

Applying the Havruta Learning Method to Nursing Education

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ABSTRACT

Background/Objectives: This study aims to nurture competitive nurses by applying the havruta learning method to nursing science classes and verifying the learning method's effects on the competencies of learners.

Method/Statistical Analysis: This study was conducted on 146 nursing students at Baekseok Culture University taking Community Nursing III and Nursing Management. Havruta-style paired discussion was applied during the 15-week curriculum and students submitted activity journals. This study was designed as a descriptive research study consisting of self-directed learning competency, discussion competency, individual and collective creativity and a satisfaction survey. Self-directed learning competency was measured through 45 questionnaire items across three criteria.

Findings: The results of this study show that among the 3 sub-criteria of self-directed learning, "learning practice" had the highest average score at 3.6 out of 5. The questionnaire item that scored the highest point(4.08) was "I complete tasks or work to see through to the end." The average score of discussion competency was 3.35 out of 5. Communication skill competency consisting of adaptation, argument, and non-verbal communication had the highest average score at 3.54, while prediction competency had the lowest average score at 3.18. The average total score of discussion competency was 35.38, which indicates "middle" discussion competency. In terms of individual creativity, the questionnaire item regarding "intrinsic task motivation" scored the highest at 3.91, and the average score of collective creativity was 3.56. Regarding satisfaction with the havruta learning method, the item "I would strongly recommend the havruta learning method to my juniors," scored the highest at 4.09.

Improvements/Applications: The new havruta learning method, focused on havruta-style paired discussion, needs to be applied to nursing classes of all school years with continuity so as to prove the effects of the learning method.

Keywords: *Havruta-style paired discussion, self-directed learning competency, discussion ability competency, individual creativity, collective creativity*

Introduction

Currently, universities are attempting to innovatively improve their curriculums by focusing on such topics as outcome-based education and a user-oriented education paradigm and responding to the fourth industrial revolution. In particular, the education accreditation system, including nursing science accreditation, is utilized as a major mechanism in the

innovation of higher education as the system is reflected in the evaluation index of government-funded support projects, led by the Ministry of Education^[1]. In the 21st century characterized by informatization, exponentially increasing knowledge, diversification and the need for lifelong education, learners are demanded to develop various competencies to effectively communicate using various communication media, such as the Internet and other information technologies, and to successfully adapt to fast-changing environments. Therefore, the education method in which all learners study in a uniform and passive manner is inappropriate. One of the most essential competencies learners need to develop is the ability to study in an autonomous and self-directed manner, while taking responsibility for their own learning procedures.

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Self-directed learning is based on the idea that education should help learners develop qualifications to respond more wisely and actively to the changing society^[2]. It is time for learners to change from passive learners to active and self-directed learners due to fast changes in the environments of society and deteriorating internal and external economic structures. Nursing college students will face changes in the environments when they become nurses. Low birthrate is a large concern in Korea, the aging population makes the medical environment more complex and increases customer demand for medical services, and the medical market seeks to develop competent nursing talent as hospital organizations pursue innovation and achievement.

Learners need to develop the competency to respond to the needs of customers, while exposed to various customers and various practical business environments. As members of society have more diverse faiths and arguments in an increasingly complex structure of society, conflicts and problems occur due to differences in opinions among different groups or individuals, and some previous studies have found that discussion is an effective way to reach a common agreement^[3,4]. Discussion is a way to derive a conclusion when people have different arguments about a given issue, and thus discussion enables people to explore rational methods while they understand and persuade opponents. Discussion competency includes not only communicative competency but also various other competencies seen in discussion activities. According to the analysis of a previous study on discussion competency and strategies, having a successful discussion requires expression competency, material analysis competency, argumentation competency, listening competency and adjustment/negotiation competency, and these competencies are components of discussion competency. This study shows how havruta-style discussion improves such discussion competency^[3].

College students will play major roles in the future of society and therefore, they need to develop the competency to solve problems through original ideas and creative thinking by creating new ideas and generating creative things, more than any other age groups. This means that universities need to prepare an educational environment for them to develop creative problem-solving abilities. It has been confirmed that creative classes and creative problem-solving classes are effective in improving the creativity and problem-solving abilities of college students^[5].

