

Difference In Multicultural Awareness and Multicultural Efficacy between Regular People of Multi-Cultural Backgrounds and North Korean Refugees, as Perceived by Nursing Students of South Korea

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ABSTRACT

Background/Objectives: This study was conducted to identify the difference in multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy between regular people of multi-cultural backgrounds and North Korean refugees, as perceived by nursing students.

Method/Statistical Analysis: Data were collected using a total of 717 copies of a questionnaire. A frequency analysis, paired t-test, and Pearson's correlation coefficients were used for the analysis.

Finding: The analysis showed that the multicultural awareness of university students majoring in nursing, towards North Korean refugees was lower than the multicultural awareness they had towards regular people of multicultural backgrounds excluding North Korean refugees. In addition, both multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy towards regular people and North Korean refugees had a positive correlation. This researcher suggests developing a program to promote multicultural capabilities in university students of nursing towards North Korean refugees.

Improvements/Applications: This program would have to address the culture-specific awareness towards North Korean refugees in addition to general multicultural awareness.

Keywords: *Multicultural family members, Multicultural awareness, Multicultural efficacy, Nursing student, North Korean refugees*

Introduction

Since the 1990s, there has been an increase in North Korean refugees who fled the famine in North Korea. As of February, 2018, the number of North Korean refugees reached three-fold that of the figure in 2001^[1]. The South Korean government includes North Korean refugees among those with a different cultural background. Due to a long history of the two Koreas being divided, North Korean refugees have a different vocabulary, value

system, life style and ideology. Such difference makes it difficult to understand them simply based on the fact that the same ethnicity is shared with South Koreans ^[2]. In fact, North Korean refugees are in the absolute and relative minority in South Korea in terms of political, economic and social status, as well as the power they have. As such, they are classified as the same category as regular immigrants ^[3]. Therefore, it is important to conduct education on building cultural capabilities in university students of nursing to prepare them for cases when they come across North Korean refugees in a clinical setting.

Cultural capabilities refer to the ability to provide effective medical services by taking into account the cultural beliefs, behavior and needs of the person in

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question. Cultural awareness is important in fostering such capabilities [4]. Cultural awareness is the first stage of fostering cultural capability, and refers to the values and beliefs of an individual towards other cultures, awareness of stereotypes and ethnocentric views, as well as awareness of other cultures [4]. According to a study conducted in Korea, university students of nursing show a low level in supportive attitude towards North Korean refugees among the categories of intimacy, accepting attitude and supportive attitude [5], they also showed a negative attitude towards providing preferential treatment to North Korean refugees [2]. This can be said as the result of their views towards North Korean refugees as heterogeneous the same way they would view other refugees, rather than viewing them as of the same ethnicity. Such a perception is driven by the difference in life style, life experience and sentiment due to having lived in a different political system and ideology [5]. Therefore, training must be provided to university students of nursing who will provide therapeutic caregiving to North Korean refugees in a clinical setting, so that they can avoid aloofness and reluctance towards North Korean refugees but have a positive perception towards them.

One of the key cognitive factors in developing cultural capabilities in nurses is transcultural efficacy [6]. Transcultural efficacy is the confidence that one can carry out transcultural nursing techniques [6]. That is, nurses with a high degree of transcultural efficacy have a high level of confidence that she can overcome obstacles or weaknesses in her own transcultural nursing techniques, leading her to execute a high degree of cultural capabilities [6]. Therefore, transcultural efficacy is a useful concept in indirectly measuring the cultural capabilities of nursing students whose cultural capabilities cannot be measured directly as they have not been staffed in clinical settings yet.

As such, this study seeks to review the awareness and cultural efficacy of nursing students towards North Korean refugees. To that end, their multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees and towards regular people of different cultural backgrounds will be surveyed to see if there is any difference. This analysis will provide basic data that can contribute to the development of a systematic nursing program that can help improve the cultural capabilities of nursing students towards North Korean refugees.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy of regular people of North Korean refugees and those with multicultural backgrounds who are not North Korean refugees to review whether there is a difference. Specific objectives were set as follows.

1. The difference in multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and towards North Korean refugees, as perceived by nursing students is reviewed.
2. The correlation between multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and towards North Korean refugees, as perceived by nursing students is reviewed.

