

## STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF PRECEPTORSHIP LEARNING OUTCOMES IN BSN PROGRAM AT PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NURSING IN SINDH.

Victoria Samar<sup>1</sup>, Shireen Arif<sup>2</sup>, Alia Nasir<sup>3</sup>, Amanullah Rind Baloch<sup>4</sup>, Sara Samar<sup>5</sup>, Asnath Samar<sup>6</sup>

### ABSTRACT

**OBJECTIVE:** The aim of the study is to assess student's perceptions about learning outcomes of the preceptorship model utilized during their BSN program and to identify their level of satisfaction.

**METHODOLOGY:** In this cross-sectional study 182 students participated from one public and one private college of nursing. Structured questionnaire named Preceptorship Effectiveness Questionnaire: Student Perceptions (PEQ-SP) developed by Shepard in 2014 was utilized. The permission to adapt the questionnaire for this study was granted by primary author. **RESULTS:** The results of the study clearly stated that all three themes, that are SPR-EPP, HoP and OS significantly correlated to each-other with p-values < 0.01 in all three themes. Moreover, the satisfaction rate of students regarding their preceptors was highly significant with p-value < 0.01. **CONCLUSION:** The study findings suggest that the preceptorship program should be implemented in other clinical courses. This will be beneficial for both clinical and academic institutions for better student's learning as well as better patient outcomes.

**KEYWORD:** Student's Perceptions, Learning Outcomes, BSN, Preceptorship Model

1. Lecturer People's Nursing School, LUMHS, Jamshoro
2. Principal, Assistant Professor Al-Tibri College of Nursing Isra University, Karachi Campus
3. Associate Professor Ziauddin University College of Nursing
4. Senior lecturer, PNS LUMHS Jamshoro.
5. BDS, mphil immunology, LHS Lahore.
6. Doctor of pharmacy.

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**CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:** Victoria Samar MSN, BSN, RN, RM. Senior Lecturer, People's Nursing School, LUMHS, Jamshoro. [victoriasamar14@gmail.com](mailto:victoriasamar14@gmail.com)

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### INTRODUCTION

Nursing education without clinical practice seems to be incomplete<sup>1</sup>. Transference of academic knowledge and theories learned in the classroom, such as critical thinking skills and its utilization in the appropriate clinical situation are difficult for students. For this reason training programs before starting of services in nursing schools are crucial to help nursing students to assimilate theory into practice<sup>2</sup>. Researchers endorsed that learning through preceptorship training is essential for nursing students to apply theory into practice. Preceptorship model of training provides students an opportunity to work in parallel with registered nurses for the purpose of facilitating learning in the clinical setting<sup>3</sup>. Researchers highlighted that development of preceptorship model is the primary need of the issues highlighted by many researches regarding application of theory into practice at the clinical area<sup>4</sup>. The preceptorship model also helps students to cope with the transition phase into the clinical area as a staff nurse<sup>4</sup>. The implementation of preceptorship model also helps in providing better teaching and learning environment to nursing students. Preceptorship models of learning helps students to accomplish the role of professional nurse at the very beginning of their nursing career<sup>5</sup>. In the time period of preceptorship learning, nursing students changed into practical autonomous nurses with the

direction of a preceptor. Here, the purpose of using preceptor is a clinical expert and a role model to supervise the preceptee<sup>6</sup>. The nursing student is known as the preceptee, is anticipated to increase their capacity and to take an individual patient assignment gradually. Students have verbalized the benefits of preceptorship model in the development of professional roles, increasing their capability and confidence in nursing practice. Furthermore, preceptorship model helps in achieving personal, professional and organizational goals and accountability<sup>7</sup>. The sum of these skills allows the preceptees to deliver quality care to their patients<sup>8</sup>.

