

ETHICAL PRACTICE BEHAVIORS OF UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS IN BANGKOK, THAILAND.

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ABSTRACT

This survey research aims to study the ethical practice behaviors of undergraduate nursing students in Bangkok, Thailand. The Tree Moral Theory was used to be a framework of this study. Samples were 400 nursing students from the four colleges and faculties of nursing in Bangkok by mean of simple random sampling. Data were collected by using 2 questionnaires compose of a demographic characteristic and an ethical practice behavior questionnaires. The ethical practice behavior questionnaire was tested for a content validity by three experts as well as an internal consistency reliability tested by Cronbach's alpha was .800. Descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, standard deviations, and ranges were applied to interpret the demographic characteristics and the Ethical practice behaviors of undergraduate nursing students in Bangkok. The findings showed that the majority of students were female (n = 363) and more than 50 percent of them were 22 year old (n = 207). Eighty three percent of them got the PGA in the 3.01 – 3.50 range (n = 332). The majority of the students lived in a rural area (n = 263). Total mean score of the ethical practice behavior of nursing students was 104.84 (S.D. = 7.95). The majority of the 4th year undergraduate nursing students replied always and often in all questions of positive ethical practice behaviors; in addition, the majority of them answered never and seldom in all questions of negative ethical practice behaviors. Recommendation for the future research are further on study the ethical practice behaviors of the other group such as should be study with young staff nurses and old age staff nurses to confirm the results.

Keywords: Ethical practice behaviors, Undergraduate nursing students, Bangkok, Thailand

INTRODUCTION

Nursing is a crucial profession within care area not only focused on the care of the patient but also takes care of families and communities. Nurses may be differentiated from other health care providers by their approach to patient care by using nursing practice. Nurses officiate as a shift work to take care with the patients all day and all night therefore they may get stressed which is lead to act inappropriate manners to patients. In Thailand nowadays, social networks post and share video clips about unsuitable behaviors of nurses to patients [1]. In fact, the nurses can have a good personality that should come from own emotional control, passion in their job, morality and ethics by extending the professional ethics of nursing. The ethical nursing behaviors of nursing students as referring to the nursing behavior that focuses on the significance of nursing clients, taking into consider the quality and efficiency which presents the respect for patient rights, honesty in caring for patients, honesty

in the job and take full responsibility, and the ability to communicate between the health team and patients and relatives [2]. The behavior of the good man and the intellect man are based on the psychological, fundamental, and psychological elements of ethical behavior [3].

The moral and ethical principles of nursing practice need to be established and developed since being an undergraduate nursing student. Undergraduate nursing students in Thailand have to learn these principles for caring patients under the Nursing and Midwifery Profession Act. Especially in the part of practicum subjects which the students require to apply their knowledge in real situations with the patients in the ward. Nursing students will receive the model of the work from mentors and senior nurses working. If they see a good model, they will have the opportunity to learn and demonstrate good and ethical behaviors when they graduated being new registered nurse who has a good ethical practice behavior are demanded of all employers. The needs of employers want to hire new graduates with moral and ethical behavior, honesty, and responsible for compliance with professional ethics [4].

As mentioned above, the researchers were interested in ethical practice behavior in undergraduate nursing students in urban area as Bangkok, Thailand to gain basic information for reinforcement the ethical behavior of them. The results of this study may help to prepare good nursing students to be qualified nurses in the future.

OBJECTIVE

The goal of this research is to study the ethical practice behaviors of the 4th year undergraduate nursing students in Bangkok, a metropolitan of Thailand.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a survey research. Participants were compromise of four hundred nursing students who were in the 4th year from four colleges and faculties of nursing in Bangkok by mean of simple random sampling.

The instruments included 2 questionnaires as follows:

1. Demographic questionnaire including socioeconomic characteristics of undergraduate nursing students consisting of gender, age, Grade Point Average (GPA), and domicile.
2. Ethical practice behaviors questionnaire evaluated the Ethical practice behaviors of undergraduate nursing students. There were 2 dimensions of Ethical practice behaviors, 12 positive messages and 12 negative messages. Twenty four items questionnaires, 5-point Liker-scale and yielded scores ranging from 24 to 120. The Cronbach's alpha of this questionnaire was .800.

Before collecting data, this research was reviewed and approved by Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University Ethics Committee. The Dean of colleges and faculties of nursing allowed the researchers to collect the data in their schools. Students were assessed the demographic and the ethical practice behaviors questionnaires in their classroom. Cleaning and checking data for error and missing before entering the analysis procedures. The Statistical Package of Social Science software (SPSS) was used to analyze nursing students' variables.

