

# **A Study on The Development of Nurse Uniform Design**

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## **I . Introduction**

The very first nursing suit was born under the influence of clothes of the Catholic nuns and Quakers. The nursing suit was made into a uniform after the 19th century<sup>1)</sup>, and as time passed, more changes such as the use of cap<sup>2)</sup> were attempted until the existing nursing suit has fixed in place<sup>3)-5)</sup>.

The current nurse uniform has deviated from simply a characteristic expression of a specified group, it became more symbolic and now it is emphasizing the functional and aesthetic parts.

Especially the uniform of a nurse requires neat and classical feature, as written in ethical principles, in order to keep the pride as a professional, and also need to be active and stable to give good influences on the patients<sup>6)</sup>.

Therefore the purpose of this study is to examine the consciousness of the three groups - nurses, doctors and patients - and check out the satisfaction of the current design of the nurse uniform, and also clarify the preference trend for a new one, in order to suggest a new design which is more individual and efficient to conform to the social trend and the needs of the medical team.

## **II . The method of study and process**

### **1. Survey research**

#### **1) Target of survey**

The research on the present uniform is based on surveys of 160 nurses actually wearing the uniforms. And the research on the new uniform design is based on surveys of nurses and 140 doctors and 129 patients, who closely contact with the nurses at the hospitals. This research surveyed both the group of persons wearing the uniform and the group of persons observing them at the workplace.

The sample was drawn from the medical staffs and patients of hospital complexes and medical facilities located in Seoul and Seoul Metropolitan Areas.

#### **2) survey administration**

The questionnaire were distributed and self-administered by the respondents, and research assistants directly interviewed some of the respondents.

#### **3) content of survey**

First, Survey items include general characteristics of nurses including types of hospitals, affiliated departments, ranks, kinds of works. Regarding the present uniforms, type of design, degree of satisfaction to the uniform, presence of seasonal differentiation, presence of rank differentiation, color, satisfaction to materials are surveyed. Lastly, regarding the development of new uniform design, type of desirable item mix, color preference, whether they want to differentiate according to ranks and season are surveyed.

## **2. Recommendation for design**

Based on the survey results, three new designs are designed and recommended.

## **III. Results and Discussion**

### **1. current uniform design for nurse and satisfaction level**

Survey target were nurses working at hospital complexes and quasi-hospital complexes located at Seoul. They include various ranks and duties. They also include both inpatient and outpatient nurses <Table 1>.

The uniform of the nurses at the time was mostly combined by 'top + slacks', followed by 'top + skirt', and 'one-piece dress'<Table 2>. I guess this is of the purpose of making the most of the functional part of the nurse duty.

As investigated the designs by details, the upper garment mostly had a princess line cut on the neckline and pockets on each side of the bodice, and a half-length sleeve without cuffs. In case of the skirt, knee-length H silhouette was most popular, which had pockets on each side of the waist, and used buttons for fastenings. Slacks were generally a basic silhouette with pockets on each seam sides<Table 3>.

The purchase form of the uniform was usually done with the shoes, and generally the hospital made the order collectively and offered them to the nurses. And relatively there were more cases of buying custom-made uniforms, than a ready-made suit. <Table 4>.

Meanwhile, there were many cases that they wore different uniforms seasonally, but there were no basic changes such as the length of the sleeve or changes of the material, only some passive disposals by wearing an outer garment such as jackets or cardigans on top <Table 5>.

The uniforms also mostly had a classification by the positions of the nurses<Table 6>.

The color of the uniform was mostly white or pink, and there were several which had some printed patterns on the suit <Table 7>.

About the fabric, many of the people answered that the touch is prickly or rough, the ability of keeping warmth is not good, but ventilates well and absorbs moisture<Table 8>.

About the subject of laundry matters, most of the people were washing the garment once a week in average. Most answered that it is easy to wash, but the spots and stains don't easily get off. Also, after the washing, there were not many transformation of length, but several of width<Table 9>.

## 2. Tendency of a new uniform design.

The research for the new uniform design was executed on the nurses, doctors, and patients. As a result of the research of the satisfaction of the current uniform, the two groups - nurses and patients - with the exception of the doctors, were mostly dissatisfied<Table 11>. The preferred form of the uniform was 'top + slacks' on all three groups <Table 12>.

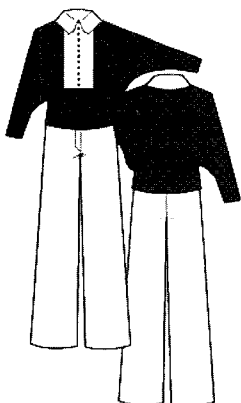
On the detailed design, peculiarly both the top and the bottom needed pockets, not so different from the existing uniform<Table 13>. In case of the color, the doctors and patients preferred white or pink, but the nurses preferred various colors<Table 14>.

About the classification by the positions, doctors and patients absolutely answered that it is necessary, but most of the nurses did not. It seems that the opinion of the hygienists and nurse's aids were reflected on this item<Table 15>. All of the three groups agreed that the classification by the duty of the nurses such as outpatient and inpatient are necessary<Table 16>.

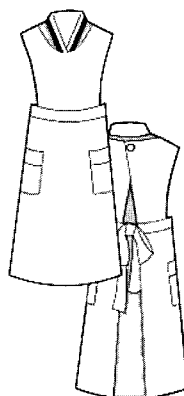
## IV. conclusion

This research attempted to recommend individualized and efficient nurse's uniform designs that conform new trends and correspond with the demands of medical staffs and patients. The survey results showed that the level of satisfaction to the current uniform by the groups of nurses and patients was very low. As for the preference for new design, they prefer the basic design that does not radically different from the current one. But as for the details, they emphasize the needs of pockets. They also prefer differentiation of design based on ranks and types of work.

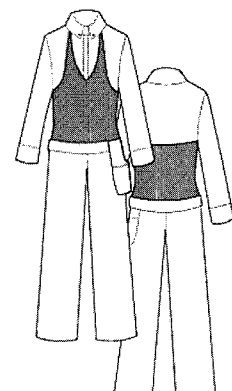
Therefore, the researcher recommended different uniform designs for inpatient nurses and outpatient nurses (Fig 1 and 2). For the hygienists and nurse's aids, the researcher recommended wearing apron to differentiate from nurses(Fig 3).



<Fig 1> Inpatient Nurses Uniform



<Fig 2> Outpatient Nurses Uniform



<Fig 3> The Hygienists and Nurse's Aids

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