Development of Nursing Profession in Thailand

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Thailand, formerly known as Siam, is located in South East Asia.

- This country is the third largest in Southeast Asian countries.
- There are 67 million citizens.
- Most of Thai citizens are Buddhists.
- Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Malaysia all border Thailand.

Health workforce (2015)
- Mds = 52,499
- Nurses = 192,630
- Pharmacists = 34,700
- Dentists = 13,000
- Others = 33,535
Scope of content

- The support from Royal family
- The first nurses
- Nursing Education
- Admission requirement
- Thai nursing Council & Professional Act
- Career pathways for general & advanced nursing practice.
- Issues and challenges
- conclusion
The tragedy of losing her infant child to cholera and the high maternal death rate motivated her to establish the first school of nursing and midwifery.

Queen Sripatcharintra, daughter of King Rama IV and the queen of King Rama V, introduced Modern Nursing to Thailand.
Queen Sri Savarindira was a consort of King Rama V, who supported nursing education in Thailand.

Her contribution include building new schools, donating her personal funds to support the improvement and administrations of schools as well as providing scholarships for nurses to study abroad.

Queen Sri Savarindira, Mother of Prince Mahidol and The Queen Grandmother of both King Rama VIII and King Rama IX.
Prince Mahidol, father of King’s Rama VIII and King Rama IX who is considered the father of medicine in Thailand.

Statue of Prince Mahidol Adulyadej in Sirirej Hospital
Prince Mahidol, received his medical education as physician from Harvard University, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

1926, he invited the Rockefeller foundation to improve the quality of nursing and medical education in Thailand.

1956, the first four-year program leading to a Bachelor of Nursing Science degree was established.
Her Royal Highness Princess Srinagarindra, was graduated from the first Thai nursing school and also got a scholarship from Queen Sri Savarindira to further studies nursing in USA.

Upon the death of Prince Mahidol, she continued to provide scholarship to medical students and she play a major role in field of nursing in Thailand.

She founded the Thailand Nursing Association, she was also a broad member.

With her funds, the first national nursing convention was organized in 1960.

Hospital buildings and nursing schools were built with her patronage.
In 1969, she established the first medical volunteer mobile unit in Chiangmai Province, called "The Princess Mother's Medical Volunteers". The team included physicians, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, and other health professionals who volunteered their time on weekends to assist the ill and offer consultative services to the public without charge.

She runs many social welfare projects for the poor people.

She was affectionately called Somdet Ya “the Royal Grandmother”.

The hill tribe people, to whom she was a special patron, she was called Mae Fha Luang “Royal Mother from the Sky” or “The Heavently Royal Mother.”
The first group of nurses were daughters of urban nobility, this young woman were only one who had the necessary 3 years of schooling required for entrance into nursing.
Nursing education in Thailand has more than 100 years’ of history.

In 1896 the first school of nursing and midwifery was established at Siriraj hospital, due to the Queen’s Sripatchariantra of King Rama V wishes to reduce maternal deaths and infant mortality rates.

The initial nursing curriculum emphasized on midwifery and taught by physicians from foreign countries.

All of the nursing courses were hospital based in a diploma level.

When Prince Mahidol returned after graduation from Harvard University, in the U.S.; he began to develop a knowledge-based nursing education program.
In 1956, the first program of baccalaureate degree in nursing education was established at the School of Nursing and Midwifery at the Siriraj of Mahidol University.

After World War II, the number of nursing schools was increased due to the shortage of nurses.

In 1971, with the establishment of the first Nursing Faculty at Khon Kaen University, nursing became an independent profession.
The first program of master’s degree in nursing was established at the education faculty of Chulalongkorn University in 1973.

The international doctoral nursing program (DNS) began in 1999, by the collaboration among the FON at Mahidol U, Chiang Mai U, Khon Kaen U and Prince Songkla U. as well as two departments of nursing from Mahidol U.

The students that entered this DNS program had the opportunity to study at both Mahidol U, and a selected overseas university.

When students studied abroad, they were monitored by supervisors with expertise in the area related to their dissertations.
In 2014, the post-master residency training programs for advanced practice nursing was established in Ramathibodi SON Mahidol U. & FON Chulalongkorn U. This program similarly as DNP in the U.S.

During the past ten years, the number of nursing schools has increased significantly under the leadership of governmental and private institutions.

