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A Needs Assessment in Research Methodology of Naval Medical Department Personnel

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Abstract

The purpose of this descriptive research was to study the needs for Naval Medical Department personnel to understand research methodology. The 324 samples consisted of physicians, dentists, pharmacologists, medical technicians, physiologists, psychologists, radiologists, nutritionists, social workers, professional nurses and technical nurses who were recruited by stratified random sampling. The research instrument was a questionnaire consisted of 2 parts: a 5-rating scale and dual response items. The instrument was tested for content validity using 5 experts, and the reliability of the instrument was equal to 0.99. To analyze the data, the descriptive statistics and PNI_{Modified} were used for needs assessment. The findings were: 1. The need for information about research methodology, using both detailed and overall scores, included the statistics used and data analysis, research project management, and publication. 2. The need for information about the research introduction aspect included the operational definition of variables writing and variables identification. 3. The need for information about the research design aspect included the qualitative research, the future research and the research and development. 4. The need for information about the statistics used and the data analysis aspect included the nonparametric statistics and discriminant analysis. 5. The need for information about the data analysis presentation, conclusions and findings discussion aspect included the data analysis presentation and the conclusions and findings discussion. 6. The need for information about the research publication aspect included the research article writing and the presentation in academic conference. 7. The need for information about the research project management aspect included research project writing for receiving the grants and the research funding agencies.

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1. Background and Rationale

The missions of Naval Medical Department are to direct, coordinate, suggest, supervise, and conduct health services, medical logistics, research, and medical development together with other missions as designated. Conducting researches is one of the important missions the Naval Medical Department focuses on to encourage its personnel to help construct a larger body of knowledge related to health services provided by the department. According to the information stated in the 18th annual academic conference of Naval Medical Department, it was however found that on average there were only 15 researches published yearly, and most of them were conducted by physicians. There were not as many as expected from other medical staff such as dentists, medical technicians, and nurses. Moreover, the application of the conducted researches is still unclear.

Research and Research Support Committee, Naval Medical Department is responsible for promoting, supporting and providing advices in relation to research conduct to units under the medical department, and is therefore interested in conducting research on need analysis of personnel's understanding of research methodology. This is because, comparing to other types of study, needs assessment is a method to gather more valid and concrete information to be presented to the supervisors. It will reflect the actual conditions, causes, solutions, and preventions of a problem (Wongwanich, 2005). This research hence would provide information related to the need of the Naval Medical Department personnel to understand the research methodology which eventually would lead to benefits gained for conducting Research Competency Development Project or for providing the accurate research advices that respond to the needs of the personnel. Responding to the needs would stimulate the personnel's confidence to conduct more valuable researches as required by the Naval Medical Department.

2. Research Objectives

To study the needs in understanding of the research methodology of Naval Medical Department personnel.

3. Research Methodology

This research was a descriptive research.

Research Population were 3,122 medical personnel of the Naval Medical Department. The sample size was calculated based on Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1976) and the calculation came up with 399 samples. The samples were composed of physicians, dentists, pharmacologists, medical technicians, physiologists, radiologists, social workers, psychologists, nutritionists, professional nurses and technical nurses who were recruited by stratified random sampling.

Research Instrument was a questionnaire consisted of 2 parts. The first part was about personal data and the second part was a dual response data on needs to understand research methodology. The second part which was a 48-item 5-rating scale questionnaire focused on collecting 2 types of information: current knowledge on research methodology and expectation to gain knowledge in research methodology.

Validation of Research Instrument

The validation of research instrument was investigated by 5 experts in terms of objectivity of each item and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient and it was equal to .99.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted after obtaining permission from the units of Naval Medical Department that the medical personnel were attached to. The questionnaires were then distributed and returned via navy post. There were 324 complete questionnaire returned which made up of 81.20 percent.

Data Analysis

1. Analyze personal data related current knowledge on research methodology by using descriptive statistic.
2. Analyze and prioritize the needs to develop the competency of the Naval Medical Department personnel

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