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PINNARATE GADUDOM: PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING COMPETENCY OF NURSING FACULTY IN NURSING COLLEGES UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH. THESIS ADVISORS: SUNEE LAGAMPAN, M.Sc., Ed.D. TASSANEE NONTASORN, M.Ed., Ph.D. PAILIN NUKULKIT, M.Ed., Ph.D. 125 p. ISBN 974-662-432-6.

Problem-based learning in nursing education is one tool to boost the learner's problem solving ability. This type of an approach places the student at the center of the learning process. The teacher is the supporter, facilitator, and encourager of learning. The purposes of this study were to compare, describe of relationships and describe variance of the problem-based learning competency. The measurement was done with a questionnaire consisting of a 4 part rating scale with reliability = 0.73 - 0.97, developed by the researcher. The sample (n = 176) who participated in problem-based learning in academic years 1997 & 1998, were selected by multistage random sampling method. The statistical analysis was done by SPSS/PC<sup>+</sup> program including percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, one way ANOVA, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis.

The finding showed that nursing faculty have a high level of problem-based learning competency. The problem-based learning competency of nursing faculty members who have older age, educational level, teaching experience, problem-based learning experience, problem-based learning training/seminar experience, attitude towards problem-based learning, and knowledge of problem-based learning was significantly greater than those who have lower degree of these factors (p - value < 0.05). However faculty members who have different teaching tasks were not significantly different. The problem-based learning competency of nursing faculty has positive relationship with attitude towards problem-based learning, knowledge of problem-based learning and age at medium level and with educational level, teaching experience, problem-based learning experience and problem-based learning training/seminar experience at low level. Attitude towards problem-based learning, knowledge of problem-based learning and age revealed a variance of problem-based learning competency at 46.89 %.

This study suggests that nursing faculty and nursing education administrators should consider more about problem-based learning and have a positive attitude towards it. The knowledge of problem-based learning should be improved by formal and informal continuing education. These will help encourage the success of problem-based learning.