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## **Perception of Staff Nurses on the Participation of Student Nurses of Tobruk University at Tobruk Medical Center**

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### **Abstract**

Nursing is a profession that delivers care artfully with compassion, caring, and respect for each patient's dignity. It embodies necessary skills, knowledge and attitude. Nurses acquired their knowledge and skills through baccalaureate, Master's, or doctorate degree. During their baccalaureate where student nurses started to acquire necessary skills they need as a future nurse. At first, they are taught the skills in their Related Learning Experience from 1 to 4. The student nurses were required to do the graded return demonstrations for their clinical instructors to assess for the readiness of the students for clinical exposure in the hospital. The aim of the study is to determine the participation of the student nurses in providing quality care for the patients in Tobruk Medical Center as perceived by the staff nurses. After gathering and interpreting the data, it was found out female respondents perceived that students have high participation in providing care in promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative. On the other hand, the male respondents perceived that students have low participation in promotive, preventive and rehabilitative. They perceived that students have high participation in curative.

**Keywords:** Perception; Clinical Participation; Clinical Practice.

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## **1. Introduction**

The world of Nursing and healthcare keeps on changing. The impact of these changes together with an acute nursing shortage puts pressure on nursing education programs to teach a larger number of students a greater amount of information in an efficient manner [1]. Nursing is both an art and a science. A nurse should learn to deliver care artfully with compassion, caring, and respect for each patient's dignity. As a science nursing practice is based on a body of knowledge that is continually changing with new discoveries and innovations. When integrating the art and science of nursing in the practice, the quality of care provided to the patients is at the level of excellence that benefits patients and their families [2]. The education of nurses had traditionally been conducted in the hospital-based setting. For the last few decades many countries offered nursing education as a tertiary level-based course. Reasons for this move were numerous with the main goal being to improve the educational experience of students and thus the competence of graduates [3]. Although there is widespread agreement exists that clinical experience is central to learn nursing, a finding suggests that teachers' and students' focus on task completion rather than a deeper understanding and readiness for nursing practice [4]. The idealistic rule bound classroom setting and perception based clinical setting differs that dissonance might occur if not properly guided by clinical instructors, thus resulting in disappointment and devaluation in nursing performance [5]. Nursing theory is relative to clinical practice, as nursing education involves both theoretical and practical process [6]. Nursing education is based upon studies in the arts, sciences and humanities and provides a foundation for continuing personal, professional and educational development. The baccalaureate program is designed to prepare a competent, self-directed, general practitioner of nursing who can assume increasing responsibility and leadership in the delivery of nursing care for individuals, families, groups, communities and societies [7]. In nursing education, clinical learning plays an important role in enriching clinical competences of nursing students as it provides an anticipatory knowledge of the organizational contexts in which nursing care is delivered [8]. A study imploring clinical role in partnership with academic role will help the research/practice gap and assist in facilitating evidence-based clinical practice [9]. As concluded by Iranian authors that the clinical area is the venue where students must relate theory to practice, learn the necessary technical and interpersonal skills, make clinical judgments, become socialized into the profession, and begin to appreciate its values and ethics [6]. Nurses are an important part of each patient's care. They provide continuous care to patients: Assessing the patient, answering questions, giving medications and treatments, and assisting with medical procedures. They have the responsibility to help patients understand the care they will receive and what the patients must do to cooperate in their care. They have the responsibility to explain to patients what they should and shouldn't do as they go through treatment and recovery, and they must quickly respond to patients in need. They are a key part of any healthcare team, and the way they perform their jobs has a real impact on healthcare quality. When giving care, it is essential to provide a specified service according to standards of practice and to follow a code of ethics (American Nurses Association [ANA], 2008, 2010b) [2]. Standards of care, the purpose is to protect the client/consumer. Standards of care are the skills and learning commonly possessed by members of a profession (Guido, 2006) [10]. These standards are used to evaluate the quality of care nurses provide and, therefore, become legal guidelines for nursing practice. One aspect of quality nursing care is professional knowledge, which comprises both experimental knowledge gained from caring for similar patients, and technical competence in performing different skills. Starting with the first year of the