Materials and Method

Design of the Study: This study is a descriptive survey using a self-reported questionnaire to improve the cultural nursing capabilities towards North Korean refugees, by reviewing the difference in the multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees and towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds, as perceived by nursing students.

Study Subjects: The study subjects were university students majoring in nursing studies in their first to fourth year at three universities located in regions K, I and C. Data were collected from March to June, 2017 using a structuralized questionnaire that study subjects were asked to fill out themselves. Out of the total of 730 copies of the questionnaire that were collected, 717 copies with sufficient responses were used for the final analysis.

Research Tools

Multicultural Awareness: Service Having multicultural awareness means having the cognitive, conscious and behavioral factors of multi-culturalism. To measure multicultural awareness, the multicultural awareness questionnaire reconfigured by [7] based on the questionnaire that [8] developed by incorporating the characteristics of the Korean society into the tools used in the preceding studies of [9,10]. The scale for multicultural awareness consisted of 5 questions on the cognitive factors, 5 questions on the conscious factors and 5 questions on the behavioral factors, measured on

a 5 point Likert scale. A higher scale represents a higher degree of multicultural awareness in the nursing student. In the study by [7], Cronbach's α or the reliability of the tool was .799, while it was .847 for this study. For the multicultural awareness on North Korean refugees, the same tool was used as above, but by replacing the subject with North Korean refugees. Before applying the revised tool, it was reviewed and verified for its validity of content by an expert on North Korean issues and a professor of nursing studies. In this study, Cronbach's α or the reliability of the tool for measuring the awareness towards North Korean refugees was .891.

Multicultural Efficacy: Job Multicultural efficacy refers to the confidence one has in learning and executing cultural nursing techniques towards diverse parties [6]. To measure multicultural efficacy, the TCSE-scale developed by [11] for Korean nurses by reflecting the health and medical services system associated with multiculturalism in Korea and the sociocultural characteristics of Korea was revised to be better fit for university students of nursing and applied. The scale for multicultural efficacy consists of 4 questions on the cognition, 12 questions on practice and 9 questions on emotions. Multicultural efficacy was measured on a 4 point Likert scale, with a higher score representing a higher degree of multicultural efficacy in the nursing student. A higher score represents a higher multicultural efficacy in nursing students. At the time of the tools' development, Cronbach's α for reliability was .880, while for this study, it was .949.

To measure multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees, the same above tool was used, but with the subject replaced to refer to North Korean refugees. Before applying the revised tool, it was reviewed and verified for its validity of content by an expert on North Korean issues and a professor of nursing studies. In this study, Cronbach's α or the reliability of the tool for measuring the awareness towards North Korean refugees was .972.

Data Collection and Procedures

For this study, data were collected using a structuralized questionnaire from March to June, 2017 on students majoring in nursing studies and enrolled in their 1st to 4th years at universities located in regions K, I and C. To abide by ethical standards, the study purpose, methodology, privacy protection of study subjects and the time it would take to fill out the questionnaire were

sufficiently described to the professors and potential candidates of each university and asked for their voluntary participation, as well as a written consent. It was explained that study participants would be kept anonymous, and the data collected would not be used for any other purpose than this study. Subjects were also told that they can withdraw from this study at any point in time, in which case they would not undergo any disadvantage. It took approximately 10 minutes for a subject to fill out the questionnaire. Participants were offered a small gift in return.

Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed as follows, using SPSS 20 (PASW Statistics 20).

1. The degree of multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy towards regular people of multicultural backgrounds and towards North Korean refugees, as well as the general characteristics of university students majoring in nursing were analyzed in terms of frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, minimal value and maximum value.
2. A paired t-test was used to analyze the difference in the mean value of the multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy of nursing students towards regular people and towards North Korean refugees.
3. Pearson's correlation coefficients were used to analyze the correlation between the multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy of nursing students towards regular people and towards North Korean refugees.

Results and Discussion

General Characteristics of Study Subjects: The general characteristics of the 23 study subjects were as seen in Table 1

Table 1: General Characteristics (N = 717)

Characteristics	Categories	n	%
Gender	Male	628	88.7
	Female	80	11.3
Age(years)	First grade	229	32.3
	Second grade	252	35.5
	Third grade	205	28.9
	Fourth grade	23	3.2

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Religion	Catholicism	85	12.0
	Christian	241	34.1
	Buddhism	32	4.5
	None	336	47.5
	Other	13	1.8

Multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and North Korean refugees: The multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy that

nursing students have towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and towards North Korean refugees were as seen in Table 2.

