

**EFFECTS OF EMOTIONAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AMONG
NURSING STUDENTS OF BOROMARAJONANI COLLEGE OF NURSING,
RATCHABURI ¹**

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Abstract

The study was a quasi-experimental study focused on developing an emotional management capacity among the first year nursing students of Boromarajonani College of Nursing Ratchaburi. The study was designed as pre-posttest two groups with the sixth week follow up. The samples participated in each experimental and control groups were 73 nursing students. The students in the control groups volunteered to join the program during the first semester of the academic year 2015. The control group had the regular sessions, such as doing exercise or review lesson learned. The experiment group received activities of the program. There were six sessions, took about 45 minutes for each group activity. The instrument used for collecting the data were the viable group plan according to the concepts of increasing group, emotional conflict, and case-based learning developed by the researchers. Three experts commented the group plan and the emotional scales. The emotional conflict scale using Likert's scale were tested for reliability with the 20 of 3rd year nursing students who showed .81 reliability. The data were analyzed using t-test. The findings showed that the emotional conflict scores after the sixth session (\bar{X} 40, SD=.70) were lower than those before joining the groups (\bar{X} =48, SD=.56) with the .05 significance. The emotional conflict scores of the experimental group (\bar{X} 40, SD=.70) after finishing all sessions were lower than those of the control group (\bar{X} =47, SD=.82).

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After the sixth week follows up, the emotional conflict scores of the experimental group ($\bar{X}=42$, $SD=.77$) were significantly different from the control group's scores ($\bar{X}=47$, $SD=.89$). The program in this study can be used in nursing education regarding student development. They can also be applied in counseling services in dealing with clients. The knowledge gained from the study was useful for making policy regarding health professional educations.

Key words: emotional conflict, nursing student, program, quasi-experimental

Background

In Thailand, the freshman nursing students more likely to be the teenager students who finished the secondary school and passed the admission process of the universities or nursing colleges. Interestingly, one study conducted in Thailand found that those new nursing students rated their happiness in broad ranges. One factor relating to the nursing students' happiness was compliance in studying nursing programme (Sricamsuk, Voraharn, & Senarak, 2011). They may be unhappy to be the nurses. However, they enrolled the nursing programme with other reasons, eg., being asked by the parents or having a too low score to study in somewhere else. This caused the intrapersonal conflict and difficulties in study lives.

Emotional conflict is same as psychological, internal, and intrapersonal conflict. It is the difficulty in deciding two or more strong motives that cannot be solved together. There are four types of disputes. Firstly, approach-approach conflict is the conflict of two desires with positive ways and equally compelling. Even though it is not harmful, in some situations choices will be very difficult. Secondly, avoidance-avoidance conflict is the conflict involves two goals with negative ways. Both are unwanted goals, but persons have to employ. Therefore, some people escape from the situations and even having amnesia, regression or fantasy. Thirdly, approach-avoidance conflict is the most complex conflict and very difficult to resolve. A person is both attracted and repelled by the same goal object with positive-negative valences. Fourthly, multiple-approach-avoidance conflict is the situations in life persons come across will involve both positive and negative valences of complicated nature. This conflict can occur through eight-stage of development. In each stage, Erikson believed people experience a conflict that serves as a turning point in development. These are trust vs. mistrust, autonomy vs. doubt and shame, initiative vs. guilt, industry vs. inferiority, identity vs. role confusion, intimacy vs. isolation, generativity vs. stagnation, and integrity vs. despair. During these times, the potential for personal growth is high but so is the potential for failure (Gans, 2017; Shama, 2017).

Conflicts resolution depends upon the type of conflict. Naturally, approach-approach conflict does not generate much anxiety, because the individual is not going to lose much. To solve the avoidance-avoidance conflict is more difficult because the individual does not want

either of the goals. Some people may relieve themselves from tension, such as daydreaming, taking alcohol, chain-smoking, suicide, etc. This can be said that avoidance is the way chosen. The approach-avoidance conflict is complicated to decide. So, compromise with the situation is the only alternative solution to overcome stress resulting from friction. To determine a solution for approach-avoidance conflict the individual has to take a choice depending on the total of positive or negative valences. To deal with the conflicts people should have abilities in creative thinking, different reasoning and proper perception of the situations. Even though motives influence behavior, the person should aware and have self-control (Gans, 2017; Shama, 2017).

It can be said that emotional conflict is experienced by people through their lives. The nursing students in particular situation like the first year of their study had to face the emotional conflict. This can be resolved by their strength. Our nursing college provided the growth group, psychological development to assist the freshmen nursing students to have well adjustment and capacity in dealing with any situations. However, the evidence of growth group affected emotional conflicts among our nursing students is rare. The current study was conducted to identify how the growth group developed can help the nursing students manage their emotional conflicts.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were to;

1. Compare score of conflict of the experimental group before and after participating the growth group
2. Compare score of conflict of the experimental and control group after attending the growth group
3. Compare score of conflict of the experimental and control group at the sixth week follow up

Methodology

The study was a quasi-experimental study focused on developing an emotional management capacity among the nursing students year one of Boromarajonani College of Nursing, Ratchaburi (BCNR). The study was designed as pre-posttest two groups with the sixth week follow up.

