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Compassion Competence Among Nursing Students From Different Cultures: A Multi-Country Study

P. E. Samson-Akpan, PhD, MPH, BSc, RN/RM, RNE, FWACN
Department of Nursing Science, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria
Youngjin Lee, PhD
College of Nursing, Ajou University,, 82-10-8920-3105, Korea, Republic of (South)
Arcalyd R. R. Cayaban,, MSN
Fundamentals and Administration Department, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat Sultanate of Oman, Oman
Mohammed B. A. J. Al-Jubouri, PhD
Fundamentals and Administration Department, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultan Qaboos, Oman
Mildred E. John, PhD
Department of Nursing Science, University of Calabar, Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

Background
Compassionate care is the wish of every patient, health professionals, the public and loved ones (John, 2016). Interestingly, the presence or absence of compassion leaves an indelible impression that patients and their relatives have about their experiences of care in the health facilities. Compassion is the main factor which adds to patient satisfaction with nursing care and it enhances nurses' job satisfaction (Royal College of Nursing 2012). Most patients and family members agree that improving patients' satisfaction around their experience of care brings out an outcome that is valued. Literature reveals that there is a universal interest in compassion as it relates to care (Adamson & Dewar, 2015; Dewar, Adamson, Smith, Surfleet, & King, 2014). According to Bivins, Tierney and Seers (2017), entreaties for additional compassionate care have become serious discussion at international level resulting in initiatives such as Schwartz Rounds established in America, Hearts in Healthcare in New Zealand, and the Asia Pacific Healthcare Hub of Charter for Compassion. In the United Kingdom, a policy document called Compassion in Practice outlined six 'Cs' associated with compassionate care (care, compassion, courage, communication, commitment and competence). Compassion connotes empathizing with the patient and also empowering them through efficient and effective nursing care (Dewar & Cook 2014). Competence means that all involved in caring roles must have adequate information about individual's health and social needs including expert understanding of technical and clinical knowledge. This would ensure effective care and treatment which are evidence-based (Department of Health, 2012). There is no evidence of assessing compassion competence among undergraduate nursing students focusing on multi countries in literature. Therefore, carrying out this study is crucial to highlight areas of deficiency in compassion competence among undergraduate nursing students so that that an intervention can be instituted for corrections since they are still at the formative stage. The study will also fill the paucity of literature on compassion competence.

Purpose: The main purpose of the study was to assess compassion competence among undergraduate nursing students from different cultures. Specifically, the following study objectives will be achieved:

- To determine compassion competence of nursing students in communicating with patients
- To ascertain compassion competence among nursing students in terms of sensitivity to patients' needs
- To evaluate the level of compassion competence in relation to insight into patients' problems
- To identify determinants of compassion competence among nursing students

Methods and Materials

The study was a descriptive cross-sectional survey involving four countries – Nigeria, South Korea, Oman and Iraq. A total of 1158 undergraduate nursing students participated in the study which included both generic and direct entry students. A stratified random sampling method was used to select participants from 200 level of study to 400 or 500 (as applicable in each of the institutions) because of their exposure to clinical experience. Data were collected using Compassion Competence Scale (CCS) developed by Lee and Seomun (2016) to measure communication, sensitivity, and insight. The instrument contain 17 items on a 5- point Likert scale (strongly agree =5, agree =4, neutral =3, disagree=2, strongly disagree=1). The 17 items are divided into eight (8) items on communication, five (5) items on sensitivity and four (4) items on insight. The total score is calculated as the mean of the scores for each question; it ranges from 1 to 5. The instrument was pilot tested on nursing students not used in the study. The Cronbach's alpha estimates were: .90 for the whole instrument; .80 for communication; .79 for sensitivity .70 for insight. Ethical approval was given by the Health Research Ethics Committee of each institution involved in the study. Data were computer analyzed by using SPSS for Windows version 21. Descriptive statistics, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regression were used to analyze the data.

Results and Discussion: Nursing students who completed the survey numbered 1,158 in four countries. The socio-demographic characteristics of the sample shows that 70.6% were female; 87.7% were single, and average age was 22.25 (SD=3.44, minimum 18 to maximum 47). The biggest proportion of the respondents was from South Korea (31.3%), whereas the lowest was from Oman (18.3%). Overall, compassion competence was 3.96 (SD=0.56), showing a sequentially high level of sensitivity (mean = 4.10; SD = 0.63), communication (mean = 3.92; SD = .60), and insight (mean = 3.86; SD = .66).

In terms of the CCS sub-factors, sensitivity domain was perceived as the highest CCS dimension among nursing students in Iraq (mean = 4.20, SD = 0.52), Nigeria (mean = 4.14, SD = 0.83), Oman (mean = 4.01, SD = 0.71) and South Korea (mean = 4.01, SD = 0.49), respectively. With regards to sensitivity, the respondents asserted their recognition of the need for sensitivity and demonstrated it to patients' with discomforts and suffering thereby easing their problems and increasing relief is which is an art of compassion in nursing. This findings is supported Lee and Seomun (2016) assertion that nurses' behaviour showing sensitivity comprises of being able to accommodate, and focused on the patients and families and other significant people around the patient, spending quality time with patients and being genuinely and candidly concerned

about patients. Sensitivity skills must be cultivated and displayed by nurses such as paying rapt attention to patients and observing the patients. Nurses must attend to patient's needs on time, listen to them actively and be willing to make suitable emergency plans to help in possible future problems. Level of study and country of residence showed statistically significant multivariate effects.

