]. As for the study on nursing image, it was ranked 1st for the most honest and ethical professional from 1999 to 2010 (except for 2001) according to the recent 2010 U.S. Gallop survey, and in case of Korea, the result of survey of nursing image for the general public conducted by Korean Nurses Associa-
tion showed that about 91% answered that nurse is a social respected profession, and 84% answered that nurses solve the issues of the patients with professional knowledge. Also, about 80% thought that nurses were trustworthy and reliable warm, kind people.

As the expertise of nursing expanded recently, the number of male nurses also increased, such that according to the news from Korean Nursing Association, the number of male nurses in 2016 exceeded 10,000, 54 years after the first male nurse in 1962. Male nursing students, however, are subject to troubles in adapting to the program due to some negative and skeptical social awareness about the profession of male nurses [4]. Therefore, the establishment of proper nursing professionalism in male nursing students is very important at this time when the rate of male nurses is gradually increasing.

1.2 Purpose of study

The purpose of this study was to identify the degree and correlations between nurse image and nursing professionalism according to nursing students’ gender using Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient and t-test and to provide information to clinical field nursing manager and provide baseline data for educational new strategies. The specific aims of this study are as follows.

2. Methods

2.1 Study structure

This study was a descriptive survey study to understand the relationship of nursing image and nursing professionalism in nursing students by gender and to figure out the factors influencing nursing professionalism.

2.2 Study subjects and sampling method

The study subjects were nursing students attending three nursing colleges within Seoul, Gyeonggi, and Gangwon region, and were limited to those who understood the purpose of this study and made a written consent to participate in the data collection. The sample size was calculated using G*power 3.1 program for statistic ANOVA with significance level .05, effect size .25, power of test .8, resulting in at least 99 subjects. Therefore, this study surveyed 230 subjects considering dropouts, and ultimately 223 subjects were included in this study excluding those with insufficient answers.
2.3 Research tools

2.3.1 Nursing image

The research tool used was nursing image Likert scale of 20 questions developed by Hye-Yeong Gang et al. (2003). The questions were divided into professional image 6 questions, traditional image 6 questions, nursing prospects 3 questions, social image 5 questions. The measurement method was 5-point Likert scale where 5 meant ‘strongly agree’ and 1 meant ‘strongly disagree,’ with the higher score meaning more positive nursing image. The reliability of the tool was Cronbach's α = .940 in the study by Hye-Yeong Gang et al. (2003), where it was Cronbach's α = .935 for this study. By area, the professional image was Cronbach's α = .863, traditional image was Cronbach's α = .919, nursing prospects was Cronbach's α = .668, and social image was Cronbach's α = .818.

2.3.2 Nursing professionalism

In this study, the nursing professionalism employed the tool modified to 26 questions excluding items regarding experience or questions that are too difficult to understand for nursing science from 29 questions in the nursing professionalism tool developed by Eun-Ja Yun et al. (2005). The subordinate areas consisted of ‘professional self-concept,’ ‘social perception,’ ‘nursing expertise,’ ‘role of nursing service,’ and ‘originality of nursing,’ and on a 5-point Likert scale of ‘strongly agree’ at 5 and ‘strongly disagree’ at 1, the higher the measured score was, the higher the nursing professionalism was. In the study by Eun-Ja Yun et al. (2005), Cronbach's α = .920, while Cronbach's α = .848 for this study. By area, ‘professional self-concept’ was Cronbach's α = .849, ‘social perception’ was Cronbach's α = .782, ‘nursing expertise’ was Cronbach's α = .775, ‘role of nursing service’ was Cronbach's α = .889, and ‘originality of nursing’ was Cronbach's α = .849.

2.4 Data analysis

In this study, the data analysis method employed IBM SPSS 22.0.

1) The average and standard deviation of general characteristics, nursing image, and nursing professionalism degree of study subjects were found using descriptive statistics.

2) The differences of nursing image and nursing professionalism in male and female students were analyzed with t-test.

3) The correlation between nursing image and nursing professionalism was analyzed using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient.
3 Result

3.1 Degree of nursing image and nursing professionalism in study subjects

The descriptive statistics of nursing image and nursing professionalism in study subjects are as in Table 1. The nursing image score of study subjects averaged 3.75±0.59 out of 5, and as for the subordinate factors, ‘professional image’ was found to be the highest at 4.09±0.59, whereas ‘traditional image’ was the lowest at 3.52±0.83. Such results were identical for all genders. The score for the nursing professionalism was 3.74±0.30 out of 5, and as for the subordinate factors, ‘role of nursing service’ was the highest at 4.34±0.43, and ‘social perception’ was the lowest at 3.14±0.66. As for the subordinate factors of nursing professionalism, ‘role of nursing service’ was the highest and ‘social perception’ was the lowest, just like the results of the entire nursing students.

