

## Effective Communication Practices in Nursing and Challenges: The Perspective of Student Nurses in Anambra State

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### ABSTRACT

Effective communication is evident when the sender conveys a message that the receiver readily receives and understands. The study examined the effective communication practices and challenges among nurses as perceived by student nurses in Anambra state. The population was 425 students from two randomly selected schools of nursing and one Department of nursing science in Anambra State. Yaro Yamane's formula was applied to draw a sample size of 206 respondents. Using validated structured questionnaire data were collected and presented in charts and tables with frequency and simple percentages. The descriptive statistics was employed in the data analysis while Chi square was applied in testing the two null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. Findings from the study revealed that the student nurses in Anambra state have positive perception towards effective communication practices in nursing with an average mean score of 3.3. The Majority of the students 99.5% saw effective communication to mean a two-way process through which the sender conveys a message that the receiver readily receives and understands. 96.1% saw it as feedback, documentation, report writing and handover. 97.5% were of the opinion that manner of approach to client is an aspect of effective communication. 97.1% saw it to embraces patient education, informed consent and involving client in his care. (94.6%) believed that asking open ended questions (95.2%), and attention to non-verbal communication (99%); were the best approaches to effective communication in nursing practice. 80.6% were of the opinion that time, conflict among health workers (91.2%), language barrier (90.8%), heavy workload (69.9%) constitutes the cogs in the wheel of effective communication in nursing practice. Gender ( $p > 0.692$ ) and training institution ( $p$  cal = 0.106) had no significant influence on their perception. The study recommends that lectures on communication skills be given to the students in both native and English languages.

**KEYWORDS:** communication, Effective communication, Effective communication practices, Challenges, communication challenges, Perception.

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### INTRODUCTION

Brown (2008) asserts that communication in nursing as with the entire medical field is crucial. Nurses have to be intermediaries between doctors and clients. In the words of Casey and Wallis (2011), Nurses and nursing staff are at the heart of the communication process: they assess, record and report on treatment and care, handle information sensitively and confidentially, deal with complaints effectively, and are conscientious in reporting the things they are concerned about. Wake (2014) took this idea further by stating that for a nurse, the ability to communicate is a very important skill and a vital part of the job. Nurses, Wake pointed out speaks to people of varying educational, cultural and social

backgrounds and must do so in an effective, caring and professional manner.

Nursing is a communicative intervention and is founded on effective communication (Current Nursing, 2013). Wright (2012) deduced that it is widely accepted that building and maintaining a good patient relationship is an essential aspect of the treatment and healing process and that effective communication skills are key to achieving this. It also goes without saying He maintained, that patients spend more time communicating with nurses than with any other healthcare professional. Effective communication may include the use of: non-verbal communication, establishing rapport, empathy and sympathy, honesty and openness, active and

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reflective listening, conflict resolution, therapeutic touch, use of personnel with special communication skills e.g. use of interpreters (Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council (CSHISC, 2012).

Wright (2012), added that Comprehensible pronunciation, active listening skills, non-verbal communication, the ability to bridge professional and lay language, written communication and cultural awareness, which, inextricably linked with language, plays a very important role in achieving effective communication in the healthcare environment. For Casey and Wallis (2011), documentation, communication during handover, information sharing, managing complaints, and reporting incidents and concerns are the more formal aspects of communication and the main focus of effective communication in nursing practice. In the opinion of Patidar (2013) effective communication techniques are useful to make the communication efficient and meaningful. Effective communication in nursing, for the purpose of this study embraces: therapeutic communication between the nurse and the patient, interpersonal relationship/communication between the nurse and other health professionals, report writing and hand over among nurses, documentation of the observations and actions carried out on the patient, charting/record of administered medications, other verbal and non-verbal expressions, that flows in the clinical setting.

The nurse stands at the centre when it comes to client care; mediating between the client and other healthcare providers, client, family, the client friends and the hospital management. This pivot position assumed by the nurse is challenging and requires intellectual and interpersonal communication skill to perfectly function in her practice arena. Student nurses are not left out in every reason for effective communication. In essence, they should develop and practice effective communication with required skill which starts with good listening skill, ability to communicate through different modes and ensuring that information contained in all communication are developed for better client care and outcome. In this regard, Smith and Pressman, in Amewonye and Davies (2011), observed that although effective communication with patient is increasingly understood as a key to effective, patient-centered care in all health care settings, the quality of training that nurses get in ways to promote and enhance effective nurse-patient communication is sadly lacking. This is true in the context of pre-service training of nurses, and it is even truer with regard to the in-service training and continuing education of nurses Smith and Pressman maintained.