At present, the nursing programs in Thailand are at least:

- 84 undergraduate,
- 45 master,
- 12 doctoral programs and
- 2 programs of post-master residency training
In 1985 the Nursing Council of Thailand was established to promote education and research and monitor the professional conduct of nurses and midwives.

As with Japanese and Taiwanese nurses associations, the Thailand Nursing Council is expanding its interest and activities beyond the national level such as active participation in the International Council of Nurses and hosting international nursing conferences.

Currently, many of university school of nursing in Thailand has collaboration with school of nursing from abroad and hosting international nursing conferences.
In Thailand: The Professional Nursing and Midwifery Act, B.E.2528 (1985)

- 52 sections
  - N&M council 6-10
  - Members 11-13
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  - The functioning of the committees 24-26
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  - Penalties 46-48
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To date, a baccalaureate degree in nursing is the entry-level requirement for working as a professional nurse in Thailand (Ministry of Education, 2008).

There are two main routes to enter the program after high school to become a professional nurse. (Anders & Kunavikikul, 1999).
Admission Requirements

- The first route is to attend four-year nursing program at a university that is within the Ministry of Education system.
  - To enter these programs, high school graduates must take a rigorous national entrance examination that includes subjects such as biology, chemistry, English, Thai language, social studies, and mathematics.
  - A high grade point average from high school and acceptable performance on an additional entrance examination administered by the particular institution may also be required.
  - In most circumstances, available seats for nursing students are very limited at the university level compared to those in the United States.
The second route is to enroll in a nursing program sponsored by the Ministry of Public Health, the military, a police department, a metropolitan school, the Red Cross, or a private university.

An entrance examination is also required by each institution.

Admission into master’s and doctoral programs as well as post-master residency training programs and available seats are very limited.
General Nursing Practice

- To obtain a registered nursing license, students who have earned a BSN degree are eligible to take the national licensing examination.

- Students who may have attended a two-year technical nursing program, popular in the 1980s, and received an associate degree in nursing (ADN), are eligible to pursue two additional years of nursing education to obtain a BSN.

- The majority of nurses with ADN degrees have furthered their education towards a BSN degree since this is now the entry level degree needed to practice nursing in Thailand.
General Nursing Practice

- The Thailand Nursing Council is responsible for the licensure examination for BSN graduates to become registered nurses.

- Subjects covered on the examination are similar to those in Japan and Taiwan and include medical-surgical, pediatric, maternity, midwifery, community health, gerontology, and mental health nursing, plus ethics and law, pharmacology and pathophysiology are not separated from but incorporated into these nursing subject areas.
General Nursing Practice

- By and large, BSN graduates have been employed by governmental and private healthcare institutions at all levels (primary, secondary, and tertiary care).

- All new BSN graduates are employed immediately upon graduation due to an increasing demand for nurses in Thailand. The Thailand Nursing Council has implemented programs for relicensing and continuing education to ensure nurses stay current with clinical and practice information.
Advanced Nursing Practice

- As in Japan and Taiwan, advanced practice nurses (APNs) are needed due to the demand for increased specialization in patient care and health promotion.
- The Thailand Nursing Council has established national standards for licensure and examination of all APN programs.
- Candidates pursuing licensure as an APN, whether CNS or NP, must complete a master’s degree in nursing through the university-based system.
Advanced Nursing Practice

- CNS specialization areas include medical and surgical, pediatric, mental health and psychiatric, geriatric, and maternity nursing.
- NP specialization is currently focused on community health. Candidates must complete a clinical practicum under the supervision of a physician or an APN (one APN per two students).
- A thesis is also required for completion of the program. Licensure examination subjects include advanced pharmacology and pathophysiology, advanced health assessment, health promotion and disease prevention, law, and topics in their area of specialty.
Advanced Nursing Practice

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  - topics in their area of specialty (Thailand Nursing Council).
Five issues and challenges:
that impact the career pathways of
nursing students and nurses in Thailand
including:
1. identity of the nursing profession
2. limited faculty resources,
3. English language barriers,
4. transitions of nursing education, and
5. the provision of culturally competent
care.

Chiang-Hanisko
Identity of the Nursing Profession

- Although the role of nurses in the healthcare systems in Japan, Taiwan, and Thailand has unmistakably advanced in recent years.

- Physicians continue to have a direct impact on the clinical practice and professional development of nursing.

- Traditionally, physicians regarded nurses as their "assistants" and closely controlled their scope of practice.
Identity of the Nursing Profession

- More recently, nurse-physician relations have been improving, perhaps driven by serious nursing shortages and escalating healthcare costs.

