Aim: This study aimed to clarify the effects that competency has on the nursing careers of novice nurses.

Background: Research related to competency is growing in the fields of education, psychology, humanities and social sciences, and curricula with competency at their core are being implemented in many countries. Competency is also indispensable in the field of nursing (Axley, 2008). Various studies have examined the concept of competency and methods for evaluating it (Cowan et al., 2005; Fullerton et al., 2011; Hosoda et al., 2011; Scott Tilley, 2008). Benner et al. (2009) also indicated that the knowledge of nursing practice is relational and contextual, and the skill of involvement therefore cannot be acquired without experiential learning. It takes three years for novice nurses to acquire the skills required. Currently, there are workplace adaptation problems, which result in low job retention and attempts by personnel to independently take action for the sake of their own nursing careers; however, they are unsure as to which action to take. Therefore, understanding the impact that novice nurses’ competency has on their nursing career is considered insightful for supporting nursing career development for them.

Methods: A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to 1,016 novice nurses (registered nurses with less than 3 years' experience) at 60 hospitals, each with 500 standard patient beds in Japan. The questionnaires were anonymous, and participation in the study was voluntary. The survey covered the basic attributes of the respondents: the Nursing Competency Scale (Hosoda et al., 2016), which consists of the subscales of “organization commitment,” “cooperative relationship building,” “agonic power orientation,” “flexibility,” “goal achievement orientation,” “leadership,” and “professional practice;” and the Nursing Career Assessment Scale (Ishii et al., 2005), consisting of the subscales of “implementation and pursuit of quality nursing,” “development and adjustment of interpersonal relationships,” “self-capability development,” and “accumulation of diverse experiences.” Potential participants were given a written explanation of the purpose and methodology of the research and were guaranteed anonymity. Ethics approval was granted by the Ethical Review Board for Nursing Research of Osaka Prefecture University. In the analysis, the subscales were observed variables, and a multiple indicator model was created to indicate the effects of “Nursing Competency” on “Nursing Career” indicating the relationship between latent variables. A covariance structure analysis was conducted using IBM® SPSS® Amos.

Outcomes: There were 458 valid responses (45.1%); 431 were from female staff (94.1%) and 27 from male staff (5.9%). The average age was 24.1 ± SD 2.9 years, and average duration of experience in nursing work was 1.9 ± SD 0.7 years. The results of the covariance structure analysis showed that the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of the initial model's fit index was greater than .1; so, based on the revised indices, a correlation was found between the error variables for “organization commitment” and “goal achievement orientation,” which were observed variables for competency. The results of this consideration showed that the transition from “Nursing Competency” to “Nursing Career” had a path coefficient of .70 and a determination coefficient of .49. The fit indices for the hypothetical model were goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = .916, adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) = .868, comparative fit index (CFI) = .950, and RMSEA = .096. All of the path coefficients were significant ($P < .05$).
**Implications:** The findings suggested that competency has an impact on the nursing careers of novice nurses. Since competency is also related to ability and action characteristics in nursing practice, acquiring competency increases the assigned workload, thereby resulting in changes in the roles and work content of staff. This is believed to help develop their nursing careers. This means that training aimed at developing competency is necessary for the development of staff's nursing careers. For mid-career nurses, factors such as nursing career stagnation predominate (Morishima et al., 2014) and circumstances can prevent the acquisition of competency among novice nurses (Goudreau et al., 2015). Therefore, consideration of an educational program aimed at improving competency is especially important during the initial stages of a nurse's career, when the educational needs are particularly important.

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**Title:**

The Effects of Competency on the Nursing Careers of Novice Nurses

**Keywords:**

novice nurse, nursing careers and nursing competency

**References:**


Abstract Summary:
This study elucidated the effects of competency on the nursing careers of novice nurses. The survey was conducted with novice nurses at hospitals in Japan and analyzed using a covariance structure analysis. The findings suggested that competency has an impact on the nursing careers of novice nurses.

Content Outline:
Various studies have examined the concept of competency and methods for evaluating it. It takes three years for novice nurses to acquire the skills required. This study aimed to clarify the effects that competency has on the nursing careers of novice nurses. Understanding the effects is considered insightful for supporting nursing career development for them. A self-administered questionnaire was conducted with novice nurses at hospitals in Japan. The survey covered the basic attributes of the respondents, the Nursing Competency Scale, and the Nursing Career Assessment Scale. A multiple indicator model was created to indicate the effects of “Nursing Competency” on “Nursing Career” and conducted a covariance structure analysis. The transition from “Nursing Competency” to “Nursing Career” had a path coefficient of .70 and a determination coefficient of .49. The findings suggested that competency has an impact on the nursing careers of novice nurses. Since competency is also related to ability and action characteristics in nursing practice, acquiring competency increases the assigned workload, thereby resulting in changes in the roles and work content of staff. This means that training aimed at developing competency is necessary for the development of staff’s nursing careers.
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