Prospects and Challenges of Women’s Health Nursing Practicum
Seonho Kim*

Department of Nursing, Chungbuk National University, Cheongju, Korea

In Korea, the birth rate has been steadily decreasing since the 2000s. Recently, the birth rate has been declining rapidly, and the expected number of children a woman of childbearing age will give birth to in her lifetime is not even one. According to the report by Statistics Korea, the total fertility rate in the third quarter of 2023 is 0.7 (Statistics Korea, 2023). This represents the lowest birth rate among OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries. The problem of declining birth rates causes problems throughout society, such as population decline. In addition, it is creating many challenges and tasks in women’s health practicum. The number of deliveries is insufficient due to the decline in birth rates. So, there are not enough hospitals for practical training. And the awareness of the rights of mothers and their families has been increased. Therefore, the students lack experience in observing childbirth. For this reason, it is challenging to effectively provide students with women’s health practice education in clinical settings. As marriage is delayed for socio-economic reasons and the proportion of pregnant women at high risk over 35 years is increasing, the role and responsibility of nurses are becoming more important than in the past. Effective practical education should be provided to manage prenatal care and high-risk deliveries. The purpose of maternity & women’s health nursing is to provide high quality nursing care and clinical practice education. Clinical practice education that integrates skills and attitudes is crucial because it can provide necessary nursing care to pregnant women.

Simulation-based practice is a great method to complement insufficient clinical practice education. Simulation-based training is conducted after setting up a clinical environment similar to a hospital delivery room. To facilitate simulation training, it is necessary to develop various scenarios that reflect clinical situations and to utilize new technologies. Recently, virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) simulation education have been introduced and applied with the advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) technology of the 4th Industrial Revolution. It was found that web-based VR practice was effective because nursing students were unable to do clinical practice in hospitals during the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic. Simulation-based training has advantages in many aspects. Nursing students can engage in repetitive practice with scenarios in the simulation room. They can cultivate critical thinking, communication skills, clinical performance skills, and problem-solving abilities (Park & Kwak, 2022). In addition, there is an effect of reflective learning through the debriefing process (Lee & Kim, 2019). Because of these points, the importance of simulation-based practice is becoming even greater.

Future tasks for effective simulation-based practice are as follows: First, it is important to create simulation facilities that closely resemble the clinical setting. To achieve this, financial support must be provided to improve the simulation practice environment. Second, simulation scenarios based on various clinical cases must be developed. Third, It is important to actively utilize the technological advancements of the 4th Industrial Revolution in simulation practice. We need to expand the development of content using VR and AR techno-
logies and utilize them in various simulation-based practice. Forth, to ensure the homogeneity of standardized patients, systematic and standardized guidelines need to be established for standardized patient education. Fifth, in the future, multidisciplinary cooperation is needed to enable integrated simulation practice in which students from various healthcare fields participate together.

REFERENCES