Participants

The samples participated in each experimental and control groups were 73 nursing students. The 73 students in the experiment groups volunteered to join the program during the first semester of the academic year 2015. 73 students of the control group had the regular sessions, such as doing exercise or review lesson learned.

The Instrument

There were two types of research tools;

1. The research instrument was the growth group plan involving concepts of growth group, emotional conflict, and case-based learning developed by the researchers. Each group activity took about 45 minutes. There were six sessions.

2. The instrument used for collecting the data was the emotional conflict scales developed by the researchers using Likert's scales.

The emotional conflict scales were tested for reliability by twenty nursing students year three, which showed .81 reliability. The group plan and the emotional scales were commented by three experts.

Data collection

The researchers collected the data between August and October 2015 with the nursing students year one of BCNR

Data analysis

The researchers analyzed the data using t-test.

Ethics consideration

BCNR Ethics Committee approved the study. There was no conflict of interest in the study.

Findings

Emotional conflict scores of the experimental group (\bar{X} 40, SD=.70) after finishing all sessions were lower than those of the control group (\bar{X} =47, SD=.82) (table 1). The findings showed that the emotional conflict scores of the experimental group after the sixth session (\bar{X} 40, SD=.70) were lower than those before joining the groups (\bar{X} =48, SD=.56) with the .05 significance (table 2). After the sixth week follows up, the emotional conflict scores of the

experimental group (\bar{X} =42, SD=.77) were significantly different from the control group's scores(\bar{X} =47, SD=.89) (table 2).

Table 1 Results of t-tests and Descriptive Statistics of scores of conflict by groups

Outcome	Group						t	p
	Experiment			Control				
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n		
After growth group	40	.70	73	47	.82	73	-3.22*	.039
The sixth week follow up	42	.77	73	47	.89	73	-1.71	.044

* p < .05.

Table 2 Results of t-tests and Descriptive Statistics of scores of conflict of experiment group between before and after growth group

Outcome	Growth group						t	p
	before			After				
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n		
Experiment group	40	.70	73	48	.56	73	-3.22*	.032

* p < .05.

Discussions

The findings showed that the emotional conflict scores after the sixth session (\bar{X} 40, SD=.70) were lower than those before joining the groups (\bar{X} =48, SD=.56) with the .05 significance. The emotional conflict scores of the experimental group (\bar{X} 40, SD=.70) after finishing all sessions were lower than those of the control group (\bar{X} =47, SD=.82). After the sixth week follows up, the emotional conflict scores of the experimental group (\bar{X} =42, SD=.77) were significantly different from the control group's scores(\bar{X} =47, SD=.89). As the results of the study, the researchers discussed in conflicts of Thai nursing students and curative factors of the growth group beneficial to those students.

The study revealed that some participants were forced or asked by the parents to study the nursing programme. Similarly, the results found in the survey conducted in Khon Kaen University, Thailand by Sricamsuk, Voraharn, & Senarak (2011). The issue was influenced by Thai values that being a nurse would be part of life security. However, most Thai tertiary students were the students who finished the secondary school. They were adolescent and may not have much intention in nursing professional compared to other fashionable areas. So they had an approach-avoidance conflict that they did not like to be the nurses but had to do (Gans, 2017; Shama, 2017). In comparison, the study conducted by Reid-Searl, Moxham, Walker, & Happell (2009) in Australia with the final year nursing students found that the nursing students had internal conflicts about fear and anxiety about passing the course, getting a job, and avoid harm to patients. This is different from the results found in the current study and gives us to understand the conflict situations among nursing students within a different culture (Gans, 2017; Shama, 2017).

The study found that after participating the growth group, those participants could resolve their conflicts. It could be said that the growth group designed by the researchers based on dynamic group frame can help the nursing students in dealing with their conflicts occurred during the first year study. This is because the group sessions included the curative factors like friendships, trusts, ventilation, sharing, giving advice, and supporting. Moreover, as they were the same age, teenager, they could accept what friends expressed in the group. That the facilitators were trained to be the growth group leaders, they were able to lead the groups to reach the goals. Furthermore, the uses of case-based learning in the group sessions help the students to think critically about the situation given. They can widen their view when considering life problems. They had chances to analyze each conflict situations. This made them become more compliance and accept their conditions later.

Conclusions

The study of developing an emotional management capacity among the nursing students year one of BCNR revealed that the nursing students faced with the internal conflict. The well-designed growth group can help the nursing students in managing the conflicts.

Limitations

As the study was conducted in Thailand, there may be some limitations in transferring to other countries. The restrictions relate to cultural differences and social values.

Recommendation

The researchers recommended that knowledge gained from the study can be utilized in nursing education, policy making, and health care providing as described following.

1. The nursing educators should provide growth group focusing on decreasing internal conflict among new nursing students.
2. The policymaker should consider the process of admission to be feasible in Thai society.
3. The health care providers should adopt the growth group or develop the one suitable to assist education parties.

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