The enhancement of Indonesian nurses capacity to face global health challenges

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Abstract

Objective: Nurses as an integral part of the health system play a pivotal role in the global health. They could be a great resource to engage in various global, and multi-professional actions. Nevertheless, there are barriers that hinder their capacity in contributing for global health, particularly in language and clinical competences. This study aimed to identify strategies for the improvement of nurses capacity in facing global health challenges.

Methods: Literature review was performed in this study. The search strategy from the database of ProQuest, as well as Google scholars, and the official websites of WHO, Ministry of Health and Indonesian e-library was conducted with the following key words: “nursing and global health”, “global health challenges” and “Indonesia nurses problems and qualities”

Results: Some reviews discussed about the need for improving the nurses’ language capacity as a part of culturally sensitive care. The reviews suggested learning strategies that could cover the skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The reviews also suggested distance learning to reach greater nurses outside the classrooms. Other articles highlighted the needs for the enhancement of clinical competences. The articles further indicated Clinical Skill Labs (CSL) as the learning facility that help nurses to develop nursing competences and professionalism. The articles also mentioned about the integration of patient centered care in the nursing curriculum. Last, some articles presented about the importance of international internship exchange programs that could help nurses particularly in experiencing global health issues and analysing the potential problem solving for specific problems in global health.

Conclusion: Strategies to prepare nurses in facing global health challenges included the development of learning methods to improve nurses’ language competences, skill labs and patient- centered care curriculum, and participation in international internship exchange programs.

Keywords: Competences, global health, Indonesia, nurses.

Introduction

Global health challenges are getting more complex than ever. The incidence of non-communicable and emerging diseases continue to evolve, yet, the incidence of communicable diseases remain high. These problems occur worldwide, and therefore necessary actions are required.

Nurses, as an integral part of healthcare professionals, play a vital role in meeting global health needs. WHO listed nursing roles in global health, including in establishing and maintaining a good relationship with the government, raising nurses’ accountability, enhancing professionalism and competences, and building networks with those who have sincere will and commitment to invest in nursing. In other words, nurses could contribute in global health through networks, collaboration, education and multisectoral actions across nation borders.

Indonesia has abundantly potential resources in Indonesia. Every year, there are 288,045 nursing graduates. Nonetheless, many remain unemployed. Only few could work in the healthcare organisations, and even fewer are able to practice in the global health settings.

Various factors could contribute to the underutilisation of nurses. A study identified lack of competences, professionalism and language ability of nurses could give rise to this problem. If the problem is not resolved, the national health system will be negatively affected. In the long run, it will hinder the capacity of the nation to engage in the global health efforts. Accordingly, nurses need to focus on identifying strategies to address those factors.
This literature review aimed to explore the possible strategies to develop nurses' capacity in facing global health challenges. This review will highlight the root of the problems, analyse them, and provide recommendations that, we believed, could be useful for Indonesian nurses in preparing themselves to face global health challenges.

**Methods**

The design of this study was literature review, with the purpose to explore the strategies to prepare the Indonesian nurses facing global health challenges. The articles were taken from the database of ProQuest, along with Google Scholars, the official websites of WHO, Ministry of Health Republic of Indonesia, e-News, and Indonesian e-library. The search terms of “nursing and global health”, “global health challenges” and “Indonesia nurses problems and qualities” were entered to the databases and websites.

The selection was limited to the articles that met the following inclusion criteria: 1) articles with the topics on the enhancement of nurses capacity facing global health challenges, 2) published in between 1990-2016; and 3) in Bahasa Indonesia or English language. The selection process included reviewing the inclusion for titles, and abstracts. After being selected, the articles then were analysed specifically on the enhancement of nurses’ capacity to face global health challenges.

**Results and Discussion**

**Enhancement of language competence**

Five articles reviewed about the importance of foreign language proficiency for nurses. Most nursing care activities require both verbal and written communication skills and therefore nurses must have the ability to master the language used in the healthcare. When nurses fail to deliver a clear message to their colleagues, patients, other healthcare professionals, and even in the patient health records, then patient safety would be at risk. Apparently, language proficiency had been one of the most critical competences for nurses.

In the era of free-trade and globalisation, there would be a demand for Indonesian nurses to be fluent in English as the world’s most widely spoken language. Nevertheless, a study indicated that most Indonesian nurses’ capacity in English language was quite low. Thus, there has been an urgent need to enhance the language ability of nurses. When the nurses possess language competence, or, in a greater view, cultural competence, health system would be positively impacted, which then would contribute to the achievement of health-related Millennium Development Goals.

The improvement of language competence amongst nurses could be done through various ways, including by a comprehensive method that integrate the attainment of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. The strategy may also include technology-based distance learning to better reach nurses outside the class. Another progressive efforts may be conducted to support continuing learning system, such as by developing language training, counseling, and research centers.

**Improvement of clinical competences along with the language competence**

Five articles highlighted barriers for nurses in passing the National Nursing Licensure Exam. Of 40,380 nursing students from 257 institutions participated in the exam, nearly half of them failed (46.39%). In fact, despite many Indonesian nurses were sent to Japan, most of them were not successful in the Japanese National Nursing Licensure Exam and had to return to Indonesia. Thus, there is still a great challenge for nursing academic institutions in developing the learning system that could assist their students in the National exam.

One of the key approaches to improve student’s clinical competences is Clinical Skill Laboratories (CSL). In the CSL, students need to perform nursing care in the lab settings before they have clinical practice in the real settings of healthcare services. This is essential for them to understand necessary skills and values in nursing practice. Also, it helps them in delivering care that promotes patient safety.

Beside CSL, the academic institutions also need to integrate the concepts of patient-centered care in all nursing curriculum. This concept could benefit nurses in comprehending the needs of the patients and recognizing the shift of the healthcare system. The concept of patient-centered care could work as a guideline for nurses in establishing professionalism.

**Active participation in the International internship exchange programs**

Some reviews presented the need for international internship exchange programs. These programs will help students to build self-confident and exercise their adaptability in a new environment. The programs will also help them to understand the actual global health issues and to deal with them.

Those who participated in the internship exchange programs would be more likely to engage in the community services especially for minorities and low-resource population. In addition, they would gain greater skills in health promotion and disease prevention compared to those who do not participated in such programs. In fact, they would be able to improve their skills in culturally sensitive care.

Indeed, international internship exchange programs provide rooms for personal and professional growth of the students. These activities could be the effective way in shaping students to be qualified nurses. Thus, academic institutions need to collaborate with the government and/or other relevant counterparts to establish cooperation.
particularly in the international internship exchange programs.

**Conclusion**

Nurses are facing global health challenges, and therefore they need to get ready. There are three strategies to help nurses in facing these challenges; improving (english) language competence, improving clinical skills, and, last, actively participating in the International exchange programs. We suggested the effective, and technology based learning strategy to improve the nurse’s language skill. We also recommended the improvement of clinical competences through clinical skill laboratories. Last, we recommended nurses to be actively engaged in the international internship exchange programs to help them growing their capacity in networking and dealing with the actual global health challenges.

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**References**