Table 1. The mean of scores of Nurse image and Nursing Professionalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division (sub-sectors)</th>
<th>Male (N=41)</th>
<th>Female (N=182)</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>professional</td>
<td>4.27±.56</td>
<td>4.05±.60</td>
<td>2.099</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traditional</td>
<td>3.68±.81</td>
<td>3.48±.84</td>
<td>1.364</td>
<td>.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prospect</td>
<td>3.73±.76</td>
<td>3.73±.70</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social</td>
<td>3.84±.67</td>
<td>3.63±.82</td>
<td>1.550</td>
<td>.123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subtotal (Nurse image)</td>
<td>3.88±.50</td>
<td>3.72±.61</td>
<td>1.546</td>
<td>.124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional self-concept</td>
<td>3.89±.61</td>
<td>3.87±.59</td>
<td>.185</td>
<td>.854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social perception</td>
<td>3.06±.56</td>
<td>3.16±.68</td>
<td>-.885</td>
<td>.377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originality of nursing</td>
<td>3.56±.18</td>
<td>3.61±.26</td>
<td>-1.167</td>
<td>.245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of nursing service</td>
<td>4.21±.40</td>
<td>4.37±.43</td>
<td>-2120</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subtotal (Nursing professionalism)</td>
<td>3.68±.26</td>
<td>3.75±.31</td>
<td>-1.365</td>
<td>.174</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 Differences in nursing image and nursing professionalism of nursing students by gender

In terms of the differences between nursing image and nursing professionalism in nursing students by gender, it was found that there were differences in the area of ‘professional image’ and ‘role of nursing service’ (p<0.05).

3.3 Correlation between nursing image and nursing professionalism of study subjects

It was found that there was a significant correlation between subordinate factors of nursing image and nursing professionalism of nursing students <Table 2>. As for the correlation of nursing image and nursing professionalism and subordinate factors of nursing students, the correlation between professional image and professional self-concept was r = .615 (p<0.05) and the correlation between social image and professional self-concept was r = .637 (p<0.05).

Table 2. Correlational matrix between Nurse Image and Nursing Professionalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nurse image</th>
<th>Nursing professionalism</th>
<th>The role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>r</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse image</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>.593**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional</td>
<td>.593**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traditional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.475**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prospect</td>
<td>.378**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social</td>
<td>.618**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional self-concept</td>
<td>.615**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social perception</td>
<td>.257**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.043</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation r is presented.*
4 Discussion

This study has been executed to analyze the relationship between nursing image and nursing professionalism in nursing students of different gender. The result of nursing image analysis was 3.75 out of 5, which was higher than the average of 3.57 in the study comparing nursing image of nursing students per normal, transfer and RN-BSN program [5]. In subordinate areas, ‘professional image’ showed the highest score as did in the above three study results. In the subordinate area of nursing image by gender, only ‘professional image’ was found to show differences (p<0.05).

As for nursing professionalism, this study showed 3.74 out of 5, whereas by gender, female students were 3.68 and male students were 3.75. And as for the differences between subordinate factors, only ‘the role of nursing service’ factor was found to show differences (p<0.05). This was higher than the average of 3.63 from the result of the study targeting male nursing students using identical research tools [6]. A recent study targeting clinical nurses with identical tools as this study averaged at 3.41, lower than the result of nursing professionalism score of nursing students [7]. Such study results seem to suggest that while the nursing professionalism should begin forming through nursing education and keep developing through working career at the clinical site, but in reality, the mental and physical exhaustion, role conflict, stress and such act as negative causes, such that nurses showed lower results than nursing students [8]. Especially, male nursing students may experience greater difficulties in interpersonal relations and mental conflicts than female nursing students after they become nurses due to the discrimination at the nursing site due to gender prejudices recognized across the society in general [9]. Therefore, endless interests and care at the educational world and the clinical site are necessary for continued positive nursing professionalism after male nursing students become nurses.

5 Conclusion

In this thesis, there was no significant difference between male and female students regarding nursing image and nursing professionalism, while there were differences in respective subordinate factors of ‘professional image’ and ‘role of nursing service’ (p<0.05). This study result demands a change in perspective towards students who enter and study in the field for the path of nursing in the educational world and clinical
sites as the number of male nurses which began in small numbers now exceed 10,000 and the number of male nursing college students keeps increasing.

References