#### Importance of Precetorship Model

Atakro emphasize that the Preceptorship model provides an opportunity to learn one on one basis at the clinical area. In this way the preceptee is able to develop an educational relationship with experienced nurses and able to gain proficient role models within a fixed and limited time frame<sup>9</sup>. It is defined in the curriculum that a preceptor is a registered nurse, able to provide direction, complete instructions, assessment, and provide ongoing feedback by completing a preceptorship program<sup>10</sup>. Preceptorship is useful for senior level and graduating nursing students in advancing

their practices in the clinical area. In preceptorship, the role of faculty is not lost. Researchers have encouraged the collaboration between the preceptors and faculty. Their collaboration is identified as the positive impact on the learning outcome of the nursing students<sup>11</sup>. Due to the collaboration of preceptors and the faculty nursing students gets the opportunity to enhance clinical experience, increase understanding, improved confidence, and incorporated skills with different clinical situations<sup>5</sup>. In a collaborative model of preceptorship, the preceptor, faculty, and student form a triad to facilitate the student acquisition of clinical competence<sup>12</sup>. The preceptor and student meet before the first clinical experience to discuss learning styles and goals for competency attainments and the desired outcome of the clinical experience<sup>4</sup>. The preceptor is authorized to provide formative and summative evaluations regarding performance and learning outcomes of the nursing student<sup>13</sup>. The use of preceptors requires planning and education, in order to ensure an understanding of the roles of preceptors. Planning and education are facilitated through planned orientations and educational sessions<sup>14</sup>.

Although preceptorship models are widely used in nursing education, empirical data to substantiate the effectiveness of the strategy is limited and conflicting. The literature supports programs that have been developed to prepare preceptors for the preceptorship<sup>4</sup>. It also states the benefits from the preceptorship program such as enhancing the ability of application of theory into practice, improvement in clinical skills and increased self-confidence<sup>15</sup>. Omer adopted a collaborative teaching method in Saudi Arabia to train nurses in an effective manner and enhance the quality care at the clinical area. Omer highlighted that in developing effective quality nurses, nursing college and nursing services has to put their efforts together. The model developed by Omer et al supports the concept of collaborative learning through preceptorship model<sup>16</sup>.

The available literature clearly intimate that preceptorship model implementation is recommended by many researchers and scholars. Many review articles have been identified, highlighting the importance of preceptorship model, but there are very fewer researchers have been conducted regarding student's perception. There are very few studies identifying student's perspective regarding preceptorship model. In Pakistan since 2008 BSN program has been started. In these years no any research has been conducted to identify the perception of nursing students regarding their preceptorship model in terms of their learning at clinical area. Furthermore, no any study has identified the overall satisfaction of the preceptorship program.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In this descriptive cross sectional study 182 nursing students of fourth year baccalaureate of nursing program completed preceptorship electives course successfully participated. The data were collected through a structured

questionnaire named Preceptorship Effectiveness Questionnaire: Student Perceptions (PEQ-SP) developed and used by Shepard in 2014. Permission was granted by the primary author. It contains four parts, first is demographic data which asks for age of preceptor and area assigned. The second portion is divided into three sections the first section contains 19 questions based on student's perceptions during preceptorship rotation. Second section has 8 questions based on beliefs the end of the entire preceptorship program. In these two sections student has to mark according to the Likert scale mentioned as strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree. The third section contains 5 questions asking the helpfulness of the preceptor and the overall satisfaction rate of the preceptorship experiences.

## **Pilot study**

The pilot testing of the instrument was done on 10% of the total sample size that is 18 nursing students. However, this sample was not included in the study. The aim of the pilot testing was to ensure that the questionnaire was understandable and self-explanatory. Overall, the validity of the toll was satisfactory and sufficient enough to carry on research. Furthermore, the contents of the questionnaire were verified by the thesis supervisor and the co-supervisor. Moreover, the post hoc Cranach's alpha was 0.81 which is also acceptable for carrying out the research. This Cranach's alpha showed that the toll was reliable to use and was valid enough to process the research.

## **Ethical Consideration**

The data was collected after approval from Clinical Research Committee (CRC), Ethics Review Committee (ERC) and Board of Advanced Studies and Research (BASR) of Ziauddin University. Furthermore, the permission was taken from the data collection site and last but not least written consent was signed from the subjects in order to ensure their voluntary participation and to maintain the autonomy of them.

