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Healthy Exercise of Registered Female Nurses in Khon Kaen Province, Thailand

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Abstract

This analytical research aimed to investigate healthy exercise among registered female nurses in Khon Kaen province, Thailand. A total of 527 registered female nurses who are working in Khon Kaen hospital were involved as respondents using stratified random sampling. Researchers employed a survey design utilizing questionnaire as instrument. Duration of data collection was about one month. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics used in this research were frequency and percentage while inferential statistics used were Chi-square, Fisher' exact test and logistic regression. Results of the research revealed that the exercise group consists of 245 respondents and non-exercise group consists of 282 respondents out of the total respondent of 503. In addition, the exercise group had high motivation level and they exercise according to FITT. Majority of the respondents preferred jogging as the most popular healthy exercise (209, 92.07%). Intensity of exercise among the respondents was at moderate-heavy level (168, 74.00%). Duration of exercise was 30 seconds or more (153, 67.40%). Frequency of exercise was three days or more (137, 60.35%). There was 2.1 increased opportunity for exercise after work (adjOR2.44; 95% CI 1.51, 3.96; $p < .001$). Furthermore respondents were found to exercise regularly at home (56.2%). They were motivated to exercise by themselves (adjOR2.97; 95% CI 1.93, 4.57; $p < .001$). Researchers would like to recommend that healthy exercise should be promoted at the workplace.

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1. Introduction

Nursing is a profession within the health care sector concentrated on the care of individuals, families, and communities so they may reach, preserve, or recover optimal health and quality of life. Despite equal opportunity legislation, nursing has continued to be a female-dominated profession. The fast-paced and unpredictable nature of health care places nurses at risk for injuries and illnesses, including high occupational stress. Nursing is a particularly stressful profession, and nurses consistently identify stress as a major work-related concern and have among the highest levels of occupational stress when compared to other professions (Xianyu & Lambert, 2006).

Stress up to a certain extent, will improve people's performance and quality of life because it is healthy and essential that they should experience challenges within their lives (Tehrani & Ayling, 2009). However if pressure becomes excessive, it losses its beneficial effect and become harmful (Cooper, Cooper & Eaker, 1988). As a result, nurses are considered to be at increased risk of non-communicable diseases (Skaal & Pengpid, 2011). Non-communicable diseases risk factors such as physical inactivity have been widely reported among nurses in those countries like Australia, United Kingdom, New Zealand, and South Africa (Blake & Harrison, 2013; Skaal & Pengpid, 2011). Skaal and Pengpid further clarified that nearly one fifth of the South Africa healthcare workers including nurses were reported having non-communicable diseases such as hypertension and diabetes.

Physical activity such as healthy exercise has many health benefits including reducing risks of obesity and type 2 diabetes and favorably impacting psychological well-being and stress (Sara et al., 2015). According to Sara et al. regular healthy exercise plays important roles in preventing chronic diseases and promoting physical and psychological well-being. The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and the American Heart Association (AHA) recommend that healthy adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity spread out over five days a week or 20 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity on each of three days a week.

2. Statement of problem

Owing to the important roles of nurses as behavioral models to patients, families and the community, an increase of national attention focusing on prevention is necessity (Rush, Kee & Rice, 2005). In Thailand, Surawongsin's study (2002) reported that approximately half of female personnel (51%) in Thai hospital did not do exercise for the past three months according to his study in 2001. Majority of them were physicians or nurses. According to Wilson (2002), little is known about the exercise patterns of the nursing workforce and shift patterns and their impact on the health of nurses. In addition, there were limited investigations of how these factors were impacting exercises and associated with health behavior among nurses (Overgaard, Gyntelberg & Heitmann 2004).

Physical inactivity predisposes nurses to increase risk of cardio metabolic diseases. Thus healthcare workers and other professionals strive to increase nurses' participation in regular healthy exercise (Sara et. al, 2015). However, this is a challenging goal. Despite exercise counselling or other strategies to increase healthy exercise such as internet- or mobile phone/smartphone-based applications, such knowledge could help nurses in selecting additional interventions necessary to successfully increase healthy exercise.

3. Research objectives

The following are the main objectives of this study:

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