RESULTS

Samples of this research were 400 nursing students from the four colleges and faculties of nursing in Bangkok, Thailand. There were 363 female (90.75%) and 37 male (9.25%) and the majority of students were 22 years old (n = 207, 51.75%). Eighty three percent of the students got the PGA in the 3.01 – 3.50 range (n = 332) meanwhile, about six

percent of them got the GPA in the 3.51 – 4.00 range (n = 25). Moreover, the majority of the students lived in a rural area (n = 263, 65.75%). From Table 1

Table 1
Demographic characteristics of nursing students in Bangkok

Characteristics	n	%
Gender		
Female	363	90.75
Male	37	9.25
Age (year)		
Characteristics	n	%
20	1	0.25
21	152	38.00
22	207	51.75
23	20	5.00
24	4	1.00
25	5	1.25
27	2	0.50
26	2	0.50
28	2	0.50
28	5	1.25
Grade point average (GPA)		
2.00 - 2.50	-	0.00
2.51 – 3.00	43	10.75
3.01 – 3.50	332	83.00
3.51 – 4.00	25	6.25
Domicile		
Rural area	263	65.75
Urban area	137	34.25

Total mean score of the ethical practice behavior of nursing students was 104.84 (S.D. = 7.95), meanwhile, mean scores of the ethical practice behavior of nursing students classify by rural area and urban area were approximately that was 104.94 and 104.66 respectively. From Table 2

Table 2
Descriptive statistics of Ethical practice behavior of nursing students classify by domicile

Variable	Mean	S.D.	Range
Ethical practice behavior	104.84	7.95	70 - 120
Rural area	104.94	8.03	70 - 120
Urban area	104.66	7.82	75 - 119

All participants completed the questionnaires of ethical practice behaviors classify by items. Results revealed that the majority of nursing students chose "Always" and "Often" in the items of the positive ethical practice behavior. The item that most students say "Always" were item number 5, I always care for the patient with regard to patient safety (86.0 percent), followed by item number 11, I always consider patients' rights while nursing (75.5 percent), item number 11, I always aware of the patient's mental needs (67.5 percent) respectively.

Meanwhile, the positive ethical behavior that less students say “Always” was item number 20, I always up to date my knowledge on prevention, treatment and health promotion in order to able to recommend many patients (29.5 percent).

Furthermore, the majority of nursing students choose "Never" and "Seldom" in the items of the negative ethical behavior. The item that most students say “Never” were item number 1, During practice in the ward, I used to give patients the wrong medicine (87.5 percent), followed by item number 2, I used to reject the patient when I got the job (85.3 percent), item number 7, I do not use sterile techniques with patients (82.0 percent). On the other hand, the negative ethical behavior that fewer students say “Never” was item number 9, I have, sometimes, rushed to care of my patients without ever telling the patient (31.0 percent). From Table 3

Table 3
Ethical practice behaviors of nursing students classify by items

Questionnaire Item	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Always
1. During practice in the ward, I used to give patients the wrong medicine.	n = 350 (87.5%)	n = 37 (9.3%)	n = 4 (1.0%)	n = 4 (1.0%)	n = 5 (1.3%)
2. I used to reject the patient when I got the job	n = 341 (85.3%)	n = 45 (11.3%)	n = 12 (3.0%)	n = 1 (0.3%)	n = 1 (0.3%)
3. When I later learned that I had misrepresented myself, I'll quickly fix it.	n = 17 (4.3%)	n = 42 (10.5%)	n = 22 (5.5%)	n = 100 (25.0%)	n = 219 (54.8%)
4. Before treatment or nursing a patient, I always study the patient's information.	n = 5 (1.3%)	n = 6 (1.5%)	n = 19 (4.8%)	n = 145 (36.3%)	n = 225 (56.3%)
5. I always care for the patient with regard to patient safety.	n = 4 (1.0%)	n = 3 (0.8%)	n = 4 (1.0%)	n = 45 (11.3%)	n = 344 (86.0%)
6. I have always skipped the nursing care step for completing the task in time.	n = 150 (37.5%)	n = 135 (33.8%)	n = 89 (22.3%)	n = 15 (3.8%)	n = 11 (2.8%)
7. I do not use sterile techniques with patients.	n = 328 (82%)	n = 57 (14.2%)	n = 10 (2.5%)	n = 1 (0.3%)	n = 4 (1.0%)
8. I will tell the truth when it goes wrong to prevent effects on patients.	n = 16 (4.0%)	n = 28 (7.0%)	n = 23 (5.8%)	n = 65 (16.3%)	n = 268 (67.0%)
9. I have, sometimes, rushed to care of my patients without ever telling the patient.	n = 124 (31.0%)	n = 171 (42.8%)	n = 94 (23.5%)	n = 10 (2.5%)	n = 1 (0.3%)
10. I care for the patient, taking into account the needs of the patient, together with the treatment plan.	n = 6 (1.5%)	n = 11 (2.8%)	n = 16 (4.0%)	n = 130 (32.5%)	n = 237 (59.3%)
11. I always consider patients' rights while nursing.	n = 6 (1.5%)	n = 3 (0.8%)	n = 6 (1.5%)	n = 83 (20.8%)	n = 302 (75.5%)
12. I used to scold and angry for the patients who did not cooperate in the treatment.	n = 226 (56.5%)	n = 146 (36.5%)	n = 27 (6.8%)	n = 0 (0.0%)	n = 1 (0.3%)
13. I never disclose the patient's secrets.	n = 63 (15.8%)	n = 23 (5.8%)	n = 16 (4.0%)	n = 48 (12.0%)	n = 250 (62.5%)