## **RESULT**

The data of the study was analyzed through SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 21. There were 182 participants enrolled in given study after the taking consent from them. Mean $\pm$ SD of age of study subjects are 24.35 $\pm$ 4.62 reported for the given study. Nurse with 20 years old is youngest participant and nurse with 52 years old is participated as eldest one. Majority of the study subjects were female i.e. (133, 73%) (see Figure 1).

The questionnaire of the study revolves around three themes that are perception during preceptorship rotation, beliefs of students regarding preceptorship model and helpfulness of the preceptor. The data

of the study compare the themes of the study mentioned. In the study Spearman correlation is applied to find the association between different themes of student’s perceptions. P-value is less than 0.05 considered as statistically significant. The table 01 indicates that all three themes are significantly correlated with each other and with overall satisfaction as well at significant level 0.01. Student’s perception during Preceptorship Rotation is strongly positive correlated with Entire Preceptorship Program i.e.  $r=0.652$ . It is the highest correlated themes among all. Correlated value shows that those students who marked their agreement strongly to the items of Student’s perception during Preceptorship Rotation are also ticked strongly agree over Entire Preceptorship Program’s items. The second highest values of correlated themes are Entire Preceptorship Program and Helpfulness of Preceptors with positive correlation value of 0.370. But it has a weak correlation that is less than 0.4. Overall Satisfaction is significantly

Figures and tables of the study

positive associated with all three themes; Helpfulness of Preceptors has highest among all. All correlated values are positive and significant at  $P\text{-value}<0.01$  but lying in the range of weak correlation i.e. (0 to 0.3).

Table 02 tells us that there is no significance difference between the mean score of Student’s perception during Preceptorship Rotation, Entire Preceptorship Program and Helpfulness of Preceptors & overall Satisfaction for the public and private sector. P-values are 0.057, 0.862, 0.814, and 0.721 respectively. Mean score of Public sector participants are greater than private sector in two themes i.e. Entire Preceptorship Program  $=14.30\pm2.80$  and Helpfulness of Preceptors  $=8.36\pm2.35$ . Overall satisfaction is also gotten high mean score by participant working in public sector as compared to private sector.

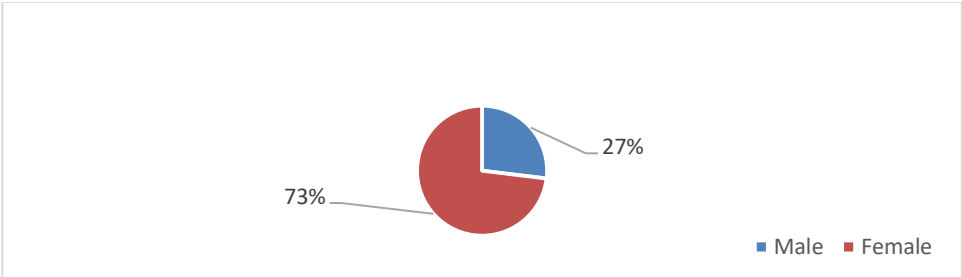


Figure: 01 Distribution of gender among study subjects.

**Table: 01** Association of Student’s perception during Preceptorship Rotation, Entire Preceptorship Program and Helpfulness of Preceptors, & overall Satisfaction:

Themes	Correlation Co-efficient	P-value
SPR-EPP	0.652**	<0.01
SPR-HoP	0.289**	<0.01
SPR-OS	0.344**	<0.01
EPP-HoP	0.370**	<0.01
EPP-OS	0.290**	<0.01
HoP-OS	0.390**	<0.01

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level  
SPR= Student’s perception during Preceptorship Rotation  
EPP= Entire Preceptorship Program  
HoP= Helpfulness of Preceptors  
OS= overall Satisfaction

