



**INTEGRATION OF MIDWIFERY NURSING SCIENCE
THEORY WITH CLINICAL PRACTICE IN SELECTED
TRAINING HOSPITALS OF VHEMBE DISTRICT,
LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

By

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ABSTRACT

Integration of nursing theory with clinical practice has been a subject of debate in the nursing profession for some time. Now the debate focuses on the possible gap between theory and practice, and whether the gap is negative or positive. Other issues include whether midwives in the wards are still acting as mentors to the students and what lecturers' responsibilities are in the integration of midwifery nursing science theory with clinical practice? The purpose of this study was to identify and describe factors affecting integration of midwifery nursing science theory with clinical practice in the training institutions of the Vhembe District in the Limpopo Province.

The study sought to achieve the following objectives: explore and describe factors that influence the integration of midwifery nursing science theory with clinical practice and describe factors that impinge on the integration of midwifery nursing science theory with clinical practice. The significance of the study was that midwifery nursing science training will be improved as the results of the study as well as students' views expressed in this study would help to explain their expectations from professional midwives and lecturers, which would form the basis for creating a conducive learning environment in class and clinical or practical placements. These results might also be considered in the development of a curriculum that would bridge the gap between midwifery nursing science theory with clinical practice, the well-developed curriculum will produce a competent midwife practitioner who will help in the reduction of maternal and perinatal deaths in the Vhembe District. The community would benefit

because of reduced stress of maternal and neonatal mortality. The government would benefit and save money following reduced maternal and neonatal death since this will reduce lawsuits.

The study design was qualitative, explorative, descriptive and contextual in nature. The population included professional midwives who have been working in maternity units of the training hospitals for 4 years or more, lecturers who have been teaching the R425 students for 4 years and above and level IV finalist student nurses from Thohoyandou Nursing Campus. Non-probability, purposive sampling was used to select the midwives, lecturers and students participants. Data were collected through in-depth interviews from 3 female professional nurses and 4 female lecturers, the ages of midwives ranged between 30-60years while the ages of lecturers ranged between 40-60years. Focus group discussions were used to collect data from 18 student nurses, 4 were males and 14 were females, their ages ranged between 20-40 years. Data were analyzed qualitatively through open-coding. One major theme emerged from the raw data, namely, poor integration of midwifery theory and practice, 4 themes that emerged from the major theme were the following: factors related to teaching and facilitation by lecturers; factors related to learning by students; factors related to midwives in the clinical practice; and factors related to systems in the organization. The results were analyzed and recommendations proposed on the best strategies to enhance integration of midwifery nursing science theory with clinical practice. Trustworthiness was ensured by Lincoln and Guba's model and ethical consideration was ensured.

Keywords: Clinical practice, integration, midwifery theory, training hospitals