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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SELF-ESTEEM OF NURSING STUDENTS AND THE IMAGE OF NURSES

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ABSTRACT

The study was a descriptive correlation study in order to identify the self- esteem of nursing students and the image of nurses. This study selected subjects using the convenient sampling method targeting nursing students attending one health science college located in U city. The data collection was conducted from May 1 to May 31, 2017. Statistical analyses were performed using 118 copies of questionnaires. This study used mean, standard deviation, t-test, ANOVA, and ANOVA, Pearson's correlation using SPSS PC+ 18.0 for Windows. The results of this study showed that nursing students in health science has had relatively high self-esteem and their image of nurses was relatively high. Moreover, the results revealed that the image of nurses was higher when the self-esteem was higher. Therefore, it will be necessary to develop education programs that can establish the image of nurses for improving the self-esteem in order to create a desirable image of nurses.

KEYWORD: Nursing students, self-esteem, and the image of nurses.

INTRODUCTION
1. Need for the Study
Nursing professionals have provided nursing services based on many decades of researches and scientific knowledge. Moreover, they have played import roles such as advocators of patients, educators, caregivers, experts, and researchers.[1] However, some people still recognize nurses as passive aids, such as white-robed angels or doctors' assistants.[2]

An image means the impression received from an object or a person.[3] The image of nursing indicates how nurses and others (e.g., colleagues, the general public, patients, and families) think about nursing.[4] The image tends to exaggerate or underestimate reality, and it is biased, unscientific, and insecure because it is related to the subconsciousness like a stereotype.[5] However, it is as important in modern society as the fact.[5] Particularly, the image of a specific job not only affects the role and occupational view of people working in the field but also is an important factor in selecting a job.[6] Recent studies have shown that positive nursing images reduce the employee turnover rate of nurses and increase nursing performance[7] and nursing major selection.[8] On the other hand, negative nursing images damage self-esteem, belief, and value of nurses, negatively affect the performance efficiency, and decrease the job satisfaction.[9] Therefore, it is expected that the positive enhancement of the images of nurses in the course of nursing education would improve the performance of nursing roles and the socialization process that supports

the establishment of identity.[10] Moreover, it will help them have a positive view on themselves and be more proud of their profession who is a member of a medical team and contributes to enhancing public health.

Self-esteem is defined as positive or negative attitudes toward the self.[11] The low self-esteem of a nurse had a negative impact on his or her job performance.[12] It will be important to establish a positive image for nursing students to develop the nursing profession.

Therefore, the objectives of this study were to improve the social image of nursing study and provide the baseline data for establishing the foundation of intervention for constructing the desirable image of nurses by identifying and evaluating the relationship between the self-esteem of nursing students in the health science and the image of nurses.

2. Objective of Study
The objective of this study was to evaluate the relationship between the self- esteem of nursing students in the health science field and the image of nurses. The specific questions of this study are;
1) To understand the general characteristics of nursing students in the health science field;
2) To identify the degree of self-esteem and the image of nurses of nursing students in the health science field; and
3) To evaluate the relationship between the self-esteem of nursing students in the health science field and

the image of nurses.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
1. Experimental Design
This study was a descriptive correlation study in order to evaluate the relationship between self-esteem and the image of nurses targeting nursing students in the health science field.

2. Study Subjects and Data Collection
This study used convenient sampling targeting on the senior student majoring in nursing at a health department of a college located in U city from May 1 to May 31, 2017. This study excluded 12 copies of the questionnaire, which were not completed, out of 130 copies and used 118 copies for the final analysis. The minimum sample size was estimated as 109 subjects when the significance level, effect size, and power were set at .05, .15, and .90, respectively, using G * power program. Therefore, the same size of 118 subjects for this study did not have an issue in statistical power. The collected data were statistically analyzed using SPSS PC + 18.0 for Windows.

3. Study Tool
The structured questionnaire was used as a study tool. It was composed of 46 items: 7 items on general characteristics, 10 items on self-esteem, and 29 items on the image of nurses.

4. Ethical Considerations
Research assistants explained study subjects the objective and methodology of the study, the assurance of anonymity, and the rights of the participant in person before collecting data. Moreover, research assistants informed study subjects that they would be able to stop participating in the study whenever they wanted and there would be no disadvantage due to it. Study subject participated in the study voluntarily. The collected data would not be used except for the research purpose and the personal identification information of retrieved questionnaires was encrypted.

RESULTS
1. General Characteristics of Nursing Students in the Health Science Field The results showed that 92.4% of study subjects were females, which was a dominant gender. Moreover, students between 20 and 24 years old were 79.9%. The majority (66.1%) of subjects responded that none of their family members was a nurse and 72.9% indicated that they had a positive personality. Moreover, 79.7% of subjects responded that they were good at coping with the changes in a situation or an environment. Regarding the item asking the motivation for choosing the major, 35.6% of subjects said that they chose it because "It is easy to get a job after graduation", which was the majority. Additionally, 90.7% of them indicated that "The image of nurses was changed after they participated in a practical training" <Table 1>.

Table 1: General characteristics of subjects (n=118).

