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Study of Learning Behaviors of Nursing Student at The Royal Thai Navy College of Nursing

Panida Varachanon^a *

^a *Royal Thai Navy College of Nursing, Bangkok 10600, Thailand*

Abstract

The study was a descriptive research aiming at study and compare the learning behaviors of nursing students at the Royal Thai Navy College of Nursing. The samples were 176 nursing students studying in the academic year 2012. The data were collected using a questionnaire. The statistics used in this study were Average, Standard Deviation, One-way ANOVA and Scheffe's Post Hoc Comparison. The results were shown as following : 1) The learning behaviors of the nursing student was generally at moderate level ($X = 3.4$, $S.D. = 0.34$); 2) It was found that the level of current study was associated with the learning behaviors as shown below: 2.1) The third year students had significantly higher anxiety regarding learning comparing to the first, the second and the fourth year students at the level of .05; 2.2) The second year students had significantly higher concentration and attention than the students in first and fourth year at .05 level; 2.3) The fourth year students possessed significantly higher knowledge processing ability than those in the first and the third year at the level of .05; 2.4) The second year students applied techniques to gather and search for knowledge more than those in the first and the third year with the statistical significance at .05.

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1. Introduction

The objective of the undergraduate course is to obtain intellectual and cognitive development for the academic advance. The academy is a significant institution in teaching and passing on knowledge to students as well as

* Panida Varachanon. Tel.: +66813401381

E-mail address: panida.v@hotmail.com

analyzing, synthesizing, establishing and broadcasting knowledge through the education process. The outcome from the university to the society should be the knowledgeable graduates who have jobs and are good citizens that will help develop the country to be the sustainable civilized one (Prakorb Kooparat, cited in Pranot Kaochim, 2006). The problem experienced by teachers in the past and at present is the inappropriate learning behaviors of the students such as lack of attention, talking in the class, having no study plans, and not handing in assignments in time. These inappropriate behaviors distract teachers in teaching, and the activities in class cannot be achieved their objectives. Besides, it affects the students that they will not be able to accomplish their study as they are supposed to (Nushart Worayotsri, 2001).

The Royal Thai Navy College of Nursing is the college with the Bachelor of Nursing Science Program completed within 4 years. The objective is to train the nurses to be capable of taking care of the patients at all ages and have the knowledge covering all the dimensions of healthcare (The Royal Thai Navy College of Nursing, 2008). According to the Nursing course last year, the problems causing by the behaviors of the students are different among each class and depend on the subjects. The problems are time management in studying and testing, not paying attention in class, and not being able to analyze the questions in the test (The Royal Thai Navy College of Nursing, 2009). Those problems are caused by the students' behaviors and might affect their achievement of the course. According to Nushart Worayotsri's study (2001), it is found that learning behaviors have positive relations with the academic achievement. On the other hand, if the learning behaviors are negative, the academic outcomes will surely fail. This motivates the researcher to study the learning behaviors of the Nursing students in each class and use the information received from the research to set the guideline for nursing students to improve themselves for their own academic achievement. They will also consider supporting the nursing students by holding more activities and providing services that will positively help the nursing students to achieve their academic goal and improve their learning behaviors.

2. Research Objectives

1. To study the learning behaviors of the nursing students of the Royal Thai Navy College of Nursing.
2. To compare the differences of nursing students' learning behaviors in each class.

3. Method

3.1 Sample

The population of this research was 315 nursing students studying the Bachelor of Nursing Science Program from the Royal Thai Navy College of Nursing academic year 2012. The Sample size was calculated by Yamane's formula (1973), and the level of errors is 0.5. The Sample size was 176 students.

3.2 Research Instruments

Research Instruments consisted of the personal information questionnaire in the check-list form and the learning behaviors questionnaire of nursing students in 5-level rating scale which included 59 questions developed from Pranot Kaochim's questionnaire (2006) which was adapted from LASSI (Learning and Study Strategies Inventory) created by CLAIRE Weinstein, David Palmer, Ann Schulte (1987).

3.3 Data Analysis

The Quantitative Data Analysis statistics were Mean, Standard Deviation, and One-Way ANOVA. When the difference was found, Scheffe's method was used to compare the means in pair.

4. Research Results

4.1 Study Nursing Students' learning behaviors

Nursing students' learning behaviors are average ($\bar{x} = 3.4$ $SD = 0.34$). The 2 highest Means were in learning attitude and learning inspiration aspects as following table 1.

