The Meaning of "Human Caring" from Nursing Students' Perspectives After the First Clinical Practice

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Background

◆ The first clinical practice has a great impact on nursing students because these students can actually experience the real practices and rethink the true meaning of nursing profession.
◆ The initial objectives of the first clinical practice in a nursing undergraduate program focused on providing nursing technical skills such as bathing or feeding to meet the basic needs of patients. In this way, however, students seemed to only concentrate on performing clinical skills as instructed in front of patients, clinical instructors, and teachers. Many students concerned so much about carrying out the assigned technical skills, and thus they tended to disregard a patient as a unique individual who has various different needs. Nevertheless, after the clinical practice, many students wondered whether or not their performing skills were truly for patients.
◆ We, therefore, decided to modify educational objectives of the first clinical practice such that students could focus on observing caring activities provided to patients by professional nurses. For example, students were given assignments to see how nurses approached patients, what rationale nurses had in providing specific nursing care to patients, and what values nurses respected most in caring patients.

Purpose

◆ To investigate the meaning of "human caring" from the perspective of sophomore nursing students in Japan after their first clinical practice.
◆ To examine differences in their experiences before and after changing the educational objectives of their first clinical practice.

Methods

◆ Design: Qualitative descriptive study.
◆ Subject:
  1. 94 students had the clinical practice with the initial objectives in 2015.
  2. 80 students experienced the clinical practice after modifying the educational objectives in 2016.
◆ Both data were abstracted by short essays of students describing about what they think of "human caring". Specifically, in the essay, students described about a scene chosen from their clinical practice that they thought of representing "human caring" as well as the reason why they choose the scene.
◆ Analysis:
  1. We used a software named Text Mining Studio to analyze Japanese dependency structure of sentences in all the essays and obtained key descriptions.
  2. The top five dependency sentence structures frequently found in the students writing were used as references to further abstract data.
  3. Four researchers examined all the abstracted descriptions and selected valid data for analyzing human caring experience of students.
  4. The abstracted descriptions both in 2015 and 2016 were compared in order to see differences in data.
◆ Procedure:

The necessary IRB approval from the researchers affiliated university was obtained prior to conducting this study.

Results

◆ The results of analysis the top five dependency sentence structure are shown in Table1.

Table1  Top Five Dependency Structure Sentence in Students Essays Regarding What they Think of “Human Caring” in 2015 & 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Assisting patients</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>Thinking of &quot;human caring&quot;</td>
<td>56.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making care plans</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>Feeling &quot;human caring&quot;</td>
<td>41.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considering about individual difference</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>Considering needs</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting the information</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>Nursing care is needed</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care for hygiene</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>Considering self development</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Frequency: how many times appeared in essays.
- In-depth analysis of the essays implied that the students of 2015 found "human caring" from the scenes of their own clinical experience, and the students of 2016 found "human caring" from the various caring scenes of professional nurses.

Conclusion

◆ The students of 2015 who tended to focus on “doing” things, however, the students of 2016 tended to “consider” human caring.
◆ The students of 2015 associated “human caring” with their experience of providing direct nursing care, while the students of 2016 found “human caring” in various clinical experience such as communicate and teaching patients in addition to providing patients care.
◆ Findings of this study indicated that following and observing professional nurse would be an effective approach for letting Japanese nursing students think and feel the “human caring” in clinical settings.