

Factors associated with Emergency Nurses' practices towards disaster management

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Introduction: Recent years, the world is appalled by the increasing number of major catastrophic events such as the earthquake in China, Japan and recently Nepal, Katrina hurricane in the United States, flooding in Florida, United States and tsunami in many countries, for instance, Indonesia and Japan. Although Malaysia lies far from the Pacific Ring of Fire, it does not keep Malaysia far away from disasters. The most recent disaster event occurred was 6.0 Richter scale earthquake in Sabah, located at the island of Borneo. Disasters kill thousands people and damage huge numbers of habitat and properties each year, which gives a huge impact to the community involved. Therefore, the fundamental of disaster management is important for every emergency nurses as frontline, where its understanding will reduce the impact of disaster and its aftermath.

Objective: The study intended to identify emergency nurses' practice towards disaster management and its associated factors.

Methodology: This cross-sectional study design was carried out between Mac and May 2013. The data were collected among 65 (100%) of emergency nurses who works in 3 government hospitals of East Coast region of Malaysia. This study utilised questionnaire developed by Ahayalimudin (2012) 'KAP towards disaster management' and the data were analysed using Chi-square and Fisher Exact test.

Results: Merely 60% (n=39) of emergency nurses had shown adequacy in their practice towards disaster management. Of 65 emergency nurses involved in this study, the majority of nurses with age of 30 and above (41.5%, n=27) demonstrate their adequacy in practice towards disaster management. In regards to level of education, about 35 (59.3%) emergency nurses with diploma and of 43 emergency nurses graduated in year 2000 and above, about 26 (60.5%) shows their adequacy in practice. It have been statistically proven that their working experience in emergency settings ($p=0.013$), involvement in disaster response ($p< 0.001$) and attended disaster education ($p< 0.001$) were significantly associated with their practice.

Conclusion: It has been recognised that emergency nurses were lacking in regards to practice in disaster management parallel to their involvement which almost 80% never have an opportunities to be involved in disaster response. These research outcomes may beneficial to strengthen their practice as emergency nurses during disaster events. With the enforcement from the health care institutions in relations to conducting frequent education/training perhaps emergency nurses can be prepared in advance while dealing with disaster victims.

Keywords: Disaster management; Disaster; Emergency nurses; Practice; Public hospital, East Coast region Malaysia