Characteristics	Classification	n(%)	t	p
Gender	Male Female	9(7.6) 109(92.4)	78.39	<.001
Age (year)	20-24 25-29 ≥30	94(79.7) 16(13.6) 2(1.7)	46.76	
Nurse in the family	Yes No	40(33.9) 78(66.1)	37.96	
Personality	Very positive Positive Negative	15(12.7) 86(72.9) 17(14.4)	41.92	
Adaptability to the changes in an environment or a situation	Very Good Good Not Good	9(7.6) 94(79.7) 15(12.7)	49.50	
Motivation for majoring in nursing	Interested in and like the major According to the entrance exam score Recommendation of a parent or a relative Easy to get a job after graduation It is a job to serve	33(28.0) 13(11.0) 19(16.1) 42(35.6) 11(9.3)	22.30	
Changes in the image of nurses after practical training	Yes No No Answer	107(90.7) 10(80.5) 1(0.7)	28.06	

2. Image of Nurses of Subjects
The score of the image of nurses in the health science field was 3.91±0.84 (mean±standard deviation) out of 5. In terms of sub-categories, the image of 'role' was the highest (3.99±0.83), followed by the image of 'talent' (3.96±0.80), the image of 'interpersonal relationship' (3.94±0.76), and the image of 'social participation' (3.76±0.95) <Table 2>.

Table 2: Score of study subjects' the image of nurses.

Image of Nurses	Number of Items	Mean±Standard Deviation (M±SD)	Range
Talent	9	3.99±0.83	1-5
Role	7	3.96±0.80	
Social Participation	7	3.94±0.76	
Interpersonal Relationship	6	3.76±0.95	
Total	29	3.91±0.84	

3. Self-Esteem Score of Nursing Students in the Health Science Field

The self-esteem score of nursing students in the health science field was 3.28±0.82 (mean±standard deviation). Among self-esteem items, "I hope I can respect myself more" had the highest score (3.76±0.79), followed by "I think I have a lot of good characters (3.47±0.89)" and ", and "I can work as well as most people (3.54±0.80)" <Table 3>.

Table 3: Self-esteem score of nursing students in the health science field.

Item	M±SD	Range
1. I believe I am not less valuable than others.	3.63±0.86	1-4
2. I hope I can respect myself more.	3.76±0.79	
3. I can work as well as most people.	3.54±0.80	
4. I think I am a mostly unsuccessful person.	3.14±.088	
5. I have a positive attitude towards myself.	3.42±0.84	
6. I think I have a lot of good characters.	3.47±0.89	
7. I sometimes think I am useless.	2.42±0.74	
8. I am generally satisfied with myself.	3.34±0.85	
9. I have little to be proud of myself.	3.09±0.71	
10. I sometimes think I am a bad person.	2.97±0.83	
Total	3.28±0.82	

4. Relationship between the self-esteem of nursing students and the image of nurses

The results of this study showed that the self-esteem of nursing students and the image of nurses are significantly correlated (r=.83, p<.001). The relationship between the self-esteem and the sub-categories of the image of nurses was in the order of 'role (r=.75, p<.001)', 'talent (r=.72, p<.001), 'interpersonal relationship (r=.74, p<.001)', and 'social participation (r=.66, p<.001)' <Table 4>.

Table 4: Relationship between the self-esteem of nursing students and the image of nurses.

	Image of Nurses				
	Total Score	Social Participation	Interpersonal Relationship	Role	Talent
	r(p)				
Self-Esteem	.83(<.001)	.66(<.001)	.74(<.001)	.75(<.001)	.72(<.001)

DISCUSSION

The objectives of this study were to evaluate the self-esteem and the image of nurses of nursing students in the health science field and to identify their relationship in order to enhance the social image of nursing science and establish the sound image of nurses.

The results of this study showed that the image of nurses perceived by nursing students in the health science field was 3.91 on average out of 5. It was higher than the result (3.10 on average) of Seo[17], who studies the nursing and health science subjects. A previous study revealed that the general public has a positive nurse image (83.4% positive response to 'possessing profession knowledge and skills').[18] Since the general public creates the image of nurses based on the stereotype formed by the mass media, it is necessary to actively publicize the positive experience and successful cases of nursing during the daily work and family life in order to establish a positive image of nursing.[19][20]

The results of this study revealed that, in terms of sub-categories of the image of nurses, the image of role had the highest score (M=3.99), followed by that of talent (M=3.96), that of interpersonal relationship (M=3.94), and that of social participation (M=3.76). The results were more positive results than Jang[14], who showed that the image of talent was the highest (M= 3.55), followed by that of interpersonal relationship (M=3.32), that of social participation (M=3.26), and that of role (M=2.89).

However, despite this positive image, nursing still has been reported as a difficult and stressful job.[21] The results concurred with the previous nurse image study on nursing student[22] reporting that subjects evaluated the image of nurses lower after a practical training. Nursing

students are professionals majoring in nursing who are required to perform important tasks in society as nurses after graduation. When they have a positive image of nurses, they can provide more creative and active professional nursing services. Consequently, it is necessary to develop a strategy that can enhance the confidence in the major.

The self-esteem related items of this study showed that "I hope I can respect myself more (M=3.76)" had the highest score, followed by "I think I have a lot of good characters (M=3.47)" and, "I can work as well as most people (M=3.54±0.80)". The results indicated that nursing students recognized, respected, and positively accepted themselves as human beings. The item with the lowest score was "I sometimes think I am useless (M=2.42)". A previous study reported that self-esteem is highly related to academic performance.[23] Therefore, nursing educators need to put efforts to develop nursing education programs that can increase self-esteem by improving academic achievement. Moreover, it was found that higher self-esteem had a more positive impact on the image of nurses. Consequently, in order to form a positive image of nurses for nursing students in the health science field, educational methods that can promote self-esteem should be sought.

Lastly, the results of this study should be interpreted carefully because this study was conducted by using the convenient sampling targeting college students studying health science at one local area.

CONCLUSIONS
The results of this study showed that the self-esteem of nursing students and the image of nurses were relatively high. Moreover, the image of nurses was higher when the self-esteem was higher. Therefore, it will be necessary to develop more educational programs that can enhance self-esteem in order to establish a desirable image of nurses for nursing students in the health science field.

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