Effective communication among the health professionals, the health professionals and clients, the health professionals and client's relatives, family members and friends remain as essential as medical management of the clients. The National Patient Safety Agency (2007) as cited in Casey and Wallis (2011) identified communication difficulties as a

major factor affecting patient outcomes. Particular concerns included unclear documentation and nurses not being clear and confident in their reporting. Wright (2012) also stated that a report carried out by the US Joint Commission on Health in 2002 concluded that up to 55% of medication-related errors in US hospitals and more than 65% of deaths were as a result of ineffective communication. It is against this backdrop that the researcher posed these questions: is there any other way to clearly understand the patients and plan care for them without effective communication? What are the students' perceptions towards effective communication in nursing practice?

### OBJECTIVES

1. Determine what constitutes effective communication in Nursing Practice?
2. Determine best approach to effective communication in nursing practice as perceived by student nurses in Anambra State
3. Ascertain the need for communication in nursing practice as perceived by student nurses in Anambra State.
4. Determine the cogs in the wheel of effective communication in nursing practice

### HYPOTHESIS

- Ho:**
1. Training institution does not have significance influence on the perception of students on effective communication among nursing students in Anambra State.
  2. Gender does not have significance influence on the perception of students on effective communication among nursing students in Anambra State

### MATERIALS AND METHOD

A descriptive survey method that determined the perception of student nurses in Anambra State on effective communication practices and challenges among nurses.

The population was made up of 425 student nurses from two randomly selected Schools of Nursing and one Department of Nursing Science in Anambra State. Information was obtained from the Principals of the Schools of Nursing and the Head of Department of Nursing Science. Inclusion Criteria were restricted to only those who have had lectures on the concept of infective communication in nursing practice and have been severally exposed to the clinical area thus includes nursing students in second and third year in the schools of nursing and 300 to 500 levels in the Department of nursing science.

Taro Yamane's formula was applied to draw a sample size of 206 respondents from the population. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was applied to ensure proper representation of the students regarding the school population. This was to reduce bias in the sampling.

Data was collected using a 25-itemed researcher-structured questionnaire with two sections (A & B). Section 'A'

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contained items that were used to divulge information on the socio-demographic variables of the respondents while section 'B' contained items that elicited information used to answer the research questions. Section B of the questionnaire was stated in modified Likert format of 4 points of Strongly Agreed (4 points), Agreed (3 points), Disagreed (2 points) and Strongly Disagreed (1 point). The validity of the questionnaire was ascertained by the supervisor and other research experts. Twenty copies (10% of the sample size) of the questionnaire were administered to 20 randomly selected students from School of Nursing Nkpor for pilot study. The reliability of the instrument was established using split half method which employed the Spearman Brown's correlation coefficient as the technique for data analysis. The researcher divided the items on the questionnaire based on even and odd numbers. A reliability index of 0.9 was obtained meaning that the instrument was reliable. Following validation of instrument, the direct service system in which the questionnaire was administered

and collected immediately was adopted to ensure prompt return of the questionnaire. Assistants were trained, who helped to administer and collect the questionnaire. It took six weeks to be able to reach all. However, none was lost in the process.

An approval from the ethical committee in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Teaching Hospital was sought before the study was carried out. Ref Number is NAUTH/CS/66/VOL.6/112. Informed consent of the respondents was sought and participation was voluntary.

Data generated were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentages, weighted mean). Chi square was applied to determine the association of gender and training institution and the students perception on effective communication practices and challenges among nurses at 0.05 level of significant. Statistical package for social sciences software (SPSS) version 20 was used for the analysis, Level of significance difference was taken to be 0.05 (that is,  $\alpha=0.05$ )

### RESULTS

#### Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Fig 1: Gender of the respondents

