

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



Background and Rationale

In the last decade of twenty, the concept approach and practice of health care had changed rapidly. These changes were closely related with changes of social expectation and advancement of technology. Nursing, the main component of health care has become more demanding and challenging. Now, it requires that professional nurses must not only provide highly specialized care but should also keep themselves up to date with the changing trend and application of health care. The concept of continuing education started to meet these demands. In general terms(3), continuing education is defined as "some form of learning that demonstrates advancement from previously established levels of competence".

Florence Nightingale once said, " The importance of continuing education development for nurses was ... if we were not self-developed every year, every month, and every week, . .we were going into reverse". Knowledge

during study period has no meaning if we are not continued to develop in each year after graduation (4).

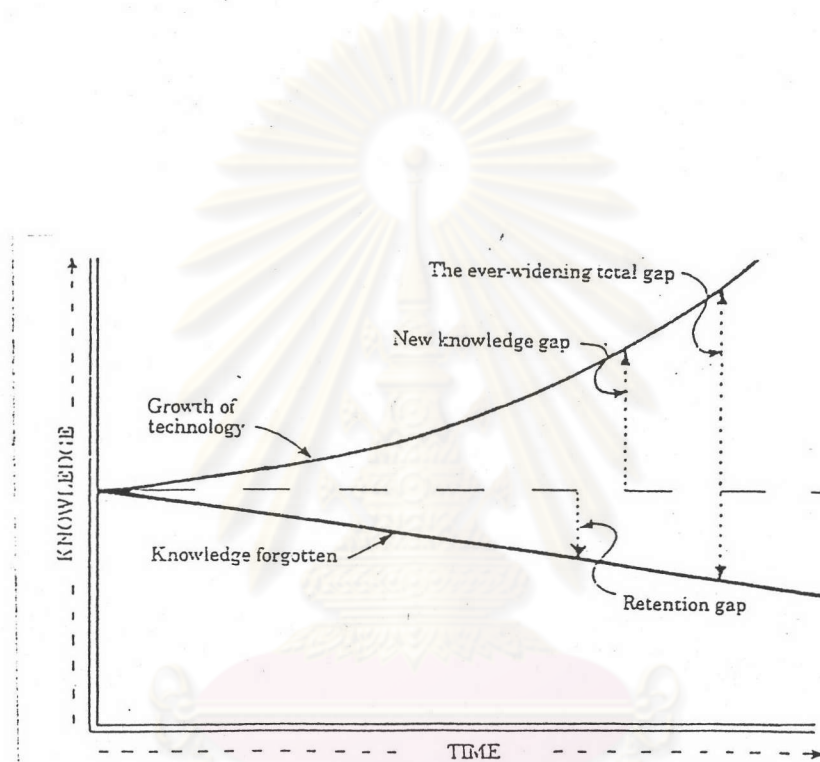


Figure I. Why We Need Continuing Education For All Health Workers (5).

As the above figure shows, the gap produced in knowledge with time, can only be bridged by continuing education. The profession of nursing which indirectly effects every life from birth to last days of life is utmost important. The continuous development of

professional nurses can be attained by integrating their jobs with continuing education. Professional nurses should be given enchanted opportunities to apply their knowledge, approaches and to pursue them, not to reverse to former old situation(6).

In developed countries, continuing education in nursing is no more a subject of discussion but an essential job requirement. In some countries, it has been made compulsory. A variety of programs are offered to professional nurses each year, keeping abreast the changing demand and technology. These different programs do not only provide an atmosphere of development opportunities but also give a scope of choice according to one's knack and future plans.

Effective program planning and marketing that yield "satisfied" participants can be optimized by identifying and responding to the expressed needs and interests of the consumer (1,2). Educational offerings for nurses are provided by educators in a variety of academic and practice settings. Similarly, nurses may choose to attend continuing education for many reasons. Apart from one's desire to master one's own field and express one self fully, the motivation to join continuing education

comes to reach other goals. The first and foremost one is the job security. Others are promotional opportunity, increase in salary and also to attain direct or indirect incentives(8). So the characteristics of the program offered influence vastly on the nurse's perception and participation in continuing education. Added to these are the indirect influences of certain personal characteristics like, age, sex, and marital status of the attendant. Thus if a program is suitable for a nurse in terms of content of the course (basic need), improvement in job (job need) cost, time, and others (personal, social), she will be more apt to take course than the other. The reverse will end in non participation.

It should be added here that as the nurses role is changing day by day from previous hospital oriented to present day community based nursing(7) including specialty fields, the perception of continuing education of nurses are also changing. Today, nurses required to know something about sociology, psychiatry, finance, accounting and even management. To achieve the goal of health for all by 2000 A.D. WHO does not only need good skilled nurses, but also need good nurse managers.

Perceptions of continuing education; topics and format. Most nurses preferred content areas related to clinical practice. Significant differences are evident in content and format preferences according to specific personal and professional attributes.