Multicultural awareness was scored 3.77 ± 1.58 points on a 5 point scale. Multicultural awareness towards North Korean refugees scored 3.40 ± 0.54 points.

Multicultural-efficacy scored 3.16 ± 2.75 points on a 4 point scale. Multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees was 3.12 ± 0.46 points which was lower than multicultural efficacy.

Table 2: Degree of the Variable of the Subject (N = 717)

Variables		Total Item				Item	
		Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Multicultural awareness	Cognition	20.01	2.50	5	25	4.00	0.50
	Consciousness	18.65	2.81	5	25	3.73	0.56
	Behavior	18.30	2.97	5	25	3.66	0.59
	Total	56.58	7.92	0	75	3.77	1.58
Multicultural awareness towards North Korean refugees	Cognition	17.46	2.71	5	25	3.49	0.54
	Consciousness	17.31	3.26	5	25	3.46	0.65
	Behavior	16.42	3.20	5	25	3.28	0.64
	Total	51.05	8.16	0	75	3.40	0.54
Multicultural -efficacy	Cognition	12.37	1.81	4	16	3.09	0.45
	Practice	37.93	5.26	12	54	3.16	1.31
	Emotion	29.23	4.25	9	45	3.24	1.06
	Total	79.21	11.00	0	115	3.16	2.75
Multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees	Cognition	12.15	1.92	4	16	3.03	0.48
	Practice	37.79	5.07	12	54	3.14	0.42
	Emotion	28.59	3.92	9	45	3.17	0.43
	Total	78.08	11.60	0	115	3.12	0.46

The difference in multicultural awareness and multicultural awareness towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and towards North Korean refugees

The difference in multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy of nursing students towards regular people with diverse backgrounds and towards North Korean refugees is as seen in Table 3.

In nursing students, multicultural awareness towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds was higher than their multicultural awareness towards North Korean refugees. This difference was statistically

significant ($t=19.37, p<.001$). In all three sub-categories of cognition ($t=23.83, p<.001$), consciousness ($t=22.31, p<.001$), and behavior ($t=16.57, p<.001$), multicultural awareness towards regular people was significantly higher than towards North Korean refugees. For multicultural efficacy in nursing students, too, it was higher towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds than towards North Korean refugees. This difference was statistically significant ($t=3.41, p=.001$). In terms of sub-categories, cognition ($t=3.30, p=.001$) and emotion ($t=5.08, p<.001$) was significantly higher towards regular people, but in the sub-category of practice, it cannot be said to be higher ($t=0.63, p=.524$).

Table 3: The difference in multicultural awareness and multicultural awareness towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and towards North Korean refugees (N = 717)

Characteristics	Categories	Mean	SD	t	p
Multicultural awareness towards North Korean refugees	Cognition	2.53	2.82	23.83	<.001
	Consciousness	1.30	3.07	11.31	<.001
	Behavior	1.86	3.00	16.57	<.001
	Total	5.52	7.63	19.37	<.001
Multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees	Cognition	0.21	1.70	3.30	.001
	Practice	0.10	4.25	0.63	.524
	Emotion	0.64	3.37	5.08	<.001
	Total	1.12	8.85	3.41	.001

The correlation between multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and towards North Korean refugees

The correlation between major variables is as seen in Table 4. Multicultural awareness towards regular people and towards North Korean refugees had a positive correlation of a medium level ($r=.54, p<.001$), while the multicultural efficacy towards both groups had a strong positive correlation ($r=.69, p<.001$). Multicultural awareness and multicultural

efficacy towards regular people had a medium-level positive correlation ($r=.55, p<.001$), while multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees had a strong positive correlation ($r=.63, p<.001$). Moreover, multicultural awareness towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees had a medium-level positive correlation ($r=.47, p<.001$). Multicultural awareness towards North Korean refugees and multicultural efficacy towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds, too, had a medium-level positive correlation ($r=.43, p<.001$).