Creativity is one of the goals in education to prepare students for the future, and it is stressed as a key competency that learners should develop. Nurses are also required to develop problem-solving abilities through creative thinking, and creativity is considered an important job competency for nurses.

The above-mentioned self-directed learning competency, discussion competency and individual and collective creativity are key competencies that should be developed through university education.

This study intends to nurture nurses by applying the havruta learning method—a learning method that strengthens interaction between learners through questions and discussions—to the nursing science classes Community Nursing and Nursing Management and verifying the effects of the learning method on self-directed learning competency, discussion competency and individual and collective creativity, all of which are qualities nurses are required to develop. The havruta learning method will encourage nursing students to actively participation in class, help them develop broad thinking and gain competence as nurses in the future

Materials and Method

The study was conducted on 146 students at Baekseok Culture University taking Community Nursing and Nursing Management in the second semester of the third year. This study used a one-group, post-test research design, with the dependent variables consisting of the havruta learning method's effects on self-directed learning competency, discussion competency and individual and collective creativity and the level of satisfaction with the learning method among students.

Research Tools

Self-Directed Learning Competency: In this study, self-directed learning competency was measured through three sub-criteria: planning of learning, learning practice and learning assessment. For measurement, this study used the self-directed learning competency index, developed by Lee Seok-Jae et al.^[6]. Each questionnaire item was scored as either 5 (very often), 4 (often), 3 (usually), 2 (seldom) or 1 (very seldom) on a five-point Likert scale. In terms of Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability for these sub-criteria, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient averaged 0.87. Planning of learning was found to have a coefficient of 0.85; learning practice 0.87; and learning assessment 0.85.

Discussion Competency: The research tool used to measure discussion competency was developed by Park Se-hwan^[7] and was later revised and complemented by Jeong Seong-hong^[8]. “Communication skill competency” had four questionnaire items—two in adaptation, one in argument and one in non-verbal communication. “Critical thinking competency” had three items—one in problem definition competency, one in analysis competency and one in judgment competency. “Expectation competency” had two items, and “listening competency” had two items. Thus, “communication skill competency” had a total of 11 items. Each questionnaire item of discussion competency was scored as either 5(very much), 4(yes), 3(not sure), 2(no) or 1(hardly) on a five-point Likert scale, and the mean and standard deviation of each item were calculated. Individuals or groups with opposing views or opinions about a task have a discussion with knowledge that can affect others and that they put their knowledge forward in order to justify their beliefs, attitude, and values. Components of discussion competency include communication skill competency, critical thinking competency and listening competency. The highest possible total score of the discussion competency test was 55. Students with a total score of 30 or lower were categorized as the “low” discussion competency group; students with a score ranging from 31 to 40 as the “middle” discussion competency group; and students with a score of 41 or higher as the “high” discussion competency group.

Individual and Collective Creativity: Individual and collective creativity consisted of a total of 17 questionnaire items. Individual creativity consisted of three sub-criteria of expertise, creativity-related work and intrinsic task motivation, based on the componential theory of creativity suggested by Amabile^[9]. Individual creativity was measured through a total of 9 items. To evaluate individual creativity, a self-report method was used regarding creative actions and achievements^[10,11,12]. “Expertise” means knowledge, skills or talent in the field, and in this study, expertise was measured through

two items: “I think I have considerable talent in what I currently do,” and “I think I have a lot of specialized knowledge and experience in what I currently do.”

“Creativity-related work” means cognitive abilities and personality traits in relation to creative thinking. It was measured through three items, including, “I think I am good at coming up with original and novel ideas,” and, “I make new ideas by combining existing ideas.”

“Intrinsic task motivation” means basic attitude toward tasks, and this was measured through four items, including, “I am motivated by curiosity,” and, “I believe it is important for people to enjoy their work.”

“Collective creativity” means a group’s creative activities and its perception of the results. This was measured through eight items, including, “I think that my team (group) can solve problems considered difficult by other teams (groups) quite well”, “My team (group) can present a new and effective solution when a problem occurs,” and, “My team (group) derives many new ideas that have not been tried before.”

Each item was scored as either 5(very much), 4(yes), 3(not sure), (no) or 1(hardly) on a five-point Likert scale.