Limitations: Different cultural background of the respondents, duration of the nursing programme (4 or 5 years); mode of students' entry (generic and direct entry) and the sample size may limit the generalization of the results

In conclusion, the respondents' sensitivity to patients needs was high across all countries that participated in the study. Therefore, there is need to emphasize and develop effective communication skills and insights which are important aspects of compassion competence during the undergraduate programme and these can increase the quality of nursing care.

Title:
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Keywords:
Compassion competence, Effective communication and Sensitivity

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Abstract Summary:

The main purpose was to assess compassion competence among nursing students from different cultures. A descriptive cross-sectional survey involving 1158 undergraduate nursing students from four countries, selected through stratified random sampling method. The results showed that compassion competence was 3.96 (SD=0.56). Effective communication and insights are needed among nursing students.

Content Outline:
1. Introduction
- Compassion is a major factor which contributes to patient satisfaction with nursing care and also enhances nurses' job satisfaction.
- Literature reveals that there is a no study on compassion competence among undergraduate nursing students therefore, the main purpose of the study was to assess compassion competence among nursing students from different cultures
2. Body
A. Design, Sampling and Sample
Supporting point #1:
- The study was a descriptive cross-sectional survey involving four countries – Nigeria, South Korea, Oman and Iraq.
- Stratified random sampling was used to select 1158 undergraduate nursing students from level 200 to 500.
- Supporting point #2
- *a)* Data were collected using Compassion Competence Scale (CCS) developed by Lee and Seomun (2016), measuring communication, sensitivity, and insight
- *b)* The instrument has 17 items on a 5- point Likert scale (strongly agree =5, agree =4, neutral =3, disagree=2, strongly disagree=1). The 17 items had eight (8) items on communication, five (5) items on sensitivity and four (4) items on insight.
- Main Point #2 Data analysis and Results
- Supporting point #1
- a) Descriptive analysis
- b) Hierarchical regression and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to analyze the data
- Supporting point #2
- *a)* Nursing students who completed the survey numbered 1,158 in four countries; 70.6% were female; 87.7% were single, and average age was 22.25 (SD=3.44, minimum 18 to maximum 47).
- *b)* Overall, compassion competence was 3.96 (SD=0.56), showing a sequentially high level of sensitivity (mean = 4.10; SD = 0.63), communication (mean = 3.92; SD = .60), and insight (mean = 3.86; SD = .66).
- c) Level of study and country of residence showed statistically significant multivariate effect.

First Primary Presenting Author
Primary Presenting Author
P. E. Samson-Akpan, PhD, MPH, BSc, RN/RM, RNE, FWACN
University of Calabar
Department of Nursing Science

Professor
Calabar
Nigeria

Author Summary: Patience Edoho Samson-Akpan is a Registered Nurse/ Midwife and nurse educator. A Professor of Nursing and former Head of Nursing Science Department, University of Calabar, Nigeria. Currently, a Post graduate M.Sc Nursing Programme Coordinator; holds a BSc (Nursing); Master's and a PhD degree. She has several awards in her honour such as "Best Academic Student Award from 1987-1981", School of Nursing, Calabar. She has authored books and published many articles in local and international journals

Second Author
Youngjin Lee, PhD
Ajou University,
College of Nursing
Assistant Professor
Korea, Republic of (South)

Author Summary: She is a PhD holder in Nursing and did a Post-doctoral, Integrative Program for Cognitive Science, Dementia & Memory Clinic, Department of Neuropsychiatry, Seoul National University Hospital, Seoul, Korea
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Signed on 12/12/2018 by *Youngjin Lee*

Third Author
Arcalyd R. R. Cayaban,, MSN
Sultan Qaboos University
Fundamentals and Administration Department
Lecturer
Muscat Sultanate of Oman
Oman

Author Summary: She is a Registered Nurse / Midwife with specialization in Nursing Administration and Adult Health Nursing. she is a Lecturer and a researcher working in Fundamentals & Nursing Administration Department, College of Nursing, Sultan Qaboos University Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

Fourth Author
Mohammed B. A. J. Al-Jubouri, PhD
Sultan Qaboos University
Fundamentals and Administration Department
Lecturer

College of Nursing, Sultan Qaboos University
Sultan Qaboos
Oman

Author Summary: H e is a PhD holder in Nursing, a researcher, journal reviewer and Certified as a mentor and TOT trainer from World Health Organization, Jordan, 2009

<u>Fifth Author</u>
Mildred E. John, PhD
University of Calabar, Calabar
Department of Nursing Science
Professor
College of Medical sciences
Calabar
Nigeria

Author Summary: Mildred John is Professor of Nursing with over thirty years' experience teaching, capacity building, and mentoring nurses. She is nurse examiner, researcher, Fellow of the West African College of Nursing, and is currently involved in Dementia Awareness in Nigeria. Mildred has over sixty publications in reputable journals, and has served as Head of Department, and Dean of Faculty. She is currently the President of Association of University Nursing Programmes in Nigeria.