

***Six Categories of Health Behavior among Student Nurses at
Boromrajonani College of Nursing, Udonthani***

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine six categories of health behaviors among student nurses Boromrajonani College of Nursing, Udonthani. The sample of the study was 290 undergraduate student nurses in 2010 at Boromrajonani College of Nursing Udonthani. The questionnaire of Six Categories Health Behaviors Policy was developed by Health Education Division of Ministry of Public Health. The questionnaire of Health Service Support Department was established by the investigators. The content validity of the questionnaires was assessed by 3 experts. Internal consistency reliability of the scale was 0.76. Mean, percentage, and standard deviation were used .

The study results found that most of subjects were women (90.30%). The average age for the sample was 21 years. The majority of the sample was Buddhism (83.80%) and unmarried status (97.90%). The greatest proportion of subjects (46.30%) had individual income between \$ 100 to 150 per month.

Most of subjects reported that their overall health behavior was in the good level. Only sixty-six percentages of the subjects had 3 meals per day. Half of subjects performed stretching exercise sometimes. The subjects (63%) released tension by doing some activities with their family members. Eighty-eight percentages of the sample did not leave sanitary pad into the toilet. Most of the subjects (85.50%) reported that they did not smoke cigarette, drink alcohol, or use drug.

The result of this study suggests that student nurses should be promoted in terms of increasing exercise and having 3 meals per day in order to improve their health behavior.

Keywords: health behaviors; students nurses

Background

In Thailand, the major causes of health problems are from behaviors, environment, and social changes. In 2002, the Public Health Ministry started promoting and protecting health with many health campaigns by increasing exercise, having healthy diet, and necessary other activities among Thai population.

Undergraduate students in nursing science are the important health personnel to provide a health service for Thai population. Nursing students should be a good model in improving health. If nursing students are healthy in terms of physical, mental, and social well-being, they can spend most of the time in study effectively. However, based on the investigators' experiences, we found that most of nursing student at Boromarajonani College of Nursing focused on their studying and students' activities. In addition, no study pursued students' health behaviors in this college. These evidences indicated that the study of students' behaviors is needed. The results of this study would be useful for guiding further research and changing health behavior among nursing students in the future.

The purpose

This study was to examine six categories of health behaviors among student nurses Boromrajonani College of Nursing, Udonthani

Samples and Methods

The total population was 513 student nurses in 2010 at Boromrajonani College of Nursing Udonthani. The total sample was 290 students (table 1) by using the table of random number by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Students were randomly selected from each class.

Table 1 Population and sample data (n = 290)

class	Populations (N)			Samples (n)		
	male	Femal e	total	male	female	total
1 st	8	82	90	5	47	52
2 nd	7	84	91	4	47	51
3 rd	7	128	135	4	72	76
4 th class A	13	86	99	7	49	56
4 th class B	15	83	98	8	47	55
Total	50	463	513	28	262	290

Measures

The questionnaire was composed of 2 parts. The first part was general demographic data. The second part composed of “six categories” of health behaviors policies on health problem such as food, environmental health, exercise, drug, and emotion. The questionnaire was developed from Health Education Division, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand.

The questionnaire of Health Service Support Department was established by the investigators. The content validity of the questionnaires was assessed by 3 experts. Internal consistency reliability of the scale was 0.76. Mean, percentage, and standard deviation were used.

Results

Part 1

The study results found that most of subjects were women (90.30%). The average age of the sample was 21 years. The majority of the sample was Buddhism (83.80%) and single (97.90%). The greatest proportion of subjects (46.30%) had individual income between \$ 100 to 150 per month.

Part 2

Most of subjects reported that their overall health behavior was in the good level. Only sixty-six percentages of the subjects had 3 meals per day. Half of subjects performed stretching exercise sometimes. The subjects (63%) released tension by doing some activities with their family members. Eighty-eight percentages of the sample did not leave sanitary pad into the toilet. Most of the subjects (85.50%) reported that they did not smoke cigarette, drink alcohol, or use drug.

Table 2 Demographic characteristics

Demographic characteristics	n	%
sex		
Male	28	9.7
Female	262	90.3
Age (year)		
15-20	105	41.2
21-25	164	97.7
26-30	21	7.3
Religion		
Buddhism	243	83.8
Muslims	47	16.2
Marital status		
Single	284	97.9
Married	6	2.1
Income (bath per month)		
1,000-2,999	56	19.3
3,000-4,999	134	46.3
5,000-6,999	88	30.2
7,000-8,999	12	4.1

Discussion

Most of subjects reported that their overall health behavior was in the good level. Only sixty-six percentages of the subjects had 3 meals per day regularly. Similarly, teenagers were lack of knowledge of having healthy diet (Kamaki & Kuandee, 2007). It is possible that breakfast is not available for students because the college is quite far from downtown for 17 kilometers and the transportation is not convenient. In addition, no refrigerator is available at the dormitory to keep their food.

The study also reported that the small number of students performed stretching exercise. The study is consistent with low regular exercise in health care providers (Sungpapan, 2009). Even though these samples were knowledgeable in promoting health, they performed irregular exercise. This might be because they are busy on their study or work.

The present study reported that 62% of students regularly released tension by doing family activities. Consistently, Athitaya (2007) found that people with age 15 – 59 years old released tension by reading, watching television, listening radio, and talking with their family members.

The finding of the study supported the previous study that the students did not leave a sanitary pad in the toilet. Soontonprapait (2008) also found that education associated with saving the environment in order to improve health such as eliminating garbage and carrier disease prevention. Most of the subjects reported that they did not smoke cigarette, drink alcohol, or use drug. The previous study similarly reported that most of the Thai population did not smoke cigarette or drink alcohol. It can be explained that nursing students know how to protect themselves from undesired behaviors.

Conclusion

The result of this study suggests that student nurses should be promoted by increasing exercise and having 3 meals per day in order to improve their health behavior.

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