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Impediments of Optimal Midwifery Experiential Learning Environments in Maternity Units of Public Hospitals of Limpopo Province, South Africa

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The purpose of this study was to ascertain the impediments of optimal midwifery experiential learning based on the numeric information of level four learner midwives in the Nursing education institutions. The objective of the study was to identify the impediments of optimal midwifery experiential learning environment in maternity units of Public hospitals in Limpopo province. A cross-sectional, descriptive quantitative design was adopted. Simple random sampling was used to select a sample of 149 respondents. Data were collected using a pre-tested and validated self-developed questionnaire which was administered to the total population of learner midwives (N=148) and the response rate was 89% (N=133). Informed consent was received from the respondents as was ethical approval from the relevant authorities. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 20 with the aid of a statistician. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

The findings revealed that the majority of the respondents were challenged by impeded factors such as inadequate resources, limited equipment, poor mentoring and supervision; poor quality of learning opportunities. Some learner midwives were considered as workforce not learners and were made to do non-midwifery duties. The processes of checking and countersigning of maternity case registers and workbooks were not well planned and addressed as indicated by about 75% respondents. More than 25% also indicated that the learning situations were not sufficient and not meaningful. While 73.98 % indicated that they received constructive feedback from their supervisors, about half of the respondents indicated that the feedback was not given continuously. Recommendations were the need to increase midwifery practitioners and availability of material resources to ensure efficient and effective mentoring and supervision, thus, improve quality of midwifery experiential learning.

Keywords: Impediments; enhancement; optimal midwifery experiential learning environment

Biography:

Dr Magdeline Kefilwe Thopola, teaches midwifery, supervising research to undergraduates and Masters Dissertations. Qualifications: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Mcur, B Cur: Nursing Education, Community Nursing Science, Occupational Health Nursing, Nursing Administration, Registered Midwife and Registered Nurse. Midwifery specialist, initiated advanced midwifery training in Ga-Rankuwa Nursing College. PhD Title "An evidence-based model for enhancing optimal midwifery practice environment in maternity units of public hospitals, Limpopo province. Presented research papers nationally and internationally. Published 13 midwifery articles in accredited journals. Reviewer of articles for publications in accredited journals. Served as faculty advisor of First Africa Cohort of Maternal-Child-Health Care Leadership Academy, 2013-2015.