

# Influence of nursing Students' satisfaction with their major, self-identity, and social support on their career identity

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**Abstract.** This study aims to determine the correlation among nursing students' major satisfaction, self-identity, social support, and career identity. A survey was carried out with 120 sophomore nursing students in K University in D city from December 4 to 17 in 2013. It is necessary to establish a campus career support program that can support the improvement of nursing students' major satisfaction, self-identity, social support, and career identity and to pursue continued research efforts to verify its effectiveness.

**Keywords:** satisfaction, self-identity, social support, career identity

## 1 Introduction

As nurses play a pivotal role as health professionals, it is of utmost importance to build a foundation for their development into healthy members of society when they are students by helping them learn the required role and professional abilities and adapt well to school. Choosing a major is very important for a future career, but nursing students' major and curriculum are already set, and their choice of career is already set upon entering the university; they lack an opportunity to search for a major on their own due to high employment rates [1].

Career is very important to individuals and changes throughout their lives, so they should carefully consider before and after making a career choice in order to have a successful career. Undergraduate years are more important for career decisions than any other time since, at that time, individuals decide on a career based on their aptitude and interest and are enabled to have a self-realization [2].

Self-identity, a beneficial factor in making a career decision, refers to an individual developing the self-awareness that they are different from others [3], and positive

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self-identity determines behaviors incarnating self-realization. It is expected to lead to successful performance of actions required to get a result and is inferred to be related to an individual's successful career search and career decision.

According to previous studies, humans are social beings who live through interactions with others and have a tendency to use the resources provided by others to aid in psychological adjustment and strengthen problem solving. Therefore, social support has been reported as one of the relevant factors for students' career decisions [4].

Along with this, recent interest and discussion on career identity, suggested as a relevant factor for career decision, started to uncover the reason for the social phenomenon of an insufficient number of nurses in clinical settings: early occupation change for nursing graduates who did not adjust to their field of employment after graduation [5]. In response to this need, this study aims to establish a basis for nursing students to succeed in school and adapt to their major as well as for developing a career and vocational guidance program by understanding the correlation among nursing students' major satisfaction, self-identity, social support, and career identity.

## **2 Materials and Methods**

### **2.1 Study Design**

This is a descriptive study aiming to determine the relationship among the levels and variables of nursing students' major satisfaction, self-identity, social support, and career identity and to identify factors affecting career identity.

### **2.2 Sampling and Data Collection**

Among the nursing undergraduates in K university in D city, the questionnaire was distributed to a total of 135 nursing sophomores who understood the purpose of this study and wanted to participate voluntarily using G Power 3.10 program with the effect size .15, significance level ( $\alpha$ ) = .05, and power ( $1-\beta$ ) = .80. Of these, 125 students' questionnaires were returned, and 5 unreliable responses were excluded; 120 were included in the final analysis.

### **2.3 Instruments**

There were 26 questions regarding the level of major satisfaction on a 5-point scale; their reliability in this study was Cronbach's  $\alpha=.95$ . There were 48 questions regarding self-identity, each on a 5-point scale; their reliability in this study was Cronbach's  $\alpha=.88$ . Social support questions were on a 5-point scale, and their reliability in this study was Chronbach's  $\alpha=.96$ . The tool for career identity consisted of a total of 18 questions, each on a 4-point scale; its reliability in this study was Cronbach's  $\alpha=.92$ .

## **2.4 Data Analysis**

The frequency, percentage, average, and standard deviation were obtained by analyzing the collected data using the SPSS Win 18.0 program, and differences in major satisfaction, self-identity, social support, and career identity based upon participants' general characteristics were analyzed using t-test and one-way ANOVA. Tukey's test was used for a multiple comparison. The relationship among major satisfaction, self-identity, social support, and career identity was analyzed with Pearson's correlation coefficients, and a multiple regression analysis was used as a final analysis to verify predictors explaining career identity.

## **3 Results**

### **3.1 General Characteristics of the Participants**

In terms of gender, 116 participants (96.7%) were female, and the majority (102 participants, 85.0%) fell between 20 and 21 years of age. In terms of region of origin, 49 participants (40.8%) were from Daejeon. For reason for applying for the nursing department, 43 students (35.8%) replied that it was an interest in nursing and 41 participants (34.2%) replied that it was in consideration of employment. In terms of satisfaction with entering into the nursing department, the majority (70 participants, 58.3%) replied "high."

### **3.2 Level of the Participants' Satisfaction with the Major, Self-identity, Social Support, and Career Identity**

Out of a total score of 5, the participants' major satisfaction was 3.86, self-identity was 2.95, and social support was 4.23; career identity was the lowest at 2.47.

### **3.3 Level of Major Satisfaction, Self-identity, Social Support, and Career Identity Based on the Participants' General Characteristics**

The difference in the level of major satisfaction based on general characteristics was examined, and the results showed a significant difference in age, current residential status, reason for application, satisfaction with entering into the nursing department, and criteria for choosing a hospital. Of the general characteristics, the age result confirms that participants younger than 20 had higher major satisfaction than did participants between 20 and 21.

### **3.4 Relationship among the Participants' Major Satisfaction, Self-identity, Social Support, and Career Identity**

The results showed that participants' major satisfaction had a significant static correlation with social support ( $r=.367, p<0.01$ ) and career identity ( $r=.260, p<0.01$ ), self-identity had a significant static correlation with career identity ( $r=.441, p<0.01$ ), and social support had a significant static correlation with career identity ( $r=.210, p<0.05$ ).

### **3.5 Factors Affecting the Participants' Career Identity**

Factors with a significant effect on career identity are level of major satisfaction ( $\beta=.302, p<.001$ ) and self-identity ( $\beta=.478, p<.000$ ); 30.2% of career identity was explained by the level of major satisfaction and self-identity .

## **4 Discussions and Conclusion**

It is necessary to establish a campus career support program that can explain and support the relationship among nursing students' major satisfaction, self-identity, social support, and career identity and to pursue continued research efforts to verify its effectiveness.

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