nursing curriculum, students are taught basic nursing skills in their nursing laboratory (Related Learning Experience 1 and 2) and were obliged for their graded Practical Return Demonstration. As it was stated, there is an improvement in the performance in the hospital once students were exposed to practical demonstration [11, 12]. The Practical Return Demonstration (PRD) demonstrated by the clinical instructor on the procedure in nursing laboratory and followed up with return demonstration of the nursing students, then a greater understanding to the purpose and responsibility of a nurse why taking care of the patient is important [7]. On their second year of the nursing course, a student is able to identify various factors contributing to the health care where the foundation of the normal anatomy and physiology is also taught. At level three, the focus of the related learning experience is on Health Care Delivery System which are the health promotion, prevention, curative, and rehabilitative aspects of health care. At the end of the fourth level, the student is expected to have been fully equipped with the acquired knowledge, attitude, and have fully harness his skills needed to begin a professional nursing practice and be able to work independently or in collaboration with others in health promotion, illness prevention, health restoration, and rehabilitation of clients in hospitals, Clinics or other health institutions. The preamble of the Code of Ethics for nurses, it states that nurses have four fundamental responsibilities: to promote health, to prevent illness, to restore and to alleviate suffering. The need for nursing is universal. Inherent in nursing is respect for human rights, including cultural rights, the right to life and choice, to dignity and to be treated with respect. Nursing care is respectful of and unrestricted by considerations of age, color, creed, culture and disability or illness, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, politics, race or social status (International Council of Nurses, 2000) [10]. Another concern is the interaction of the student nurse with the patient and with the staff nurses. When the patient meets the student nurse for the first time, the way the student nurse presents himself or herself has an impact on the client's perception of that student's capabilities. The use of more formal and clear language with clients can obtain feelings of self-esteem in the client which is important in encouraging active client participation in care activities. Proper behavior encompasses a wide latitude subject. This study aims to focus on two important aspects, the non-verbal and verbal components of communication, and to identify the various observations of staff nurses regarding student nurses' appropriate behavior as they perform the daily routines in the hospital. Student nurses are expected to comply with the standards of the nursing profession. Part of the nursing profession is the practice of the appropriate behavior. Appropriate behavior is often reflected one's practice of communication and also revealed in one's personal appearance and grooming. This study aims to know if the students have high participation in providing quality care for their patients in Tobruk Medical Center-TMC, Tobruk, Libya. The null hypothesis of the study is that there is no significant difference between female and male staff nurses on their perception of students' participation in quality nursing care. The study is limited to the perception of 40 selected nurse staff at Tobruk Medical Center currently handling students of Tobruk University doing clinical duty if they are performing quality nursing care in terms of promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative aspect.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

The research employed a descriptive non-experimental research with purposive sampling assessment were the respondents will come from the hospital. The study used the questionnaire method of research among staff nurses with assigned group of student nurses rotated in selected wards of the hospital. The study aims to find out the participation of the Student Nurses of Tobruk University College of Nursing in providing quality care as

perceived by the staff nurses in Tobruk Medical center.

### 2.1 Study Sample

The respondents were forty staff nurses of Tobruk Medical Center who had direct interaction with student nurses from Tobruk University. The proponents selected 20 male and 20 female respondents for equal comparison purposes.

### 2.2 Research Tools/Instrument

The researcher used the tested and formulated questionnaire patterned after the preamble of the Code of Ethics for Nurses (International Council of Nurses).

It states that nurses have four fundamental responsibilities: to promote health, to prevent illness, to restore and alleviate suffering. The four fundamental responsibilities were presented in the questionnaire as promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative aspect of nursing care [10].

### 2.3 Data Measures

Collected data were tallied and organized into tables to permit ease of analysis. Measures of central tendency using weighted mean is used to look for variation in the relative contribution of individual data values to the mean. After which, the computed results are then analyzed with the use of an interpretation table with specific mean score ranges and a subsequent descriptive rating. Shown below is the interpretation table used for study.

