

Effects of Health Perception, Generativity, and Wisdom on Job Competency of Korean Care Workers

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to produce fundamental materials for nursing intervention development for care workers' job competency enhancement by analyzing impact of care workers' health perception, generativity and wisdom on job competency.

Methods: Data was collected by means of self-report questionnaire with ethical considerations from 116 care workers at two nursing homes and one care worker center in D Borough in D City, two nursing homes in J Borough, and one nursing home in S Borough. The collected data was then analyzed by frequency scale, mean, standard deviation, t-test, ANOVA, Pearson correlational coefficients, and stepwise multiple regression.

Results: The care workers' health perception scored 3.86 points out of 5 points, generativity scored 2.75 points out of 4 points, and wisdom scored 3.49 points out of 5 points, and job competency scored 3.79 points out of 5 points. The job competency of care workers was a moderate positive correlation with health perception ($r=.49$, $p<.001$), generativity ($r=.34$, $p<.001$), wisdom ($r=.47$, $p<.001$). The health perception ($\beta=.346$, $p<.001$) of care workers had a significant influence on job competency. Health perception, wisdom and work experience of care workers explained 39.6% of job competency.

Conclusion: Care workers should be provided with environmental and institutional strategies for constant service provision without career disruption. Job competency affected by care workers' health, wisdom and work experience, therefore, regular check-up and spur for maintenance of good health are required, in addition to constant refresher and capability enhancement education for extended wisdom on caring and life in daily lives. On top of that, a capability management program should be developed in consideration of the said factors. Job competency increased in proportion to work years in elder caring, therefore, institutional management of manpower is needed in policy-level.

Keywords: Health perception, Generativity, Wisdom, Job competency, Care workers

Introduction

The country's current population is 51,635,000 as of 2018 and expected to increase until otherwise in 2031, while the current population over age 65, which is 7,381,000, is expected to increase until 2050 (18,813,000). Given the rapid population ageing, the elderly over age 65 is forecasted to reach 41.0% in 2060¹ from 14.3% in 2018. Accordingly, there has been a need of health and welfare policies for the elderly called out to date, especially of high-quality services of health and

medical employees for elderly's better health and life quality.

In this regard, the country implemented the National Long-Term Care Insurance in 2008 whereby complimentary caring is provided to the elderly of great age or with a senile disease struggling in daily lives to assist in housework and physical activities in order to help improve their health and life in later years, and also ease burden on their families to ultimately enhance the national quality of life, and has been reinforcing medical

and nursing service, day and night caring service, senior welfare centers and elderly care facilities for those over age 65 annually.¹ Professional nursing centers, elder care hospitals and educational institutions have devoted to cultivating care workers as the professionals to provide quality in-home services

Care workers' job competency can be seen as a worker's capability to provide efficient in-home care services using its acquired skills and knowledge as internalized with its own values and job attitude. Internalization processes differently by individual, and thus the quality of service appears differently depending on how the worker internalizes its acquired skills and knowledge upon its own values and attitudes when rendering care services². Simply put, care workers' job competency is an integral of worker's set of values, attitude, knowledge and skills.

Impact factors on enhancement of care workers' job competency will vary, although the primary should be worker's subjective perception of its own health. The subjective health perception is an overall wellness of physical, psychological and social functional ability³, being neutral between human and environment, with an ability to adapt to environment, perform social tasks and roles⁴. Hence, positive self-perception of health is seen to reduce work stress and enhance job competency.

According to Erikson's human development and life cycle theory, generativity is an adult's ability to self-survive and create fruits and thoughts that will outlast for next generations as it looks after families, society and system, maintains and succeeds cultural tradition, and also an affection to nurture and lead next generations.⁵ Generativity ideally arouses one's passion and resolution to provide a guidance outside the range of caring, nurturing and family, and takes a form of advice, teaching, guidance and volunteer activity in work place and local community. Accordingly, an individual with high generativity is influential on others with desirable results.⁶ Most care workers are falling in the middle-aged bracket, whose development task is achievement of generativity. Generativity is also considered an essential element and value for care workers' job competency enhancement given its attributes.

A research on job competency of 120 care workers at elders nursing home⁷ revealed wisdom as the most influential factor on job competency. A wise man has problem-solving capability and insights to embrace life

and build a stronger relationship with others. As wisdom refers to, in cognitive terms, keen eyes, insights and exceptional judgement, while in private terms, balanced integration and consonance of ego⁸, a wise care worker assumes positive attitude and performs impartial, empathic communication in elder caring.

Therefore, this study attempts to identify impact factors on enhancement of care workers' job competency after defining the degree of health perception, generativity and wisdom in respect of the level of job competency.