Satisfaction with the Havruta Learning Method: The content of five items, represented on a five-point Likert scale, were checked to examine students’ satisfaction with the havruta learning method.

Results and Discussion

The results of the analysis on self-directed learning competency show that among the sub-criteria, the “learning practice” area scored the highest average at 3.66 out of 5. Among the sub-factors, basic self-management competency scored the highest average at 3.79. The item with the highest score (4.08) was, “I complete tasks or work to see through to the end” [Table 1].

Table 1: Self-directed Learning Competency

Questionnaire item Sub-factor	Average	Competency factor	Average
Learning need Diagnosis	3.56	Planning for learning	3.56
Goal setting	3.58		
Examination of learning resources	3.54		
Basic self-management competency	3.79	Learning practice	3.66
Learning strategy selection	3.67		
Continuity of learning practice	3.51		
Effort attribution about results	3.55	Learning assessment	3.55
Self-introspection	3.54		

The results of the analysis on discussion competency show that the nursing students averaged 3.35 out of 5. Communication skill competency, consisting of adaptation, argument and non-verbal communication, scored the highest average at 3.54 among the sub-criteria. Prediction competency scored the lowest average at 3.18. The total average score was 35.38 [Table 2].

Table 2: Discussion competency

Classification	Questionnaire Item Content	Discussion Competency	
		Average	Total
Communication skill competency	Adaptation, argument, non-verbal communication	3.54	14.15
Critical thinking competency	Problem definition competency, analysis competency, judgment competency	3.38	10.14
Prediction competency	Prediction competency	3.18	5.91
Listening competency	Listening competency	3.28	5.18
Total		3.35	35.38

In terms of individual creativity, the “intrinsic task motivation” area scored the highest average at 3.91. The average score of collective creativity was 3.56 [Table 3].

Table 3: Individual and collective creativity

Classification	Questionnaire item content	Average
	Expertise	3.41
Individual creativity	Creativity-related work	3.48
	Intrinsic task motivation	3.91
Collective creativity		3.56

The overall level of satisfaction with the havruta learning method is shown in Table 4. The item with the highest average score (4.09 out of 5) was, “I would strongly recommend the havruta learning method to my juniors. The level of satisfaction with individual and collective creativity was found to be relatively low [Table 4].

Table 4: Satisfaction with the havruta learning method

Classification	Questionnaire Item Content	Average
1	The hivruta learning method improved my discussion competency.	4.02
2	The hivruta learning method improved my self-directed learning competency.	4.01
3	The hivruta learning method improved my creativity.	3.92
4	The hivruta learning method improved my team’s (group’s) creativity.	3.95
5	I would strongly recommend the havruta learning method to my juniors.	4.09

Conclusion

Under the theme “new challenge for a better future”, this teaching method research group verified the effects of the havruta learning method by applying it to nursing science classes attended by all students in the third year. It was found that there was an absolute need for various teaching methods in which individual learners are taken into account. The havruta learning method was applied

to nursing science classes in the first semester to derive the concept relating to the learning method’s effects. The derived concept was applied to nursing science classes in the second semester to verify the learning method’s effects regarding more specific content. This way, this study derived positive results regarding the application of the havruta learning method. A few suggestions can be made based on the results and implications of this study.

First, this study applied the havruta learning method, focused on paired discussion, to nursing science classes and verified its effects although the research period was short. During the research period, nursing students explored materials necessary to solve realistic problems at a time when most classes in the Nursing Department are operated in a traditional lecture style, focused on theory and cases. As a result, statistically significant results were found in the areas of self-directed learning competency, discussion competency and individual and collective creativity, and students' level of satisfaction with the havruta learning method was high. However, further research needs to be conducted by applying the havruta learning method in all college years at the same time or with continuity during students' college years.

Second, it is considered somewhat inadequate to check statistically significant changes in self-directed learning competency, discussion competency and individual and collective creativity that appear in a short period of time. Although the students had higher scores in this study than in other studies conducted on college students, it seems somewhat inadequate to generalize the results of this study. Consequently, further research is required to continuously verify the effects by extending the research period when self-directed learning competency, discussion competency and individual and collective creativity are applied in classes for one year or longer.

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