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of learning behaviors of nursing students at the Royal Thai Navy College of Nursing (Overall and in each aspect)

Study behaviors	X	SD	Interpretation
1. Learning attitude	4.02	0.54	high
2. Learning motivation	3.64	0.39	high
Total	3.43	0.34	Moderate

4.2 Compare the learning behaviors of nursing students from each class

The 3rd year nursing students were more anxious than nursing students in other classes with statistical significance at level 0.5. The 2nd and 3rd year nursing students concentrated and paid more attention in class than the 1st and the 4th year nursing students, with statistical significance at level 0.5. Year 4 Nursing students have higher knowledge processing than nursing students in year 1 and 3, and it shows statistical significance at level 0.5. The 2nd year nursing students used more techniques in studying than nursing students in the 1st and the 3rd year nursing students as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Comparison of the differences in learning behaviors classified by year of classes

Learning behaviors	Sources of variance	SS	df	MS	F	P	Year	Pairs differences
Anxiety	Between groups	6.361	3	2.120	5.501*	.001	1-3	-.5366*
	In group	66.294	172	.385			2-3	-.3255*
	Altogether	72.654	175				3-4	-.3400*
Concentration and paying attention	Between groups	3.778	3	1.259	4.677*	.004	1-2	-.3559*
	In group	46.30	172	.269			1-3	-.2428*
	Altogether	50.085	175				2-4	-.3331*
							3-4	-.2200*
Knowledge processing	Between groups	3.547	3	1.182	3.730*	.012	1-4	-.4093*
	In group	54.521	172	.317			3-4	-.2350*
	Altogether	58.086	175					
Using techniques in studying	Between groups	4.136	3	1.379	3.900*	.010	1-2	-.3473*
	In group	60.807	172	.354			1-4	-.2678*
	Altogether	64.942	175				2-3	-.3424*
							3-4	-.2629*

5. Discussion

1. Learning behaviors of the nursing students

According to the research finding, the samples' learning behaviors were in moderate level. When considering

each aspect, the 2 highest means were learning attitude and learning motivation aspects. The result can be explained that the Royal Thai Naval College of Nursing is a higher education institution arranging the program of nursing science. It is expected that the graduates must be able to provide a holistic care to customers at all ages and health status. They are supposed to be well educated and trained in nursing and other related science, as well as able to apply them to nursing practice using nursing process (The Royal Thai Naval College of Nursing, 2008). These may be the reasons explaining why the samples paid attention to their nursing subjects. The results also corresponded to the study of Orapin Sirimahakhan et.al (2011) which reported that the students in the Faculty of Education at Silpakorn University had high level of learning behaviors in the learning attitude aspect. The samples had the desire and motivation to learn and obtain learning achievement. In other words, motivation had a significant impact on the learners and those with high level of motivation were likely to be successful students (Rujira Yaowamat, 1998).

2. Comparison study of learning behaviors among nursing students in each year

The 3rd year nursing students were found more anxious than those in other classes with statistical significance at the level .05. The finding can be explained that the 3rd year nursing students were being trained in Obstetric Nursing Practicum which required them to complete all procedures within the limited timeframe of the course. Further, they were not allowed to leave the college until the requirements were met, causing higher level stress and anxiety comparing to those in other classes.

The result shows that the 2nd year and the 3rd year nursing students significantly had greater concentration and attention to their study than those in the 1st and 4th year at level .05. This finding can be explained that the 2nd year nursing students were learning theory subjects in the class and had no nursing practicum in patient wards, while the 3rd year nursing students were learning both in theory and nursing practice of Obstetric Nursing and Nursing care for individuals with health deviation which are major subjects of the examination for nursing registration from Thailand Nursing and Midwifery Council. Therefore, they paid more attention in their study.

The 4th year nursing students had better knowledge processing ability than those in the 1st and the 3rd year. This might be due to the most senior students have been provided education process reinforcing thinking process continuously since they were freshman of the nursing program as the requirement from the Act of National Education issued (1998). The Act specified education guideline for education institution in section 24 item 2 which focused on thinking development and application of knowledge to prevent and solve the problem. Moreover, in the item 3 of the Act, learning activities provided should promote learning from real experiences, reading habit and continuous learning (Ministry of Education cited in Watcharaporn Choeyesuan, 2008). Continuous reinforcement by education process and throughout the nursing program under the Act may explain the greater knowledge processing ability among the 4th year nursing students when comparing to those in the 1st and the 3rd year.

The 2nd year nursing students applied techniques to seek knowledge more than those in the 1st and the 3rd year with statistical significance at level .05. It is specified in Thai Qualification Framework for higher education (TQF: HEd) that learners must be able to access and search for information from various resources and analyze systematically using nursing and other related knowledge (The Royal Thai Naval College of Nursing, 2008). In the education plan of the institution, the second year nursing students have to study theory subjects in the classroom without nursing practice in the patient wards. Therefore, they had more opportunity and time available to apply techniques for knowledge seeking than those in the 1st and the 3rd year.

6. Recommendations

1. According to the research result, the nursing students' learning behaviors were in moderate level, addressing the necessity to design activities to enhance their participation and desired learning behaviors since the first year of the nursing program.
2. The result shows that nursing students in each year had different learning behaviors. Thus, learning activities should be provided to meet their needs and respond to the difference in learning behaviors in each class in order to reinforce leaning development and achievement.

3. Factors associated with learning behaviors of nursing students such as learning achievement, learning attitude and learning motivation should be study to use as a guideline for education development plan of the nursing program.

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