**Action Research on Integrating "Design Thinking: Empathy Experience" into Human Development Courses to Enhance Students' Empathy**

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**Abstract**

*Human Development courses primarily explore the developmental stages of the human lifespan from a developmental psychology perspective. However, due to the decrease in birth rates and changes in family structures, students in a Junior College often lack real-life experiences with newborns and infants. Even if they live with their parents or grandparents, their opportunities for meaningful communication are limited, let alone understanding the physical, psychological, cognitive, and role transitions during the middle and old age stages. Caring is the essence of nursing and a core component of nursing education, where empathy is a crucial concept. For nursing personnel facing complex and diverse clinical situations, the appropriate use of empathy aids in establishing and maintaining patient-caregiver relationships, thereby enhancing the quality of professional care. Nursing students who cannot empathize with the transitions or needs at various life stages may struggle to care deeply, empathize, and perceive the situations of patients in the workplace. This study aims to explore the impact of " Empathy Experience and Design " integrated into the Human Development course on students' empathy, to understand whether it enables students to observe and comprehend the physiological development, behavioral characteristics, cognitive and psychosocial development, and common issues of these developmental stages, and to apply their learning experiences in clinical care. Using action research methodology, the study targets sophomore nursing students at a Junior College in central Taiwan, collecting data through student reflection reports, focus group interviews, and empathy scale assessments. Qualitative data were analyzed using open coding, and quantitative data from the scales were analyzed to assess the impact of " Empathy Experience and Design " on students' empathy.*

**Keywords**

Empathy, Human Development, Nursing Students, Action Research