**Table: 02** Comparison of score of Student’s perception during Preceptorship Rotation, Entire Preceptorship Program and Helpfulness of Preceptors & overall Satisfaction between the public and private sector:

Themes	Working Sectors	Mean±SD	P-value
Student’s perception during Preceptorship Rotation	Public	34.50±5.63	0.057
	Private	36.59±5.18	
Entire Preceptorship Program	Public	14.30±2.80	0.862
	Private	14.09±3.27	
Helpfulness of Preceptors	Public	8.36±2.35	0.814
	Private	8.27±2.56	
Overall Satisfaction	Public	1.87±0.762	0.721
	Private	1.86±0.560	

DISCUSSION

The results of the study clearly endorsed the need of preceptorship model as their learning need. It is helpful in improving their learning outcome of confidence, and clinical skills through working

with and learning from their preceptors. The result of the study that students have high satisfaction level indicates its importance in overall learning process.

### Learning Outcome through Preceptorship Model

We could able to assess student's perception about learning outcome of the preceptorship model utilized in their fourth year of studies in such a way that (142, 78%) participants have mentioned that entire preceptorship program was helpful in enhancing their skills. The students were shown their confidence over learning outcomes. They marked that they are better prepared to delegate appropriate tasks to nursing assistants with improved professional communication skills and knowledge of medications. They mentioned that their nursing interventions, patients care issues, and overall nursing skills are became stronger as a result of the preceptorship experience. Communication with physicians is also enriched. The available literature supports the findings of the current study and highlights that the learning outcomes overall improves while working with preceptors<sup>15, 16</sup>. Furthermore, preceptorship models helps to reduce anxiety of clinical area, increases students confidence of working and communicating with patients and their relatives and also helps to gain skills of working in clinical area utilizing their leadership skills<sup>16,17</sup>.

### Perceptions of Nursing Student's Regarding Preceptorship Program

In the current study the data were collected from 182 participants. The study tool identifies the perception of BSN students regarding preceptorship program. Furthermore, it identifies the effectiveness of the preceptorship program in terms of learning outcomes of nursing students. The results of the study clearly stated that all three themes are significantly correlated with each other. Moreover the satisfaction rate of students regarding their preceptors was highly significant. The available literature supports the findings of the current study and highlights that the preceptorship program is beneficial for the nursing students<sup>16, 17</sup>.

In the current study the student's perception during preceptorship rotation was correlated with the entire preceptorship program that was strongly positive. This clearly states that students are strongly agreeing their involvement of preceptor and found entire preceptorship program beneficial for them. In the current study students further agrees that their preceptors were helpful in terms of learning skills and confidence at the clinical area. The available literature supports the finding of the current study and highlights that the preceptors are helpful in terms of learning skills and building confidence in the clinical area. On the contrary the literature stated that there is need to identify the experiences of the preceptors too<sup>17, 18</sup>.

In the current study the overall satisfaction level of nursing students was significant. This stated that students find the preceptorship program very much beneficial for them. All themes of the study correlate with each other with high satisfaction level. The literature also supports the findings of the current study that students are very much satisfied with the preceptorship program<sup>18, 19</sup>.

### CONCLUSION

The study concluded that students are very positive regarding preceptorship program and it also improves the learning outcomes of the students of fourth year BSN program. Through this study researcher was able to provide forum for nursing students to share their perceptions regarding learning outcomes and the preceptorship program, which has not been conducted yet in Pakistani context. However, the participants were selected from one private and one public college of nursing which limits the generalizability of the study findings.

### RECOMMENDATION

The study recommended that students feel comfortable at clinical areas in in terms of different learning outcomes with their preceptor. This is a positive finding of the study that could be utilized in other courses with the clinical component. Students could assign on their rotational clinical areas with the preceptors to learn effectively in other specialty areas from the beginning of the year. Furthermore, the findings of the current study also propose that researchers could further work to gain in depth understanding of the preceptorship programs and especially to understand the learning outcomes of the preceptorship program. Moreover, the study recommends that mix study methods should be utilized for in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

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