Although one specific area (surgical nursing) will be investigated, the finding may be applied to other similar or to generalized nursing program. And also surgical nurses can make meaningful contributions in designing continuing education, because they work in close proximity with new technology in health fields and know their strengths and weaknesses as well (1,2, and 23). So they will know own requirement better than other nursing fields in term of program characteristics in surgical nursing of continuing education.

In Thailand, context of a few courses are available to general nurses and to special group nurses, it is even more limited. In a pilot study in nurses who were working in some public and private hospitals, we came into conclusion that, a good proportion of nurses give a different opinion about the program of continuing education. Most of them want to add some non-nursing subjects within the courses. It seems the basic course

in surgery does not produce much interest. Now the nurses seem to reach out, they want to communicate with broader society(9). Along with nursing, they want to plan, manage, or administer their own work, improve further and to be more professional.

In this background and rationale, a descriptive study is designed to investigate this important and complicated subject of the program characteristics of continuing education that are of interest to surgical nursing. The purpose of this study is to determine and identify the important and non-important program characteristics in surgical nursing that are of interest to professional nurses who are working in surgical unit of public sectors around Bangkok Metropolitan Area, and to analyze between interesting and non-interesting groups in surgical nursing courses of continuing education for professional nurses who are working in public sectors around Bangkok Metropolitan Area.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

5.1 To find out the percentage of interesting group and non interesting group of continuing education in surgical nursing course that are of interest to surgical nurses who work at the public sectors around Bangkok.

5.2 To determine the important and non-important program characteristics of continuing education in surgical nursing course that are of interest to professional nurses who are working in surgical unit at the public sectors in Bangkok Metropolitan Area.

5.3 To analyze the interest on subject characteristics between interesting and non-interesting group of continuing education in surgical nursing course of professional nurses who are working in surgical units at public sectors around Bangkok Metropolitan Area.

5.4 To determine the scope of formal course of continuing education for the professional nurses who are working in specific area.

RESEARCH QUESTION PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the percentage of professional nurses who are interested and nurses who are not interested in continuing education in surgical nursing?

SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the important and non important program characteristics of continuing education in surgical nursing course that are of interest to surgical nurses who are working at the public sector in Bangkok?

Is there any difference between the interesting and non-interesting groups of continuing education in surgical nursing courses of nurses who are working in surgical units at the public sector in Bangkok?

HYPOTHESIS

Most of the professional nurses working at public sectors are interested in continuing education of surgical nursing courses by more than fifty percent

There might be difference in the interest of continuing education in surgical nursing course between interesting group and non-interesting group for nurses.

OPERATION DEFINITION

Professional nurses : A licensed registered nurse with bachelor's degree in nursing and who is working full time in a surgical units' patient care within a hospital.

Such as general surgical unit, traumatic unit,... etc.

Program characteristics in surgical nursing : This is defined as specific format and areas of program which offered in surgical nursing of continuing education. such as program quality, cost, timing, content relevancy... etc.

Public sector: Hospitals which are run under the government.

Continuing education: Activity of education for professional nurses after graduation. The aim of this education program is to make nurses more skillful in their work and to keep up with the advancement of knowledge which includes:

1. Formal course : The study program for surgical nursing included in the master's degree and doctor's degree during 2 years. (shown in Appendix III)

2. Short Course Training : The program for new knowledge training in nursing which includes seminar in service training, refresher course, workshop, conference program instruction or counseling during 6 months.

3. Self-directed learning : Refers to any learning activity for which a person desires to search for new information or skill through her daily life or professional work for the purpose of self-improvement or self-satisfaction. Such as reading by themselves,

learning with television, video program, listening to
radio and searching in the library ...etc.



ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

SUBJECT

AGE EDUCATION
MARITAL STATUS
HOSPITALS INCOME
WARD ADMINISTRATIVE POSITION
WORK EXPERIENCE
SPECIAL JOB

CHARACTERISTICS

PROGRAM

CONTENT RELEVANCY
PROGRAM QUALITY
TIMING COST OTHER

**PROFESSIONAL NURSES WHO
ARE WORKING IN SURGICAL UNITS
AT PUBLIC SECTORS**

INTERESTING

IN SURGICAL
NURSING COURSE

REASONS

NON-INTERESTING

IN SURGICAL
NURSING COURSE

REASONS

ASSUMPTION

This sample was representative of all professional nurses who are working in surgical units around Bangkok Metropolitan area.

LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

1. Limited budget.
2. Shortage of time.

It was done in specific unit for the same homogeneous.

EXPECTED BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

1. These results will be presented to the organization of professional nurses concerning problems in human resource development in term of a good quality service, nursing, and patients' life.

2. These results will be useful to planning and implementation of the formal courses in continuing education.

3. These would help the administrators in making decision to reduce risk factors provided in program characteristics of continuing education for professional nurses by marketing concept.

4. This study can be used as basic information for the further study of the similar problem.