**Table 1:** Range and Adjectival Interpretation

Scale	Range	Adjectival Interpretation
4	3.51 – 4.00	Very High Participation
3	2.51 – 3.50	High Participation
2	1.51 – 2.50	Low Participation
1	1.00 – 1.50	Very Low Participation

An independent t-test will be performed to determine if significant association exists between the profile of the respondents and their job performance based on gender.

### 2.4 Software Tools

The researchers used Microsoft Excel as a tally sheet and permit the data to be computed using function average for mean, stdev for standard deviation sample size. Tallied values undergone data analysis tool pack to get the difference of mean between male and female staff nurses by computing for t-test and p value.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Data were organized using table to permit ease of analysis. Measures of central tendency like weighted mean and standard deviation were presented together with equivalent adjectival rating for the staff nurses evaluation of nursing students' participation in nursing care. An independent t-test and p value data analysis were used to determine the difference in response when grouped according to gender.

**Table 2:** Weighted Mean of Staff Nurses Responses on Student Nurses Participation

<b>Promotive</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Adjectival Interpretation</b>
1. Encouraged client to maintain cleanliness of the body	2.75	0.59	High Participation
2. Performed nursing activities like oral hygiene	2.23	0.66	Low Participation
3. Nurse maintained cleanliness through changing of linens when necessary	2.75	0.59	High Participation
4. Assisted client in changing clothes	2.88	0.56	High Participation
5. Encouraged client to eat well balanced diet	2.38	0.54	Low Participation
<b>Average weighted mean</b>	<b>2.60</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>High Participation</b>
<b>Preventive</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Adjectival Interpretation</b>
1. Removes all used or discontinued equipment from client area and return them	3.03	0.66	High Participation
2. Provide information about condition of the client	2.43	0.64	Low Participation
3. Teach client how to cope with the disease	2.23	0.62	Low Participation
4. Provides a comfortable and pleasing environment	2.50	0.72	Low Participation
5. Assist Client in performing range of motion exercises	2.13	0.72	Low Participation
<b>Average weighted mean</b>	<b>2.46</b>	<b>0.74</b>	<b>Low Participation</b>
<b>Curative</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Adjectival Interpretation</b>
1. Takes and record vital signs accurately	3.18	0.38	High Participation
2. Observes signs and symptoms, institute remedial actions when appropriate	2.75	0.59	High Participation
3. Assist client in moving, maintaining body alignment and utilizing good body mechanics	2.28	0.68	Low Participation
4. Prepare client for diagnostic and therapeutic procedures	2.65	0.66	High Participation
5. Administer and charts medication and client's reaction to medication	2.58	0.59	High Participation
<b>Average weighted mean</b>	<b>2.69</b>	<b>0.65</b>	<b>High Participation</b>
<b>Rehabilitative</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Adjectival Interpretation</b>
1. Interprets to clients their role in promoting successful therapy and rehabilitation	2.43	0.59	Low Participation
2. Observe and responds to clients emotional and spiritual needs	2.40	0.74	Low Participation
3. Explain the procedures to be done to the client as well as its advantages and disadvantages	2.38	0.77	Low Participation
4. Instruct client on the proper way of taking home medications	2.60	0.71	High Participation
5. Encourages client to have follow up check-ups	2.65	0.70	High Participation
<b>Average weighted mean</b>	<b>2.49</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>Low Participation</b>

As seen in the results, in terms of promotive care, the students recorded the highest in assisting client in changing clothes at 2.88 average and lowest at performing oral hygiene. Removes all used or discontinued

equipment from client area and return them has the highest participation of students based on staff nurses perception while lowest at assisting clients in Range of motion at 2.13 average in preventive care. The highest mean was recorded in curative care as the students participated highly in taking and record vital signs accurately at 3.18 although low participation was found in assisting client in moving, maintaining body alignment and utilizing good body mechanics. The nursing students encourages client to have follow up check-ups with a weighted mean of 2.65 was at highest participation as according to the staff nurses although explaining the procedures to be done to the client as well as its advantages and disadvantages deemed lowest in terms of rehabilitative care.