Questionnaire Item	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Always
14. When someone I know comes to the service, I will give the special care of him/her.	n = 297 (74.3%)	n = 55 (13.8%)	n = 36 (9.0%)	n = 8 (2.0%)	n = 4 (1.0%)
15. I always aware of the patient's mental needs	n = 4 (1.0%)	n = 5 (1.3%)	n = 13 (3.3%)	n = 108 (27.0%)	n = 270 (67.5%)
16. Sometimes, I used a traumatic speech to the patients.	n = 298 (74.5%)	n = 86 (21.5%)	n = 12 (3.0%)	n = 2 (0.5%)	n = 2 (0.5%)
17. I always describe the procedure for the patient to listen periodically in order to help the patient get confident and well behaved.	n = 2 (0.5%)	n = 9 (2.3%)	n = 48 (12.0%)	n = 159 (39.8%)	n = 182 (45.5%)
18. I only listen to the patient's specific words related to the disease of the patient at that time.	n = 134 (33.5%)	n = 124 (31.0%)	n = 55 (13.8%)	n = 40 (10.0%)	n = 47 (11.8%)
19. I always give consult with the patients in order to prevent him/her back to the disease again.	n = 1 (0.3%)	n = 17 (4.3%)	n = 56 (14.0%)	n = 193 (48.3%)	n = 133 (33.3%)
20. I always up to date my knowledge on prevention, treatment and health promotion in order to able to recommend many patients.	n = 3 (0.8%)	n = 10 (2.5%)	n = 98 (24.5%)	n = 171 (42.5%)	n = 118 (29.5%)
21. When I have to explain the symptoms to the patient, I would say the truth without regard of the patient's feelings.	n = 210 (52.5%)	n = 98 (24.5%)	n = 53 (13.3%)	n = 22 (5.5%)	n = 17 (4.3%)
22. I always encourage the patients and let them accept the reality in sickness and adaptability.	n = 3 (0.8%)	n = 7 (1.8%)	n = 34 (8.5%)	n = 163 (40.8%)	n = 193 (48.3%)
23. I always feel irritated when the patients are not properly treated themselves and unsuitable for the disease.	n = 166 (41.5%)	n = 168 (42.0%)	n = 58 (14.5%)	n = 7 (1.8%)	n = 1 (0.3%)
24. I only talk to patients at the time of history and symptoms assessment to avoid to waste of my time.	n = 252 (63.0%)	n = 111 (27.8%)	n = 25 (6.3%)	n = 6 (1.5%)	n = 6 (1.5%)

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

A study of the ethical practice behaviors of undergraduate nursing students in Bangkok, the majority of the 4th year undergraduate nursing students have appropriately ethical practice behaviors. As the results showed that most nursing students choose to answer "Always" and "Often" in their positive ethical practice behavior and, conversely, choose "Never" and "Seldom" in the negative ethical behavior. The ethical practice behavior questionnaire, it was found that most nursing students were sensitive to ethical practice behavior in the terms of patient safety including giving patients the wrong medicine, rejecting the patient, and do not use sterile techniques with patients respectively. According to the finding of Maytapattana and colleagues, they study the ethical behaviors of the 4th year

undergraduate nursing students at College of Nursing and Health, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University [5]. This research results also consistent with many studies, Khumtorn and colleagues who studied the ethical behavior of nursing students at Boromarajonani Nursing College, Trang. The results showed that the 4th year nursing students had good moral behavior at good level, with a score of 4.36 from the 5 score full mark [6]. In addition, results also consistent with Kliamanee and colleagues who studied the ethical behavior of nursing students at Boromarajonani Nursing College, Nakhon Ratchasima. The ethical behavior of nurses was rated at 5.77 and honesty was at 5.05 from the sixth grade [7].

Recommendation for the future research are further on study the ethical practice behaviors of the other group such as should be study with young staff nurses and old age staff nurses to confirm the results.

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