Competence in Dementia Care among Nurses Working in Acute Care Settings
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Introduction / Purpose
Taiwan sees a rapidly growing population with dementia who often need to visit or be admitted into acute care facilities due to chronic conditions or diseases. Nurses working in acute care settings busy with clinical tasks and lacking knowledge of dementia-related care often need to rely on medications prescribed by doctors or physical restraints for dealing with problem behaviors in patients with dementia (PwD). Before intervening appropriate education or training, nurses’ competence toward dementia care is of critical. The purpose of this study was to investigate the competence in dementia care among nurses working in the acute care settings, analyze how nurses differ in their knowledge, attitudes and skills in dementia care concerning demographic characteristics, and examine the relationships between the three. The conceptual framework of this study was based on the Competence Model by Spencer & Spencer (1993) and Vazirani (2010).

Methods
This is a cross-sectional and descriptive research design, subjects were nurses from the adult units and the psychiatry department at two medical centers in South Taiwan. A structured survey was conducted to collect data, totally 310 nurses participated in the study with the response rate of 99.4% (n=308). The instruments including three sub-scales, Knowledge, Attitude, and Skills of Nurses toward caring for PwD was developed by the research team. Descriptive statistics and Analysis of Cariance and Pearson correlation coefficient were used to analyze the data.

Results
Most of the acute care nurses have experiences with care for PwD (n=288, 93.5%) for an average of 6.9 years (range= 0 to 31, SD = 7.29). Only 36.7% (n=113) of them have ever received training related to dementia care. Mean scores and SD for each measures was shown in Table 1. Nurses demonstrated good knowledge and positive attitude toward caring for PwD. In addition, nurses with older age, more working experience and dementia care experience, ever had dementia education or training demonstrated higher dementia care knowledge, attitude, skill scores (Table 2). There was a significant relationship between knowledge and care Skills as well as Attitude and Care skills (Table 3.)

Table 1. Knowledge, attitude and skills
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<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge total score (18-67)</td>
<td>13.70</td>
<td>1.84</td>
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<td>Attitude total score (1-5)</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skill total score (0-10)</td>
<td>6.80</td>
<td>1.32</td>
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Table 2. Demographic variables by KAS

Table 3. Correlation of Knowledge, attitude and skills

Conclusion
Findings of this study can be references on the dementia-related care competences that nurses have in Taiwan’s acute care facilities, which can serve as the basis for developing dementia related education training that meets the needs of nurses in acute care facilities in the future. Especially, older, less working experiences and dementia care experiences are considered demographic factors when planning for training.