- Many physicians have begun to realize that collaboration with nurses may result in improving nurse retention, reducing overall healthcare costs, and ultimately reaching more positive patient outcomes.

- Although, greater nurse-physician collaboration is encouraging; yet the traditional attitudes of “nurse as an assistant” and physician as “principal authority” in patient care decisions persist today.
Identity of the Nursing Profession

- Lacking autonomy in practice, nurses feel their professional status is challenged.

- Attaining a more established professional identity separate from physicians and unique to nursing is a goal toward which nurses in all three countries continue to strive.
Limited Faculty Resources

- Working in an academic position is associated with elevated status in most Asian countries.
- It relatively easier to attract nurses into academic positions in these countries than in some other countries.
- However, many nurses holding faculty positions have inadequate clinical experience.
- The lack of clinically qualified faculty to teach in both undergraduate and graduate programs has been a serious problem in nursing institutions in all three countries.

(Lu, 2004; Turale, Ito, & Nakao, 2008)
Limited Faculty Resources

...many nurses holding faculty positions have inadequate clinical experience.

- faculty who entered SON in the 1970s & 1980s, and who have been promoted based on seniority and not merit, are still actively teaching.
- New doctoral prepared faculty often have limited clinical exposure and do not understand the realities of nursing practice too.
- This lack of current clinical experience brings about a disconnect between education and clinical practice (Chou et al., 2005).
English Language Barriers

- It concerns the use of textbooks translated from English.
- Some translations do not capture the contextual meaning of the medical and nursing terminology used.
- Some nursing programs will therefore avoid the use of translated textbooks and attempt to use the original English language textbook.
English Language Barriers

- This can often be a burden to nursing students and faculty with limited English-language-proficiency skills.

- Opportunities for career growth may be restricted for nurses with limited English-language proficiency. A greater emphasis on helping nursing students master the English language is needed.
Transitions of Nursing Education

- The healthcare systems in Japan, Taiwan, and Thailand are experiencing ongoing changes to increase healthcare accessibility and specialization, with an emphasis on multidisciplinary collaboration and accountability.

- Nursing education in the three countries is responding by restructuring and upgrading curricula, clinical competencies, and specialization to raise the professionalism of nursing practice.
Transitions of Nursing Education

- Although there has been much progress in responding to these changes in healthcare delivery, disparate routes for entry-level nursing programs persist; and widely varying levels of licensing for general practice are common.

- While multiple entry points may attract more students into various nursing programs, the quality of care provided by graduates below the baccalaureate level is questionable and may be inadequate for today’s and tomorrow’s professional healthcare environment.

Ozawa et al., 2006
Transitions of Nursing Education

- The continuation of nursing programs under the baccalaureate level delays the transition of nursing education into the university system and hinders a clear set of standards for examination and licensure.

- Also, the complexity of the nursing education system and licensure process can be confusing to the public and negatively impact the image of nursing.

- Discontinuing nursing programs under the baccalaureate level can help to move the profession of nursing forward.
Provision of Culturally Competent Care

Greater emphasis on providing culturally competent care is needed to ensure that nurses are prepared to work in a multicultural world.
Conclusion

- Although, each country is faced with many nursing issues and challenges as mention above.

- It is interesting to note the rapid expansion of APN, master's, and doctoral nursing programs.

- In Thailand, the post master residency training program (3 years) which focus on the high qualified APN similar as DNP in the USA was initiate.
Differentiation criteria in nursing practice based upon levels of education, experience, and competency will continue to be established as the healthcare system demands higher levels of abilities and competencies from nurses.

In Thailand, have “the professional N&M Act, B.E.2528(1985) which more focus for general nurses and keep continued to develop for APN.
Future career pathways for nurses will occur as nurses more clearly define their identity, increase their skills, and adapt to new work environments.

Developing new career pathways by establishing more consistent requirements for education, professionalism, licensure, English language ability, and culturally competent care, they will continue to develop new career opportunities for all nurses throughout Asia.
“Nurses have always been a resilient group and have been able to respond to challenges proactively in order to create new and exciting opportunities to improve health of people and also improve our profession.”
PhD/DNS (3-5)  Cert. Broad of APN (3)

MSN (2-5)

RN > 1 year

BSN (4)  BSN (2)

High school grade 12

2. Chiang-Hanisko “Pathways to Progress in Nursing: Understanding Career Patterns in Japan, Taiwan and Thailand” OJIN.


Thank you for your attention