Standards for Competence of New Graduate Nurse

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Abstract. Nursing educational programs should be designed for nursing students to become new graduate nurses with competencies required in clinical settings. The purpose of this study was to develop clinically sensitive generic competency standards for new graduate nurse (GCSN) from considerably experienced nurse perspective in Korea. The mixed methods sequential explanatory design was used and the 25-item GCSN was developed. The findings suggest what competencies for new graduate nurse should be emphasized and achieved.

Keywords: student nurse, nursing education, new graduate nurse, competency, instrument development

1   Introduction

The meanings of competency vary and include the ability of a person to successfully perform a job or occupation or to reason or make decisions in given circumstances [1], [2]. Nurses' competencies have a direct effect on the precise and safe care of patients. Nurses must therefore possess adequate competencies that can be transformed into effective practical performance. The competency of new graduate nurses should be a core function in quality assurance systems and human resource management [3].

In Korea, the Korean Accreditation Board of Nursing Education (KABONE) sets standards of education and training so that nursing students can be provided quality assured education from 2004 [4]. The process has become more official and compulsory from 2010. Since then, the board has persuaded core competencies of nurse to be included in educational objectives of nursing schools. At this point, educational objectives of nursing schools need to be identified and complemented by important competencies expected of new graduate nurse in clinical settings. It is important to include the competencies of new graduate nurses highlighted and expected by considerably experienced nurses in the educational objectives of nursing schools for effective care of patients. And an elicitation of the competencies requires a more empirical approach. Nurses with experience-based know-how would be able to identify the competencies needed by new graduate nurses in their daily work [5].

The purpose of this study is to develop generic competency standards for new graduate nurse from considerably experienced nurse perspective in Korea. Our findings would then show what competencies to be emphasized in nursing education by nurse educators and be used to evaluate periodically the achievement levels of competencies of nursing students before graduation, better preparing them for clinical settings.

2   Methods

The process in this study was divided into three phases. First phase was to develop the preliminary version of GCSN from educational objectives of 65 nursing schools that have been certified to date by the KABONE. In second phase, Focus group interviews and individual interviews were conducted by a panel of nine nursing experts for content validity. And the reliability of the revised GCSN was evaluated. In the final phase, the developed GCSN were tested using exploratory factor analysis.

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the National Evidence-based Healthcare Collaborating Agency (approval no. PIRB11-028 and no. PIRB11-028-1).

3   Results

The first phase began with all 570 statements included in educational objective of nursing schools and classified in eighteen competencies as a preliminary version of GCSN (Table1).

In depth interviews of second phase, the panel of nursing experts discussed profoundly what competencies, along with the 18 preliminary competencies, new graduate nurse must have for fit to practice.

In step two of second phase, the reliability of the revised GCSN was evaluated by 365 nurses. The age of them was between 26 and 55 years old (M = 34.8, SD = 6.1), all of them had from 5 to 32.5 years of client care experience in hospital practice (M = 11.6, SD = 6.1). Corrected item to total correlations ranged from .426 to .603. Cronbach's ¤ was .939. There was no improvement in ¤ when any item was deleted.

In final phase, a three-factor solution as determined by Eigen values greater than one resulted from factor analysis, explaining 63.330% of the total variance. Three factors were named based on common domain suggested by competency standards within each factor. Domain 1 included 11 competency standards related to nursing practice and judgment; domain 2, 8 competency standards related to professional values and development; domain 3, 6 competency standards related to communication and caring relationships.