Method

Subjects: The subjects of this study are 116 care workers with more than 6 months of work experience selected from two nursing homes and one care worker education center in D Borough in D City, two nursing homes in J Borough and one nursing home in S Borough. All participation was made voluntarily by grownup male and female workers upon their understanding of purpose of this study as submitted with written consent. As the least number of samples for 5 predictors, effect size 0.15, significance level 0.05 and power 0.90 was calculated to be 116 by G-power 3.1.9.4 program, but given elimination rate 10%, a total of 128 workers were surveyed initially, with those with less than 6 months of work experience excluded later on, leaving the final number to be 116. Ahead of the survey, the participants were informed of this study's purpose and survey method, that the survey results would be anonymized as confidential and be only used for study purpose. They submitted a study participation acceptance form, knowing participation could be revoked anytime if desired.

Instruments

Health perception: The Korean version of THI (Todai Health Index)⁹, developed by Health Department of Tokyo University Medical School, was used as amended and supplemented for this study. The tool consisted of 30 questions across 4 sections-physical, psychological, spiritual and social. Using a 5 point Likert scale, a higher score indicated a better condition of health perceived. For this study's reliability, Cronbach's α was shown .94.

Generativity: LGS (Loyola Generativity Scale), developed by McAdams and Aubin¹⁰, used by Hong¹¹, was employed as amended for this study. It consisted of 19 questions on such concepts as teaching, knowledge

transfer, positive contribution to society, caring and responsibility for others, creativity and productivity, sustainable legacy. Using a 4 point Likert scale, a higher score indicated a higher level of generativity. For research reliability, Cronbach's α of this study was shown .79.

Wisdom: Korean Men's Wisdom Scale (KMWS), developed by Kim¹² was used. It consisted of 43 questions across 4 sectors of cognitive ability, refinement and balance, positive attitude toward life, empathic interpersonal relationship. Using a 5 point Likert scale, a higher score indicated a higher level of wisdom. For research reliability, Cronbach's α of this study was shown .97.

Job competency: National Capability Standard (NCS), restructured for care workers by Lee¹³ was used. It consists of 24 questions on communication capability, problem-solving capability, self-development capability, interpersonal relationship capability, technique capability and professional ethic capability. Using a 5 point Likert scale, a higher score indicated a higher degree of job competency. For research reliability, Cronbach's α of this study was shown .94.

Data collection: The researchers of this study visited 5 nursing homes and 1 care worker education center in D City to provide explanation on the purpose of this study to care workers directly after getting approval of the center head and manager upon explanation of the purpose and method of this study. Written consent was submitted by participants ahead of survey for data collection.

Ethical consideration: Approval was acquired by the ethics committee of K University on the objective, methodology and protection of rights of study participants (KNU_IRB_2019-90). During the study period the guidelines on ethical studies were observed.

Data analysis: Using the SPSS/WIN 23.0 program, the general characteristics and variables were analyzed for frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The difference in job competency across different general characteristics was analyzed using a t-test, ANOVA and Scheffe test. The correlation between care workers' variables was analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficients. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to analyze the factors affecting the subjects' job competency.

Results

General Characteristics of Korean Care Workers

The average age of 116 care workers was 57.43 ± 0.51 , with the majority in the age bracket of 50-59 (44.0%). Female care workers accounted for most (112 people, 96.6%). For educational background, 93 had a minimum high school education (80.2%). The average years of work experience was 42.5 ± 33.20 months, with 47 workers less than 24 months (40.5%). The majority of respondents had received 1 or more refresher education or professional education for the past one year (85 people, 73.3%). More than a half earned less than KRW1 million (73 people, 62.9%). For the form of job, in-home care service job took up the majority (112 people, 96.6%). Those who care one person a day were 62 (53.4%).

Degree of Health Perception, Generativity, Wisdom and Job Competency in Korean Care Workers:

Korean care workers' health perception scored 3.86 points out of 5 points, generativity scored 2.75 points out of 4 points, and wisdom scored 3.49 points out of 5 points, and job competency scored 3.79 points out of 5 points (Table 1).

Table 1. Degree of Health Perception, Generativity, Wisdom and Job Competency in Korean Care Workers

Variables	M \pm SD	Range
Health perception	3.86 \pm 0.51	1~5
Generativity	2.75 \pm 0.32	1~4
Wisdom	3.49 \pm 0.50	1~5
Job competency	3.79 \pm 0.48	1~5

Difference in Job Competency across General Characteristics

Comparative analysis of job competency According to general characteristics found that work years ($F=5.19, p=.007$) and form of job ($t=4.38, p=.016$) make differences in job competency: A group of people with more than 5 years of work experience showed a higher level of job competency than a group with years between 2 and 5; a group of people who provide in-home care

service showed a higher level of job competency than a group on shifts at institutions.

