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Nursing Students' and Clinical Nursing Instructors' Perceptions about the Characteristics of an Effective Clinical Instructor and Clinical Training Policies in Gaza Strip

Mahmoud Sami Elkhateeb

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Prepared by:

Mahmoud Sami Elkhateeb

B.Sc.: Palestine College of Nursing – Palestine

Supervisor: Dr. Hamza Abdeljawad

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Prepared By: Mahmoud S. A. Elkhateeb
Registration No: 21711348

Supervisor: Dr. Hamza Abdeljawad

Master thesis submitted and accepted, Date: / /
The names and signatures of the examining committee members are as follows:

1- Head of Committee:	Dr. Hamza Abdeljawad	Signature: .....
2- Internal Examiner:	Dr. Wael Mekky	Signature: .....
3- External Examiner:	Dr. Atef Ismail	Signature: .....

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my dear parents who gave precious for the sake of my education…

To my brothers and sister…

To my loyal friends…

To my good teachers…

Your love, unwavering support and absolute belief in the completion of this thesis made this educational journey possible. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your caring, encouragement and all the sacrifices you each made along the way!

Mahmoud Sami Elkhateeb

Declaration

I certify that this thesis submitted for the degree of Master, is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and this study (or any part of the same) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signature:

Mahmoud Sami Elkhateeb

Date: / /

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My family and my colleagues for their love and support.

Mahmoud Sami Elkhateeb

Date: / /

Abstract

Clinical instructors play a key role in the success of nursing students' clinical learning, as well as their ability to link theory and practice. Many studies conducted in different parts of the world have demonstrated considerable weaknesses in clinical teaching, most of which have been associated with nursing instructors and clinical training policies. The aim of the study was to assess the nursing students' and nursing clinical instructors' perceptions about the characteristics of an effective clinical instructor and clinical training policies that may contribute to improving the quality of clinical nursing education at the colleges that run bachelor of nursing programs in Gaza Strip. A descriptive cross-sectional analytical design was used. The study population was comprised of clinical instructors and third and fourth level students at five universities/colleges. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed. The validity of the questionnaires was tested by five experts. The reliability of both questionnaires was checked through the pilot study. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for the two questionnaires by more than 0.7. Data were analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The study found there were statistically significant differences between perceptions of nursing students and perceptions of clinical instructors regarding the characteristics of an effective clinical instructor and effective clinical training policies. The most effective characteristics of an effective instructor as perceived by nursing students were professional competence, communication and training skills. While the most important characteristics of an effective instructor from the viewpoint of the clinical instructor were professional competence, communication, and support of the professional growth of students. The most effective clinical training policies as perceived by nursing students were the appropriate selection of training site, objective evaluation, adequate clinical hours for clinical courses to achieve the objectives, appropriate and clear assignments to students in clinical courses and obvious role of training department in monitoring students' clinical training. While the most effective clinical training policies as perceived by the clinical instructors were the role of training department in monitoring of instructors' performance with students must be clear, objective evaluation, appropriate selection of training site, clear directions about the objectivity in evaluating students from the clinical department and clarity in the role of training department about monitoring students' clinical training. The study concluded that clinical nursing teaching is in need to improve its quality for both, the clinical instructors and policies.

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List of Abbreviations

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CI	Clinical Instructor
CEGEP	Collège d'Enseignement Général Et Professionnel
CLE	Clinical Learning Environment
HE	Higher education
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
IUG	Islamic University of Gaza
LSD	Least Significant Difference
NCTEI	Nursing Clinical Teacher Effectiveness Inventory
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NT	Nurse Teacher
MCI	Mobile Cooperation Intervention
MoH	Ministry of Health
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PCN	Palestine College of Nursing
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PN	Practical Nurse
RN	Registered Nurse
SoP	State of Palestine
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UCAS	University College of Applied Sciences
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
WHO	World Health Organization

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background

Clinical experience is an indispensable component of nursing curricula as it provides real-life experiences involving actual patients. Clinical learning is considered as the heart of professional practice bridging the theory-practice divide. The integration of theoretical knowledge with clinical practice is of vital importance for the development of efficient professional nurses. Both quality classroom teaching and ability in demonstrating clinical competence greatly influence the success of graduates of a nursing program (Dasila, et al., 2016).

Experienced faculty available for clinical teaching is diminishing and many clinical instructors are employed casually. Poor clinical teacher preparation is therefore seen as a common problem to effective clinical teaching. These among others have resulted in the gap existing in nursing theory and practice (Okoronkwo, 2013).

In a study on clinical learning challenges of nursing students, Baraz, et al. (2015) stated that clinical teaching and learning experiences can be challenging, stressful and unpredictable, time and energy-wasting, and compromises the quality of teaching and learning. Furthermore, Ironside, et al. (2014) stated that current clinical practice is time and resource-intensive, and that little is known of whether or not it really contributes to the achievement of the learning goals of students. Their study findings suggested that the focus of clinical instructors and students is on the completion of tasks, which overshadows the more important and complex parts of nursing practice, and which can possibly lead to graduating low skilled staff who will not be able to practice safely and competently.