

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PERSONAL FACTORS, EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, AND PSYCHOSOCIAL ENVIRONMENT WITH MORAL REASONING OF NURSING STUDENTS OF PRACHOMKLAO COLLEGE OF NURSING, PHETCHABURI PROVINCE, THAILAND

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Abstract

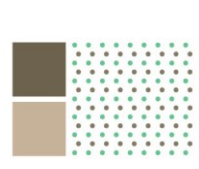
This descriptive research aimed to study the relationships between personal factors, extra-curricular activities, and psychosocial environment with moral reasoning of Thai nursing students Prachomklao College of Nursing Phetchaburi province, Thailand. The sample group consisted of 282 nursing students in Bachelor of Nursing Science Program of Prachomklao College of Nursing, Phetchaburi province. The research instrument consisted of personal data, moral reasoning, extra-curricular activities and psychosocial environment questionnaires. The instrument reliability was tested by Cronbach's alpha coefficient in 0.89, 0.87, and 0.88 respectively. Mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient were employed in data analysis. The results were as follows: 1) The moral reasoning of nursing students was at level 5. 2) The mean of professional nursing value and psychosocial environment were at high level. Most nursing students (30.73%) were the members of environment conservation club. The average time of club activity participation was about 1 hour per week (68.47%). 3) There were positive significant relationships between psychosocial environment, mean time for joining in club activities, preservative environment club, Bhuddist club, professional nursing value, and moral reasoning of nursing student at 0.05 level ($r = 0.402, 0.238, 0.197, 0.181, \text{ and } 0.157$). According to the research results, the researchers suggested that the promotion of nursing students' participation in the extra-curricular activities, arrangement of appropriate time for extra-curricular activities, and development of moral reasoning in Nursing Program were crucial.

Keywords: moral reasoning, personal factors, extra-curricular activities, psychosocial environment

Introduction

Due to the trust of society toward nursing services, the ethical practice of nursing students should be developed according to social expectation and professional nursing value (Auvinen et al.2004). In particular, moral reasoning of nursing is deserved to be studied to explore whether the nursing students apply moral reasoning in decision making. The results will be a fundamental data to set up program facilitating nursing students' moral reasoning development.

Prachomklao College of Nursing, Phetchaburi province is a college under the auspices of Praboromarajchanok Institute (PI), Ministry of Public Health, Thailand. PI manages college-level nursing education in order to provide qualified nurses with professional knowledge,



ability to provide health services, incorporation with communities, moral and leadership skills for reasonable decision making. Therefore, various extra-curricular activities should be available for the development of nursing students' attitude and moral reasoning. In 2010, nursing students with inappropriate behaviors (3.73%), late returning to the dormitory (0.47%), leaving the college without the permission (0.44%), failing to attend the clinical practice sessions (0.02%) and test cheat, etc. are found (Student Activities Group 2009). All these inappropriate behaviors are unreasonable actions. Therefore, the researchers are interested in studying moral reasoning of nursing students and how the seniority may affect moral reasoning level. Professional nursing value has an important role in decision making of each person (Soile 2006). When facing a conflict of moral dilemmas, nursing students with good ability to solve them will have good professional value.

Moreover, the psychosocial environment such as the teachers' assistance, advice and solutions may foster students' development of their caring value and attribution of responsibility to become the effective nurses. The group support of students and friends is also influential because the students may follow the good behaviors of their classmates (Rhonda 2012). Behavioral imitation among the students staying in the dormitories of nursing colleges and the senior students' influence on thinking and decision-making process of nursing students are also found. (Raines 2000)

According to this research finding, the researchers are thus interested in studying the relationships between students' personal factors, extra-curricular activities, psychosocial environment and moral reasoning of nursing students of Prachomklao College of Nursing, Phetchaburi province, Thailand. The results of this study can be used in the arrangement of nursing programs, extra-curricular activities and psychosocial environment for moral reasoning development. This work is to study 1) moral reasoning of nursing students and 2) student personal factors, extra-curricular activities and psychosocial environment and 3) relationships between student personal factors, extra-curricular activities and psychosocial environment with moral reasoning of nursing students