Correlation between Perceived Health Perception, Generativity, Wisdom and Job Competency in Care Workers

The job competency of Korean care workers was a moderate positive correlation with health perception ($r=.49$, $p<.001$), generativity ($r=.34$, $p<.001$), wisdom ($r=.47$, $p<.001$) (Table 2).

Table 2. Correlation between Health Perception, Generativity, and Wisdom on Job Competency in Korean Care Workers

Variables	Health perception r(p)	Generativity r(p)	Wisdom r(p)	Job competency r(p)
Health perception	1			
Generativity	.43(<.001)	1		
Wisdom	.43(<.001)	.45(<.001)	1	
Job competency	.49(<.001)	.34(<.001)	.47(<.001)	1

Factors affecting Job Competency in Korean Care Workers

To find out the factors affecting the job competency of Korean care workers was conducted multiple regression analysis by the stepwise method with health perception, generativity, and wisdom as independent variables, and work experience and type of working agency among general characteristics. The problem of multicollinearity expected in the multiple regression analysis was 0.1 or higher with the tolerance limit of 0.533~0.785, and the variance inflation factors (VIF) was 1.274~1.877 that did not exceed the standard of 10 or higher, so there was no problem of multicollinearity. Also, the Durbin-Watson value was 1.795, with no problem of autocorrelation. The analysis showed that health perception ($\beta=.346$, $p<.001$) had a high influence on the job competency of Korean care workers and As it shows explanation power of 39.6%, showed that the higher the degree of health perception and wisdom, and the longer of work experience, the higher the job competency is. Health perception, wisdom and work experience were the variables affecting the job competency of Korean care workers (Table 3).

Table 3. Factors affecting Job Competency in Korean Care Workers

Variables	B	SE	β	t	p
Constant	1.552	.341		4.554	<.001
Health perception	.330	.080	.346	4.138	<.001
Wisdom	.347	.082	.353	4.246	<.001
Work experience (25~60 months)	-.368	.099	-.375	-3.735	<.001
Work experience (over 61 months)	-.261	.100	-.264	-2.615	.010
R ² =.396 Adj. R ² =.375 F=18.218 p<.001					

Reference: work experience (less than 24 months)

Discussion

This study's job competency was shown 3.79 out of 5 possible, similarly to that of Kim's² research (3.68±0.51) on 217 in-home service care workers. These levels are merely modest, requiring improvement. Generativity was shown 2.75 out of 4 possible, also moderate and similar to that of Hong¹¹'s research (2.70±0.42) on adults in senescence. The average age of this study's subjects was 57.4, with the majority over age 50, whose development task should be considered generativity achievement. According to McAdams & Aubin¹⁰, an adult fosters, educates, leads and promotes a progressive spirit of next generation and attains generation of products and fruition of life beneficial to social systems, i.e., generativity. Generativity is a drive for one's better perception of itself and its own life to help assess oneself more positively and meaningfully. People with more generativity associated resources and abilities tend to be more supportive for others and feel more responsibility for society.¹¹ Generativity is deemed the main concept to motivate in care workers' job performance who are mostly middle-aged, therefore, they should be aided with a chance of improvement.

This study found that job competency had pure correlations with health perception, generativity, and wisdom, while impact factors on job competency as health perception, wisdom and work experience. Subjective perception of good health is a comprehensive self-evaluation in physical, physiological, psychological and social terms where health is the key element of every life. Generativity is also a main element of caring for others.¹¹ Wisdom is another essential element of care workers' performance as a wise man displays comprehension, communication skill, competence, interpersonal relationship and social humbleness.¹⁴ Therefore, it is always needed to consider and devise measures to improve the said concepts for enhancement of care workers' job competency. On top of that, care workers should make daily efforts to stay fit through regular check-up and to make early detection of possible disease for timely treatment, and further to nurture wisdom while constantly pursuing relevant job experiences for extended knowledge and skills. There should also be institutional aids; local governments, educational institutions and practical affair institutions should exert best possible endeavors to achieve job competency improvement and quality environment formation.

Conclusions

For enhancement of care workers' job competency, daily care for health management is needed, for early detection of possible disease for timely treatment as well. They should endeavor to increase generativity, the development task of the middle-aged, and to live a wise life individually. As this study finds health perception, wisdom and work experience as the main impact factors of job competency, care workers should be provided with a chance to improve their knowledge and skill for continued caring service without career disruption, assisted by job capability enhancement programs and quality environment devised by their employer institutions in consideration of the said elements, health, wisdom and generativity.

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Conflict of Interest: Nil

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