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SUJITRA PAESUPUTT : HELPING RELATIONSHIP AND STRESS IN
CLINICAL PRACTICE OF NAVAL NURSING STUDENTS. THESIS ADVISORS :
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The clinical component of education is one of the most stressful experiences for nursing students and influences their performances. Clinical instructors perform roles to facilitate nursing students to get through the objective of clinical experiences. The relationship between a clinical instructor and nursing students should be a helping relationship. The purposes of this study were to : a) describe the helping relationship of a clinical instructor, b) identify stress situations as appraised by nursing students after their first clinical practice, and c) ascertain the correlation between the helping relationship of clinical instructors and students' stress. Lazarus and Folkman's stress, appraisal, and coping theory was used as the conceptual framework of the study. Sixty female naval nursing students were the sample for this study. They described stress situations based on their first clinical practice, marked their level of stress on a visual analog scale, and completed a Helping Relationship Scale. Descriptions of stressful situations were analyzed by content analysis, stress level and the helping relationship of a clinical instructor were analyzed by program SPSS/PC.

Results indicated that the stress situations of nursing students can be categorized into three groups : 1) Situations that nursing students had no experience before, 2) situations that had an impact on students' self-esteem, and 3) conflicting situations and insufficient material resources. Nursing students had a moderate level of stress (63.3%). The helping relationships of the clinical instructor as perceived by nursing students were good (100%). There were no statistically significant correlation between the helping relationship of clinical instructors and students' levels of stress.

The results of this study can be used as baseline information to develop interventions for helping naval nursing students cope with stress situations.