Methodology

This is a descriptive research. The sample group consisted of 282 nursing students (including the 2nd, 3rd and 4th year) in Bachelor of Nursing Science Program of Prachomklao College of Nursing, Phetchaburi province, academic year 2009. The research instrument included the personal data, professional nursing value, extra-curricular activities, psychosocial environment and moral reasoning questionnaires. The researchers were granted the permission to collect data, while research process was explained to the sample group. Personal data analysis was conducted using the frequency and percentage. Besides, the arithmetic mean and standard deviation were employed in the analysis of professional nursing value and psychosocial environment. Also, the extra-curricular activities and moral reasoning were analyzed by number and percentage. The relationship between educational factors such as academic year, professional nursing value, extra-curricular activities (club and average time of club activity participation) and moral reasoning were computed by Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients.



Ethical Considerations

The study was approved by the Proposal Review Committee of Prachomklao College of Nursing. All subjects were informed about the nature and purpose of the study, confidentiality and anonymity issues and their right to leave the research at any time without repercussions. All subjects were also required to sign the consent forms prior to the study.

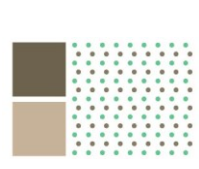
Results

1. Eighty of nine of 2nd year nursing students (36.33%), 88 from 3rd year nursing students (35.92%) and 68 of 4th year nursing students (27.76%) from nursing students of Bachelor of Nursing Science Program were investigated in this work.
2. Nursing students had high level of professional nursing value ($\bar{X}=4.08$). The arithmetic mean was also high. The topic with the highest arithmetic mean was the nurses' ability to apply the research result into nursing practice, nursing program, and real-world nursing administration to suit the opportunity and condition ($\bar{X}=4.65$). Meanwhile, the topic with the lowest arithmetic mean concerned the question on the right to make decision and prescript the mental, emotional and psychological treatment for each patient without doctors' approval ($\bar{X}=2.68$).
3. Nursing students had opinion on psychosocial environment at high level ($\bar{X}=3.85$). The students' responsibility in their assignment accounted the highest mean ($\bar{X}=4.06$). Then, the teachers' education courses to promote students' development of reasonable problem solving skill had the second highest mean ($\bar{X}=4.02$). The lowest one was the college's awards or ethical/good behavior honor ($\bar{X}=3.38$).
4. 137 of nursing students (61.70%) had moral reasoning at level 5, while 48 of nursing students (21.60%) were at level 4. The smallest group was 2 of students (0.9%) with moral reasoning at level 2. Besides, 12 of 2nd year nursing students (5.4%) had moral reasoning at level 6. The next group was 8 nursing students (3.6%). The smallest group was one student in Year 3 and Year 2 each (45%). Finally, 10 nursing students (4.5%) being the environmental conservation club member and 7 nursing students (3.15%) joining the Buddhist club had moral reasoning at level 6.
5. Relationship between psychosocial environment and moral reasoning of nursing students was moderately positive at 0.05 level ($r = 0.402$). Meanwhile, the relationship between the average time for participating in the activities of environment conservation club and Buddhist club, professional nursing value and moral reasoning of nursing students was low positive at 0.05 ($r = 0.238, 0.197, 0.181$ and 0.157 respectively).

Discussion and Conclusion

This study explored the relationship between personal data, extra-curricular activities, psychosocial environment and moral reasoning of nursing students of Prachomklao College of Nursing, Phetchaburi province. The research results will be discussed as follows:

