

# Exploring the Lived Experiences of Student Nurses in Community Based Training Program

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**Abstract:** Community Based Training Program is one of the community practices of the nursing students in the nursing curriculum in order to render services to the community people. The main purpose of Community Based Training Program is to apply the theoretical that is learned in the classroom into practice. Community health nurse is a blend of primary health care and nursing practice with public health nursing. They conduct a continuing and comprehensive practice that is preventive, curative, and rehabilitative. The researcher utilized a qualitative study framed within phenomenological perspective used a semi-structured, in depth individual interview, observation and document analysis. There are 31 participants selected through purposive sampling who agreed to participate in the study. The researcher ended its data gathering when the researcher determined that there is already saturation of data. The participants were graduating nursing students of Madda Walabu University Goba Referral Hospital, College of Nursing in Ethiopia who had their Community Based Training Program last October 2017. The researcher interviewed the participants to gather the data. Thematic analysis was used to interpret and analyzed the data while using the seven steps used in Collaizzi's approach.

**Keywords:** Community Based Training Program, Community Health Nurse, Primary Health Care.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Community Based Training Program is one of the community practices of the nursing students in the nursing curriculum in order to render services to the community people. The main purpose of Community Based Training Program is to apply the theoretical that is learned in the classroom into practice. Community health nurse is a blend of primary health care and nursing practice with public health nursing. They conduct a continuing and comprehensive practice that is preventive, curative, and rehabilitative.

In today's environment of health care reform, federal, state and private market forces and calling for the development of community based, competent comprehensive, convenient and accessible health care delivery systems, A community – based, population-focused approach to planning, delivering and evaluating nursing care has never been more important, thus professional nursing needs to realign its allegiance and accountability by shifting from the historical emphasis of the profession to respond to these trends. So this study is to comprehend the experiences of the life of a nursing student as they promote health and prevent illness with community folks including the frail elderly, teen mothers, smokers, homeless individual and sometimes with mentally ill person.

This is a descriptive phenomenology. A descriptive research refers to research studies that have as their main objective the accurate portrayal of the characteristics of person, situations or groups (Polit & Hungler, 2004).

**II. BODY OF ARTICLE**

**METHODS:**

Following the phenomenological approach, researcher seeks to understand meaning in events and in human interactions. Further, the context is important to the interpretation of data. This approach requires that the researcher "centers on the attempt to achieve a sense of the meaning that others give to their own situations" (Smith, 2007). The descriptive phenomenology reached true meanings through engaging in-depth reality (Lopez & Willis, 2004).

The researcher utilized a qualitative study framed within phenomenological perspective used a semi-structured, in depth individual interview, observation and document analysis. Semi-structured interviewing is best used when the researcher won't get more than one chance to interview someone and when he will be sending several interviewers out into the field to collect data (Banfield, 2004).

There are 31 participants selected through purposive sampling who agreed to participate in the study. The researcher ended its data gathering when the researcher determined that there is already saturation of data. The participants were graduating nursing students of Madda Walabu University Goba Referral Hospital, College of Nursing in Ethiopia who had their Community Based Training Program last October 2017. The researcher interviewed the participants to gather the data. Thematic analysis was used to interpret and analyzed the data while using the seven steps used in Collaizzi's approach.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:**

The study described the lived experiences of nursing students in the community on how they cope up with the learning and issues in nursing practice. In order to have a comprehensive, accurate description of the phenomena being investigated from the perspective of the informants, specific questions has been formulated by the researcher and it will be answered during interview process. The researcher asked the questions: (1) "What are the learning experiences of the student nurses in the practice of the nursing in the community?" (2) "What are the challenges faced by the student nurse in the practice of nursing in the community?" (3) "How did the student nurses cope up with the challenges in the community they experience in practice of their profession?"

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:**

Participants answered the open-ended questions, (1) "What are the learning experiences of the student nurses in the practice of the nursing in the community?" (2) "What are the challenges faced by the student nurse in the practice of nursing in the community?" (3) "How did the student nurses cope up with the challenges in the community they experience in practice of their profession?" Table 1 presents the major themes that emerged from the participants' responses through an unstructured interview.

There are three major themes that emerged namely: (a) Art of Serving; (b) Appreciation of Work; (c) Patience and Humane Consideration.