Overall the staff nurses perceived that the students has high participation in promotive and curative care with 2.60 and 2.69 average weighted mean. On the other hand they believed that the students has low participation in terms of preventive and rehabilitative care with 2.46 and 2.49 mean score. The low participation of students in preventive and rehabilitative care may be because of limited teaching staff handling loads of students in their Related Learning Experience. The lack of teaching materials like nursing books and laboratory manuals; nursing skills laboratory equipment, supplies and models may also attributed to the result [13].

Despite widespread agreement that clinical experience is central to learn nursing, a finding prevalent in school setting suggests that teachers' and students' focus on task completion rather than a deeper understanding and readiness for nursing practice [4], getting the job done and completing the requirements rather than loving the task.

**Table 3:** Differences in Responses between Male and Female Respondents

<b>Participation</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t-stat</b>	<b>p value</b>
Promotive	Female	2.73	0.72	3.4597	0.0025
	Male	2.46	0.50		
Preventive	Female	2.51	0.88	0.9818	0.3379
	Male	2.41	0.55		
Curative	Female	2.80	0.67	2.7425	0.0126
	Male	2.57	0.62		
Rehabilitative	Female	2.75	0.77	8.0955	0.0000
	Male	2.23	0.53		

The respondents were divided into 20 female staff nurses and another 20 male staff nurses. The difference were shown in table 3 were female staff nurses has a higher perception on students participation in all nursing care compared to what the male staff nurses perceived of the nursing students. Despite the difference in their view at preventive care were female has 2.51 and male at 2.41 average, the p value is at 0.3379 which is not <0.05 level of confidence thus indicating no significant difference in their perception. In terms of promotive, curative and

rehabilitative with p value of 0.0025, 0.016 and 0.0000 respectively between female and male respondents, the mean scores differ significantly thus their view of student nurses is not the same and thus rejecting the null hypothesis. The ardent rule bound classroom setting and awareness based clinical setting differs that dissension might occur without proper guidance by the clinical instructors, resulting in disappointment and devaluation in nursing performance in practical setting [5] despite proper training in classroom / laboratory must have caused the result.

#### **4. Conclusion**

As evidence in the results, the students have low participation on promotive, preventive and rehabilitative as perceived by the male nurses. In curative aspect, male nurses perceived that students have high participation. On the other hand, female nurses perceived the students nurses with high participation in all levels of care. Disregarding the gender of the respondent, the staff nurses believed that the students has high participation in promotive and curative care while low participation was observed in preventive and rehabilitative care. The low participation of students may be attributed to lack of teaching staff to handle more students in their Related Learning Experience. It is also due to Lack of learning / teaching materials like nursing books and laboratory manuals; nursing skills laboratory equipment, supplies and models [13].

The wards with male staff are catering male patients. Most nursing students of the college of nursing of Tobruk University are female. As found in the results, in male ward students were not as same in their performance when they are assigned in female wards. It is attributed to the culture that women were traditionally placed in seclusion at puberty [14]. This may be one of the factors that hinder female to have high participation once they handle male patients. Moreover, women have conservative attitudes and values and often dominated by society. These varied with the age, education, and place of residence of the women [15].

#### **5. Recommendation**

Based on the findings and conclusion, the College of Nursing of Tobruk University should enhance the Related Learning Experience curriculum for the students to improve their skills before they will be exposed for their hospital duty. More time for students to practice to enhance their skills. Moreover, the faculty members should be enough for students to have quality teaching for their RLE. The faculty student ratio should be also observed for their Related Experience. It should be emphasized by the faculty that knowledge, skills and attitude are relevant in providing care for patients, thus students should always apply both in classroom and clinical area. As stated by Ericson, developing proficient motor skills involves a continuum that moves understanding and performing skills are internalized and executed automatically and require deliberate practice [2]. Furthermore, the College of Nursing should have virtual laboratory for the students with laboratory equipment, supplies and models to enhance the skills of the students. The University should put up library with learning / teaching materials like nursing books.

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