

Nursing Students' Perceptions of Post COVID-19's Role in Nursing Professionals

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the perception of nursing students about the role of the nursing professionals on post COVID-19. The survey was conducted online with 50 nursing students. Results of this study indicated that the scores for the importance of the nursing profession on post COVID-19 were the highest in the areas of infection control, emergency, and critical care. In addition, the areas of the nursing profession that needed to expand their role were identified as infection control, emergency, and public health, respectively. It is necessary to prepare for each nursing specialty to provide services as health care providers in the post COVID-19 era.

Keywords: post COVID-19, nursing, professional

INTRODUCTION

The spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), which began in 2019, caused many changes for people around the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared a pandemic, and the development of treatments and vaccines is underway; nevertheless, COVID-19 continues to progress worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic is imposing changes not only in the healthcare sector, but also in the global economy and society in all areas. [1-3]

With the COVID-19 pandemic underway, the role of medical staff is increasing, and in particular the role of nurses facing patients at the forefront of the medical field is more important than ever. [4] In a public opinion poll, the contribution and role of medical personnel in the prevention and problem solving of COVID-19 was considered significant. [5] It was also found that a positive public perception of medical personnel was formed. Moreover, to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and ensure patient treatment, it is necessary to expand the public health care system and reduce the shortage of medical personnel. [6]

The activities and roles of nurses on post COVID-19 have become increasingly important, and public awareness has improved accordingly. For this reason, there will be changes in nursing students' perceptions of their profession and their professionalism. In addition, not only the role of hospital-oriented nurses, but also that of nurses in community-centered public health activities could be observed.

There are many discussions on post COVID-19 in the political, economic, social, and cultural arenas. There is also active discussion in the field of nursing. This study aims to investigate the perceptions of nursing students about the role of the nursing profession on post COVID-19, as a basic data study.

METHODS

Study Design

This is a descriptive study to find out the perceptions of nursing students about the role of the nursing profession on post COVID 19.

Participants and data collection

Participants in the survey were 50 nursing students from a university in South Korea. Data collection was conducted from August 24th to September 1st, 2020 through an online survey. There were 34 women (68%) and 16 men (32%), with an average age of 21.8 years.

Ethical consideration

For the survey, the purpose and method of the study were explained, and the survey was conducted only with subjects who voluntarily participated and submitted voluntary consent.

Measurement

The importance of specialties within the nursing profession on post COVID-19

The field of nursing was surveyed based on 13 advanced nurse practitioner (APN) in Korea. [7] The importance of the role of each specialty was measured on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 point, "not very important" to 5 points, "very important."

Specialties in the nursing profession that need to expand their role on post COVID-19

Participants in the survey were asked to select three areas within the nursing profession that needed to expand their role on post COVID 19.

Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the PASW 22.0 program. Data analysis used descriptive statistics for percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

RESULTS

The importance of specialties within the nursing profession on post COVID-19

As a result of the importance of the role of nursing professionals, infection control, emergency, and critical care were all the highest among nursing specialties with 4.92 points (out of 5 points). In comparison, the areas that were relatively low were 3.84 points and 3.68 points (out of 5 points) in the anesthesia and oncology nursing areas. (Table1)

Table1. The score of importance in areas within the nursing profession

Specialty or area	Mean (sd)/range 1-5
Public health care nursing	4.80(0.57)
Anesthetic nursing	3.84(0.74)
Psychiatric nursing	4.48(0.58)
Home health care nursing	4.40(0.57)
Infection control nursing	4.92(0.27)
Industrial nursing	4.32(0.82)
Emergency nursing	4.92(0.27)
Gerontological nursing	4.84(0.47)
Critical care nursing	4.92(0.27)
Hospice care nursing	4.16(0.80)
Oncology nursing	3.68(0.80)
Clinical nursing	4.72(0.54)
Pediatric nursing	4.52(0.71)

Specialties in the nursing profession that need to expand their role on post-COVID-19

The areas that needed expansion of their role in the nursing profession post COVID-19 were infection control, emergency, and public health nursing, respectively (Table 2).

Table2. Ranking of nursing profession specialties that need to expand their role on post-COVID-19

specialty or area	ranking	response rate (%)
Infection control nursing	1	30.7%
Emergency nursing	2	20%
Public health care nursing	3	16%
Critical care nursing	4	9.3%
Clinical nursing	5	8.0%
Psychiatric nursing	6	6.7%
Gerontological nursing	7	5.3%
Hospice care nursing	8	2.7%
Home health care nursing	9	1.3%

DISCUSSION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of the role of medical professionals was recognized. The dedication of nurses caring for patients at the forefront of prevention and quarantine was reported through various media. Media reports have also influenced the establishment of roles and values for nursing students. [8-9]

As a result of this survey, respondents answered that the areas considered to be important within the nursing profession on post COVID-19 were infection control, emergency, and critical care nursing, respectively. This is thought to be due to the recognition of the importance of infectious disease prevention and patient management through various processes of COVID 19.

In addition, regarding areas within the nursing profession in need of expanding their role on post COVID-19, the respondents indicated infection control, emergency, and public health nursing,

respectively. It is thought that students also recognized the importance of expanding the role of infectious disease nursing due to the national demand for infectious disease crisis response and nursing management of infectious diseases. It is also the result of recognizing the importance of prompt treatment and nursing of patients, and the effective link between public health centers and primary care services in the community.

It is necessary to change the role of nursing professionals to be better suited for the new normal in the post COVID-19 era. In addition, nursing services need to undergo a paradigm shift in line with the trend of social change.

Study limitations

The data collection in this study was conducted by convenience sampling, therefore, it is necessary to not generalize the results of this study.

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