**TABLE I. MAJOR THEMES**

<b>Major Themes</b>	<b>Sub Themes</b>
<b>Art of Serving</b>	Dedication to serve Serving while learning
<b>Appreciation of Work</b>	Recognition of workmanship Heartfelt admiration to vocation
<b>Patience and Humane Consideration</b>	Respect for profession Kind depiction to community people Appropriateness and unconditional passion

**Art of Serving:**

Community health nurses are very hard working in a way that they serve and intended to work in the community area, serving the community people through their dedication and passion giving them true caring to their clients. Uplifting these positive characteristics of a community health nurse by the nursing students, leads them to be successful future community nurse.

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There are two subthemes emerged in this concept and these are (1) Dedication to Serve and (2) Way of work that was identified by the researcher.

The nursing students believed that when you are assigned in community for practice, you will appreciate really the life of a nurse and that is serving. It's very hard to work in the community and they think it is nurses are destined to work there.

**Dedication to serve.** The first sub-theme is dedication to serve. Serving the community gives happiness to the nursing students and enthusiasm to work. Dealing with the community people is a very challenging role of the community health nurse. You felt overwhelmed by those people who gave thanks to you on how well you rendered care and health teaching to them.

One participant said:

*"I enjoyed my clinical attachment in the community, meeting new people with different needs. It is very overwhelming when someone say thank you for helping them. Because of this I am more dedicated to serve my community in the future"*

Another participant acknowledged the response of the first participant.

*"I want to serve the community after my graduation, since it is an eye opening for me that it is more challenging and it needs commitment in working in the community."*

One participant when asked the same open-ended question said:

*"As a student nurse perseverance to work in the community is a must for a community health nurse, because lots of challenges and problems that you will encounter"*

All the answers of the participants are accepted. In fact according to Adams (2010) nursing profession embraces dedicated men and women who devote themselves to serving their neighbors and the community.

**Serving while learning.** The second sub-theme is serving while learning. The student nurses are exposed in different community areas to apply what they have learned in the theory. These exposures allow opportunity to the nursing students to learn while they are serving the community people.

One participant said:

*"It is mandatory to have clinical attachment in the community and apply the theory taught by our instructors in the classroom. It is so amazing to tell that while helping the community, I also learned during my practice in the community"*

Another participant forcefully said:

*"The community people were able to get enough information from us regarding different diseases. At the same time, I have also learned a lot from them during our clinical attachment"*

Still another participant said:

*"Our clinical attachment in the community provides me an opportunity to increase my knowledge and skills in dealing problems encountered in the community. I am glad that while serving the community, I was able to help and learned"*

You can learn a lot while rendering your service to the community. The purpose of service learning is, in essence, to, "equally benefit the provider and the recipient of the service as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service being provided and the learning that is occurring (Fucro & Andrew, 2011). According to Lebanese American University (2016), one of their students stated during the promotion of disease prevention in a health fair organized in the city of Byblos that "We are providing a service but also learning from the community".

### Appreciation of Work:

The simple thanks which come from the client you helped give you happiness and a strong sense of accomplishment wherein people accepted you and you got their trust. This accomplishment gave you fuel to have an energy for the next day.

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The second major theme reflects the appreciation of work. There are three subthemes emerged in this concept such as (1) Recognition of Workmanship, (2) Heartfelt Admiration to Vocation and (3) Respect for Profession.

**Recognition of Workmanship.** The first subtheme emerged is recognition of workmanship. The students enjoyed visiting in the community and meeting a new people. It is very overwhelming when someone say thank you for helping them. In community-based training program, the student nurses done a lot of works such as communicating with the health workers, identifying the common cause of morbidity and mortality, educative their clients about their health, immunization with community health nurses but still they do not get tired doing these because it can help to provide a quality of care of many people in the community.

One participant said:

*“As a student nurse, we don’t only identify the community problems, but more on providing health education. In Community-based training program, you don’t focus only on one aspect; you must give the health educations too. Sometimes, having clinical attachment in the community is tiring and boring. Nonetheless, we enjoyed because they appreciated our work, so it is fulfilling.”*

Furthermore, one participant said:

*“After exhausting day of our clinical attachment in the community, still we are motivated to finish and continue our job because of the positive reception of our work by the community people”*

Recognition of work of the students gives them motivation to improve their work and increase engagement to the community people. According to Dr. Phillip Schlechty (2002), he defines affirmation of performances as, “Persons who are significant in the lives of the student, including parents, siblings, peers, public audiences, and younger students, are positioned to observe, participate in, and benefit from student performances, as well as the products of those performances, and to affirm the significance and importance of the activity to be undertaken”. Affirming and recognizing the work of the students by others makes learning authentic and worthwhile.

**Heartfelt Admiration to Vacation.** The second subtheme emerged is heartfelt admiration to vocation. They feel happy when they help someone who is in need. To appreciate the work in the community one must enjoy, understand and relate to what a community is all about; Enjoy dealing with community folks; Understanding the needs and problems; Relate to their life and condition.