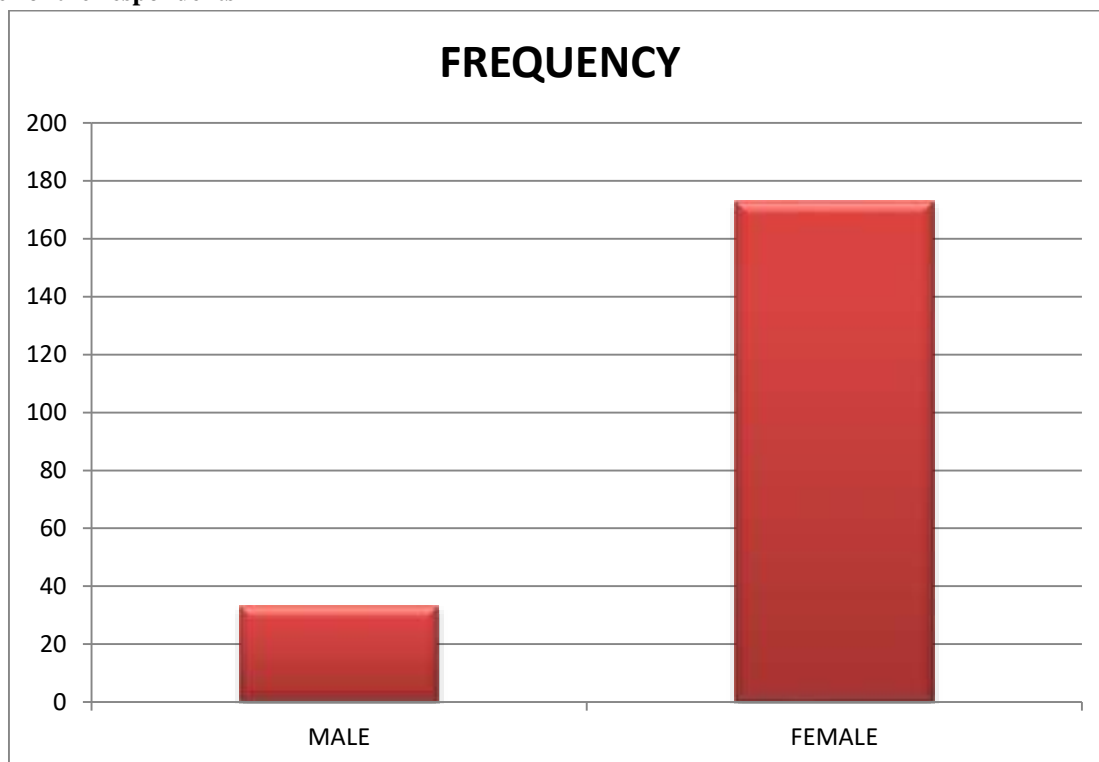


Figure 1. Out of the 206 respondents, 173 (83.9%) were females while 33 (16.1%) of the respondents were male.

Fig 2: Training institutions of the respondents

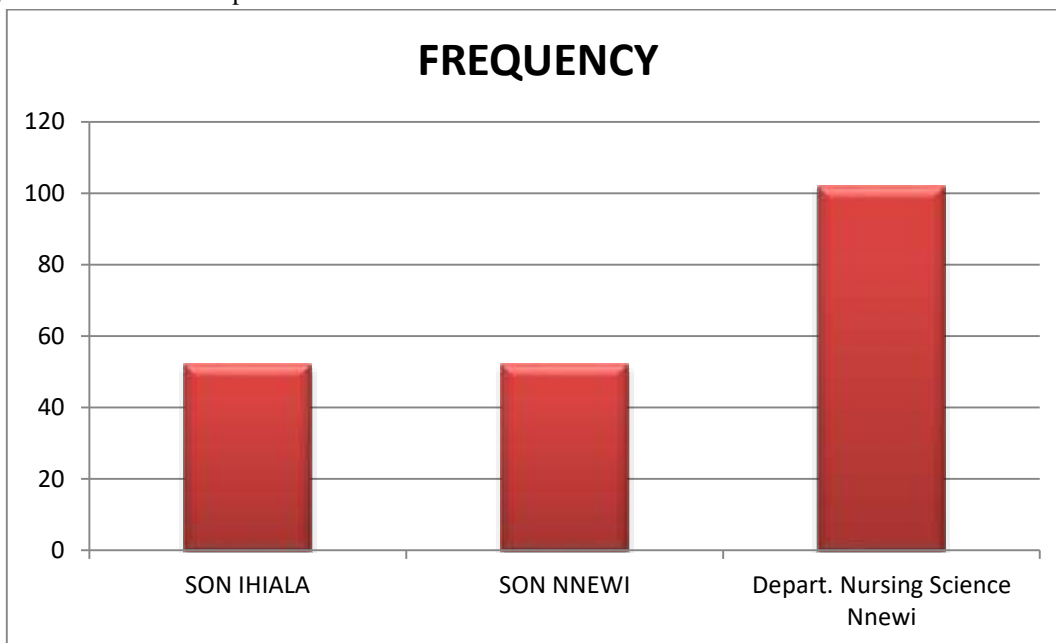


Fig. 2. There were 102(49.6%) students from Department of Nursing Science Nnewi, 52 (25.2%) from School of Nursing Nnewi and 52 (25.2%) are from School of Nursing Ihiala. 17% of the respondents were in 200 level, 44% in 300level, 27% in 400level while the remaining 12% were in 500 level.