Table 1. Generic competency standards for new graduate nurse

Important educational objective	Competency of new graduate nurse	Domain
Graduates must establish nursing knowledge	1.New graduate nurse must have a basic knowledge of the structure and functions of human body, and other relevant knowledge from the cultural, behavioral, psychological and social sciences as applied to health, illness, ageing and death	Nursing practice and judgment
Graduates must have good nursing skills	2.New graduate nurse must perform nursing skills exactly	
Graduates must think critically	3.New graduate nurse must apply his/her knowledge base to actual client contexts through critical thinking to solve problems	
Graduates must practice holistic nursing of physical, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects	4. New graduate nurse must collect, validate and organize date. They must be able to use a variety of skills including observation, interviewing, and physical examination	
Graduates must use nursing process for care proficiently	5.New graduate nurse must identify patterns, validate the diagnosis, and formulate the nursing diagnosis statement in the diagnosis phase of nursing process	
	6. New graduate nurse must establish priorities, client goals and outcome criteria with scientific rationale.	
	7.New graduate nurse must perform nursing interventions and record nursing actions exactly in implementation phase	
	8.New graduate nurse must collect data, measure goal attainment, record judgments or measurements of goal attainment and revise or modify the client's plan of care	
Graduates must educate clients effectively	9.New graduate nurse must develop rapport with clients and family and identify purpose of client education	
	10. New graduate nurse must assess learning needs and readiness and provide client-centered education.	
Graduates must care for clients with various cultures and values	11.New graduate nurse must be aware of his/her own values and them of others, respect the values of others and examine his/her own values	
Graduates must have professional responsibilities	12. New graduate nurse must practice according to The code of ethics for Korean nurses and conduct within the law.	Professional values and development
Graduates must practice ethical values	13.New graduate nurse must recognize the limitation of their knowledge and practice and take advice from their nurse preceptor or senior nurse	
Graduates must learn continuously for self-development and adjustment to new situations	14. New graduate nurse must improve their performance and enhance the safety of care through continuing professional development. They must have an in-depth knowledge of common physical and psychological problems and treatments and ensure their skills and knowledge to be up to date in their own field	
Graduates must perform nursing research	15. New graduate nurse must use evidence to assess, plan, implement and evaluate care	
Graduates must speak a foreign language well	16. New graduate nurse must be able to understand research, and make a decision to apply research findings to their work.	
Graduates must manage information	17. New graduate nurse must collect information by various means such as web sites, books, mass media, magazines et al.	
	18. New graduate nurse must process considerable information effectively	
Graduates must demonstrate leadership	19. New graduate nurse must provide leadership through quality improvement of care and service to enhance the quality of care	
Graduates must communicate effectively	20. New graduate nurse must record clearly, accurately and completely in client documentation with standardized vocabulary	Communication and caring relationships
	21. New graduate nurse must Not miss client's condition change and notification to doctor, falsify client records and chart in advance	
	22. New graduate nurse must use common language to be able to share not the connotative but the denotative meaning of the words. And they must use simple and short sentences with the point to minimize confusion, catch the effective communication timing, use suitable communication skills, not speak rapidly or slowly or say in mild or common tone of voice	
	23. New graduate nurse must prepare your appearance and hygiene to establish trust, consider posture, gait, facial expression, eye contact and gesture reflect your emotion and not threaten personal space during interpersonal interaction.	
Graduates must have therapeutic relationship with clients	24. New graduate nurse must have good character for caring relationships. They must present a professional and caring image as professional appearance, demeanor and behavior, act with common courtesy such as saying hello, goodbye, sorry and thank you, not calling client grandpa or father, knocking on doors before entering, protect a client's privacy, demonstrate consistency, reliability and honesty, and provide high quality care regardless of social and economic state, the nature of disease and client's negative behavior.	
Graduates must provide a valuable service to the public		
Graduates must interact with teams and be cooperative	25. New graduate nurse must work to help each other colleague. And they must be aware of and respect the roles and responsibilities of other experts involved in client's health care and treat all colleagues, team members and anyone else.	

4   Discussion

The result of this study was to be developed clinically sensitive generic competency standards for new graduate nurse. The developed GCSN relates to the competence required of all nursing students at the end of their undergraduate nursing program, and includes the generic competencies that all new graduate nurses must achieve.

The GCSN instrument has high reliability. The validity of the GCSN was established through content validity by expert nurses. The validated GCSN with clinical sensitiveness will help nurse educators aware that students must acquire core competencies.

The limitation of the GCSN is to be excluded field competency requirements within the context of to be required for each field. This study was conducted in the Korean clinical settings with its specific characteristics that include nursing situations in Korea and educational system. Although this was the case, the developed GCSN may be able to be applied in other countries or cultures.

5   Conclusion

This study has made contributions to nursing education by testing in phases for nursing student to achieve nursing competencies required in clinical settings with the developed clinically sensitive GCSN. We hope that nursing educators develop effective strategies in order that nursing student possess adequate competencies before graduation.

References

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