1. To study moral reasoning of nursing students of Prachomklao College of Nursing, Phetchaburi province: the study showed that 41 nursing students (61.7%) had moral reasoning at level 5. As most nursing students in the sample group had high level of moral reasoning, it can be



assumed that most of them had moral reasoning according to the social norms. They had good behavior because of personal value and social acceptance which can be changed by common interest. This phenomenon was found in people at the age of 16 years or older. This was in line with study of Patama (2009) who examined moral reasoning of nursing students of Nursing College under the auspices of Public of Health. According to her study, most nursing students had moral reasoning of Kohlberg at level 5. Also, the study of Rachneewan (2008) which explored moral reasoning of nursing students in Khon Kaen University found that most nursing students also had moral reasoning of Kohlberg at level 5. The individuals with level 5 of moral reasoning recognized the importance of majority and avoided violating the rights of other people. They were able to control, reward and punish themselves and had self expectation. They were ashamed or proud of their actions, social acceptance and had the behavior based on the personal value and social standard. All principle might be changed by common interest. Due to the professional nurses' responsibility of human life and the difference of the value and physical, emotional and social conditions of each patient's, the professional moral nursing practice was required for the nursing students (Norberg 1995). They needed to consider the conditions and environments of each patient carefully. These characteristics had an effect on moral reasoning development. As a result, Prachomklao College of Nursing, Phetchaburi province has set up the education programs consisting of open discussion, debate, group debate, seminar and conference. These programs allowed them to engage in the practice of the expression of reasonable opinions, analytical thinking and acceptance of the opinion of others in order to develop their level of moral reasoning.

2. To study the relationship between personal factors, extra-curricular activities and psychosocial environment to moral reasoning of nursing students Prachomklao College of Nursing, Phetchaburi province:

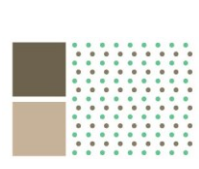
2.1 Relationship of personal factors such as educational level, professional nursing value and oral reasoning of nursing students Prachomklao College of Nursing Phetchaburi province.

2.2 According to the research results, there was the insignificant statistic relationship between educational level and moral reasoning of nursing students. They were 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year nursing students of Bachelor of Nursing Science Program. There was the difference only in higher level program. Therefore, the nursing students in each level had no different in moral reasoning. It was found that 12 2nd year nursing students (5.4%) had moral reasoning at level 6. The next group was 8 2nd year nursing students (3.6%). Therefore, the educational level had insignificant relationship with moral reasoning of nursing students.

2.3 There was a low positive relationship between professional nursing value and moral reasoning of nursing students. The students having high professional nursing value had good moral reasoning. On the other hand, the students having low professional nursing value had poor moral reasoning. (Turner et al.1998) The professional nursing value can create the motivation as well as develop the decision-making model and value acceptance.

2.4 Relationship of extra-curricular activities was club, the average time for club activity participation and moral reasoning of nursing students Prachomklao College of Nursing, Phetchaburi province

According to the research results, there was low positive relationship between the environmental conservation club and Buddhist club and moral reasoning of nursing students. In other words, the nursing students who joined the environmental conservation club and Buddhist club had an appropriate moral reasoning. In particular, most of them had moral reasoning at level 6. One possible reason might be that the environmental conservation club



may dedicate to the common interest allowing the nursing students to apply rational reasons in making their judgment. The nursing students in Buddhist club mostly had good friends and were interested in making merit and religious activities. These supported their analytical thinking.

3. Relationship between psychosocial environment and moral reasoning of students.

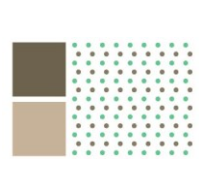
According to the research results, there were fairly positive relationships between psychosocial environment and moral reasoning of nursing students. Presumably, good psychosocial environment would promote good moral reasoning of nursing students. On the other hand, poor psychosocial environment would lead to poor moral reasoning. The psychosocial environment was an opportunity to share opinions, to look after each other and to provide reasons of appropriate action to teachers. Besides, the education systems could also develop the high level of reasonable problem-solving skill, while the teachers act as the good models. (Pam et al.2003) These environments allowed the nursing students to practice reasonable thinking which affected their decision making process. (Sylvia et al.2012) Moreover, most nursing students (freshman through senior) stayed in the dormitories; therefore, the imitation could occur among them in many levels and through several methods such as the interactive learning and mutual assistance, etc. Learning process occurred when the students perceived the appropriate behavior of the others. The learning thus affected the ethical and moral reasoning development.

Acknowledgement

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