CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Nurses can be categorized as one of the important characters that provide hospitality toward the patients in the hospital. Apart from medical officers and healthcare assistants, nurses are also essential in complementing the doctors’ work (Roberts 2010). This is simply because nurses not only assist the doctors in the surgery rooms but also help in updating the doctors regarding the patient’s health status regularly. Next, according to the Ministry of Health Singapore Nursing website portal, nurses can be defined as a profession that interacts with people’s lives that require care due to sickness or infirmity. Other than that, nurses also oversee the management of patients by performing clinical assessments of physical and mental aspects. In addition, they also facilitate treatment and care on the patient’s comfortability in terms of hygiene in the wards so that the patient can recover tremendously.

In Malaysia, there are 88,908 nurses that work at the Ministry of Health Malaysia while 37,729 nurses work in the public and private sectors as recorded in late December 2015 (Perutusan Hari Jururawat Antarabangsa 2016, 2016). These come from a variety of departments in the hospitals such as Gynaecology, Anaesthetic, Critical Care, Cardiology Department and others (Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia 2011). Moreover, there are four categories of nurses in Malaysia, such as community nurses, staff nurses, registered nurses, and midwives (Nursing Schools and Colleges in Malaysia - Kolej Kejururawatan, n.d.). However, this statistic shows a decreasing trend in the number of nurses as based on the Health Indicator 2015, which stated that the number of nurses in 31 December 2014 was 92,681 nurses, which is slightly higher than in late 2015 (Ministry of Health Malaysia 2015). This happened might be due to the factors of the
work environment, age, personality traits and occupational factors (Growing Nursing Numbers - Literature review on nurses leaving the NHS, n.d.).

Next, the example of common occupational factors that might triggered the nurses to turn over or eliminate interest toward this field are accident of infectious disease, needle stick injury, stress, low back pain and work - musculoskeletal disorder. This is simply because the job scope of nurses which interact and served the patients (Stone et al. 2004; Tan 1991; Dajah & Daghi 2015; Keriri 2013). In addition, it is proven by previous study that 7.5 % of prevalence for nurses acquiring CTS (Ithnin et al. 2012) can exposed or conduce the nurses to have the disease or syndrome. CTS also resulted in 30 days away from works (Personick 1997). This will surely affected the productivity of the organisation due to the absenteeism. If certain safety procedures are not been done while handling the patient, nurses have high risk or most likely to be infected by contagious disease. If this situation getting severe among nurses, this will affect the number of them in the future subsequently Malaysia may experience shortage of nurses.

The definition of carpal tunnel syndrome can be explain as the person can feel the tingling, numbness, weakness and other problem of the hand due to the compression on the median nerve in the wrist (Carpal Tunnel Syndrome - Symptoms, Causes, Treatment, Exams and Test for Carpal Tunnel, n.d.). This syndrome affects about 1% of working-aged people and is the commonest cause of hand pain in manual workers (Saint-Lary et al. 2015). As the syndrome worsen, the person might have experience weak grip strength or feel pain in their arm between their hand and elbow. It is reported that in Germany, decompression of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is among the most frequently performed surgical intervention which 90% of 300 000 operation are carried out by surgery (Giersiepen & Spallek 2011). Moreover, there are several factors that can cause CTS which are due to the individual risk factors and occupational risk factors. The example of individual risk factors are age, sex, medical history and duration of service. While for ergonomic risk factors are repetitive work especially in handling task in awkward posture (Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Risks: Repetitive Motion, Smoking, and More, n.d.). Consequently, if the person with this syndrome is not getting treated or sometimes the condition is severe, the nerve and muscle damage in the hands can be permanent. The most common permanent problems face by he/she is weakened hand muscles and chronic pain. Fortunately, most CTSs’ symptoms can be controlled with proper treatment.
Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the prevalence of CTS symptoms among nurses in Hospital in Melaka so that proper treatment and improvement can be done to prevent or treat the symptoms. This is to avoid shortage of long experience and skilful nurses so that they can provide their service with ease along with the doctor to treat patients.

1.2 Problem Statement

Nurses can be considered as the back bone of health care where they have wide job’s scope that need to be covered. They used mostly of their arm, hand and wrist to handle patient. In addition, they also need to prepare a lot of paper works and reports which require them to type and this lead to repetitive motion. Other than that, nurses that work in Surgery Department, apart from assist the specialist during operation, they also need to follow and prepare the procedures for surgery. For instance, they need to clean and arrange all the equipment and tools which weight around 5 – 10 kg per set per operation. Moreover, nurses also need to push and pull the patients bed to locate them in ward. This show that forceful exertion is done (Nelson n.d.). As times goes by, this will consequences in Carpal Tunnel