One of the participants said:

*“Speaking in front of the public is my weakness when I first enter to the community. But at the end of the day I gained confidence talking to many people.”*

Another participant said:

*“A lot of work needed to be accomplished in community, but no one can hinder us in finishing those task assigned to us, because our main goal is to uplift the life of community people”*

Likewise, another participant said:

*“As a future community health nurse, I will embrace the challenges that I encountered during our attachment in the community. I was able to witness the problems of the community, and I want to be part of those problems by giving solutions when I become community nurse someday”*

Meeting different people everyday who needs attention is a challenge for nursing students. It may be hard but they always tried to give their wholehearted service because in return a big smile and admiration becomes their greatest reward. Now their option became their choice.

**Respect for profession.** The third sub-theme that emerged is respect for profession. Every profession deserves respect because every one of those people is contributing to the society. The students and community people were be able to appreciate and respect the work of community health nurse.

One of the participants offered his view on this sub theme when he said:

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*"Now I know how tough to be a community health nurse, for the reason that they experiences over work, not compensated well and lack of recognition from the government. But because of respect of the community people to community health nurses and nursing students like us we are motivated to continue our services to them."*

Another participant agreed and said:

*"Being immersed in the community made me realize how important the work of a community health nurse. I observed that most of the community people respect the community health nurses by listening and participating in every activity provided"*

A participant verbalized:

*"I have the outmost respect to the hardworking nurses in the community. It is not easy to work in the community but these nurses were be able to fine time to smile, teach and say thank you to us"*

Gaining respect to the profession needs a lot of time, commitment and dedication. Currently, nurses ventured into different roles such as nurse practitioner, administrator, researcher, or even an educator. As a result, even they have a wide spectrum of duties performed, they deserve more status and power rather than be treated like "ward housewives"( Mishra, 2015).

### **Patience and Humane Consideration:**

The researcher believes that one may also need empathy and deep understanding on the patient's situation. A nurse should sometimes listen to their personal problems so and give understanding on their situation. One should not only focus on their health problem but also building a deep relationship.

The third major theme speaks about patience and humane consideration. From this major theme, the participant revealed two sub-themes namely: Kind depiction to the community people and Appropriateness and unconditional passion

**Kind depiction to the community people.** The first sub-theme under patience and humane consideration is kind depiction to the community people. A long hour of duty inside the community is like living in a home with their love ones. They always accept the fact that they are comprised as a part of a whole because as they deal with the community folks they become more understanding on how hard to become less fortunate so they give their empathy for them to feel that there still hope in one's life.

We all know that caring is the essence of being a nurse. It is a center piece that nurses always give to their client. Nurses must also have a wider range of patience to those clients who are difficult to deal with.

One participant agreed and said:

*"You must have the patience especially when dealing with patient who doesn't understands you"*

Another participant also voices her concern about kind depiction to the community by saying:

*"My experiences in the community made me appreciate the virtue of patience and being part of the family, even they are not really my family. For bad experience like trials in dealing with the patient who always argue with you. And for good experience like patient who become your family and friend because they appreciate you."*

In giving care to the clients it should be from your heart that you have your willingness to help your client and treating them as your family so that it gives a positive impact to their health. According to Dr. Benaroch (2015), to best treat a patient, you sometimes have to treat the patient as family.

**Appropriateness and unconditional passion.** The last sub-theme under patience and humane consideration is appropriateness and unconditional passion. Empathy is a necessary ingredient for nurses in the application of good patient care. Good communication between a community health nurse and patient whether good news or bad, should always be given in an empathetic manner. Student nurses must also observe empathy in dealing their clients in the community.

A participant verbalized:

*"There's always empathy to your patient, you relate yourself to them because you them to feel you understand their situation"*

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Another participant said:

*"The feelings of you are on the situation of the patient, made me cry and understand more his condition"*

The answers of the participants are all acknowledged. In the nursing profession empathy is considered to be one of the most significant characteristics of therapeutic relationship and play a vital role in controlling human behavior. Accurate empathic perceptions on the part of the nurse assist the patient to identify feelings which will be suppressed or denied. According to Hojat (2016), the patient perceives the clinician as a helping member of a social support system with all the beneficial health effects of human connection in an empathic engagement.

### III. CONCLUSION

The result of this study has evaluated the effectiveness in giving care of their patients and dedication of their work of the nursing students. Furthermore, this study shed some light to the future community health nurses that through hardships and adversity there's always accomplishment.

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