Table 3: Relationships among the Study Variable

(N = 717)

Variables	MA	MANK	ME	MENK
	r(p)	r(p)	r(p)	r(p)
MA	1	.549 (<.001)	.552 (<.001)	.473 (<.001)
MANK		1	.435 (<.001)	.636 (<.001)
ME			1	.694 (<.001)
MENK				1

MA=Multicultural awareness; MANK=Multicultural awareness towards North Korean refugees

ME=Multicultural–efficacy; MENK=Multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees

Discussion

This study was conducted to seek measures to improve the cultural nursing capabilities towards North Korean refugees, by identifying the difference in multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy of nursing students towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and towards North Korean refugees.

The multicultural awareness of nursing students towards North Korean refugees was found to be lower

than that towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds who are not North Korean refugees. The multicultural awareness of nursing students towards North Korean refugees scored significantly lower in all three sub-categories of cognition, consciousness and behavior. In other studies conducted in Korea, too, nursing students scored the lowest in supportive attitude, among the three categories of intimacy, accepting attitude and supportive attitude [5], and university students showed a negative attitude towards

providing preferential treatment towards North Korean refugees [2]. This can be attributed to the fact that to university students who have lived under a different political system and ideology despite being of the same ethnicity, the difference in life style, life experience and emotions make them view North Korean refugees as foreign refugees rather than as those of the same race [5]. Therefore, effective multicultural education related to North Korean refugees must be provided to university students of nursing who will serve as therapeutic caregivers of North Korean refugees in clinical settings in the future, to ensure that these students do not have a reluctant attitude but a positive perception towards North Korean refugees. Moreover, in terms of multicultural efficacy, too, university students majoring in nursing studies had significantly lower multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees than towards regular people, indicating an urgency for training to boost the students' multicultural capabilities related to North Korean refugees. There was a positive correlation between the nursing students' multicultural awareness towards regular people and towards North Korean refugees, between their multicultural efficacy towards the two groups, between their multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds, between multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees, between multicultural awareness towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and multicultural efficacy towards North Korean refugees, and between multicultural awareness towards North Korean refugees and multicultural efficacy towards regular people of multicultural backgrounds.

These findings suggest that it would be effective to apply multicultural education related to North Korean refugees within the framework of general multiculturalism education when conducting education programs on university students of nursing to reinforce their multicultural capabilities. The model by Papadopoulos, Tilki and Taylor (the PTT model) which is a leading model for multicultural capabilities education, classifies learning into culturally generic competencies and culturally specific competencies [12]. That is, culturally generic competencies focus on the deep understanding and perception of fundamental social or organizational structures that promote or undermine cultural capabilities nursing, or how cultural identity affects health. During the practice stage, the focus is on

the acquisition of specific cultural capabilities within a specific cultural group [4].

Therefore, to improve the cultural capabilities of nursing students towards North Korean refugees who are of the same ethnicity as the students themselves but are perceived as people with a different cultural background, a program to promote multicultural capabilities towards North Korean refugees must be developed based on the model for culturally specific competencies should be applied to university students of nursing.

Conclusion & Suggestions

This study was conducted to identify measures that can improve the cultural nursing capabilities towards North Korean refugees, by understanding the difference in multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy of university students of nursing, towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and towards North Korean refugees.

The study results show that nursing students' multicultural awareness towards North Korean refugees was lower than their multicultural awareness towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds excluding North Korean refugees. The same was found for their multicultural efficacy. Moreover, there was a positive correlation between their multicultural awareness towards regular people and towards North Korean refugees, and between their multicultural efficacy towards regular people and towards North Korean refugees.

Therefore, this researcher suggests that to improve the cultural capabilities of nursing students towards North Korean refugees who are of the same ethnicity as the students themselves but are perceived as people with a different cultural background, a program to promote multicultural capabilities towards North Korean refugees must be developed based on the model for culturally specific competencies should be applied to university students of nursing.

This study is the first of its kind to compare the multicultural awareness and multicultural efficacy of South Korean nursing students at universities towards regular people with multicultural backgrounds and towards North Korean refugees, and thus is meaningful in that it provides basic data that can contribute to the development of a curriculum for the fostering of

multicultural nursing capabilities in university students of nursing. However, as this study was conducted on students of only three colleges of nursing, its findings cannot be generalized. As such, this researcher suggests an expanded study or an iteration of this study to acquire more general findings.

Ethical Clearance: Not required

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Conflict of Interest: Nil

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