Fig 3: Pie chart showing level of study of the respondents

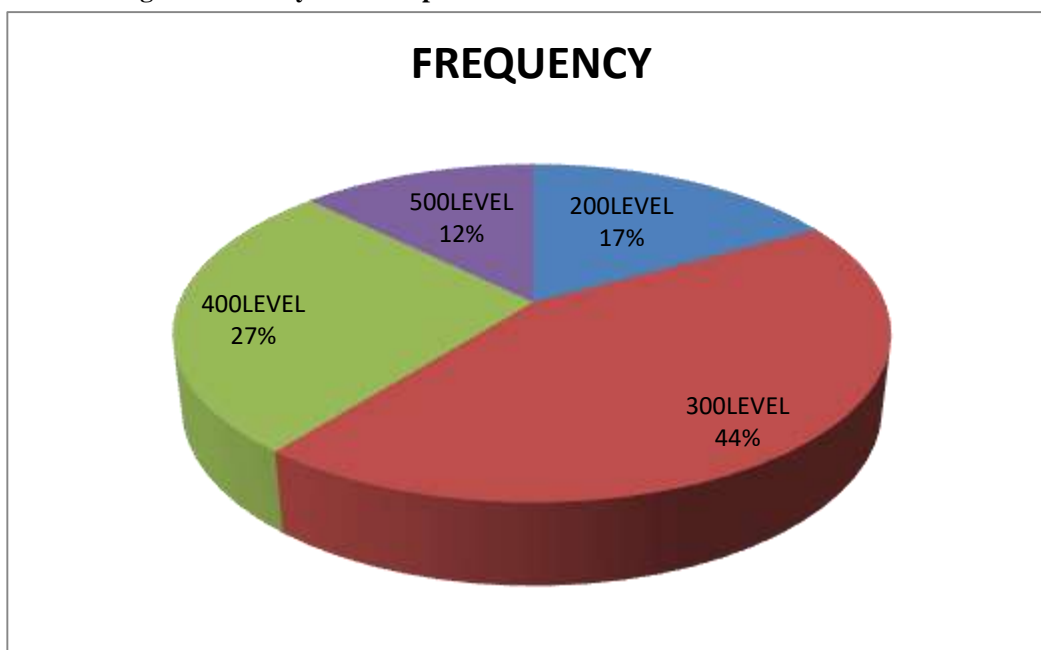


Table 1: what constitutes effective communication in Nursing Practice?

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	Std	Remark
1	Effective communication is a two-way process through which the sender conveys a message that the receiver readily receives and understands.	165(80.1%)	40(19.4%)	1(.5%)	-	3	0.4	Positive
2	Effective communication includes feedback, documentation, report writing & handover	136(66.0%)	62(30.1%)	8(3.9%)	-	3.5	0.6	Positive
3	Manner of approach to client is an aspect	132(64.1%)	69(33.5%)	3(5%)	2(1.0%)	3.5	0.6	Positive

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4.	Effective communication embraces patient education, informed consent & involving client in his care.	126(61.2%)	74(35.9%)	2(1.0%)	4(1.9%)	3.5	0.6	Positive
5.	Effective communication techniques are skills that make communication efficient and meaningful.	146(70.9%)	58(28.2%)	1(.5%)	1(.5%)	3.2	0.5	Positive
6.	Active listening & body language are effective communication skills	131(63.6%)	7(35.0%)	3(1.5%)	-	3.5	0.5	Positive

Table 1. showed that 99.5% saw effective communication to mean a two-way process through which the sender conveys a message that the receiver readily receives and understands. 96.1% saw it as feedback, documentation, report writing and handover. 97.5% were of the opinion that manner of approach to client is an aspect of effective communication. 97.1% saw it to embraces patient education, informed consent and involving client in his care. 89.1% were of the

opinion that effective communication techniques are skills that make communication efficient and meaningful. And 98.6% saw active listening and body language as effective communication skills. Generally, average mean score of 3.3 was recorded showing that the student nurses in Anambra State have a positive perception on what constitutes effective communication in nursing practice

**Table 2. Best approaches to effective communication in nursing practice**

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	Std	Remark
7.	Giving extra time for communication with clients facilitates effective communication in nursing	101(49.0)	94(45.6)	11(5.3)	-	4	0.6	Positive
8.	Creating rapport with clients enhances effective communication	83(40.3%)	82(39.8%)	32(15.5%)	9(4.4%)	4.75	0.8	Positive
9.	Thorough handover at the nursing change of shift is a good approach to effective communication in nursing practice	126(61.2%)	76(36.9%)	4(1.9%)	-	3.75	0.5	Positive
10	Asking open ended questions and verifying information are approaches to effective communication in nursing practice	119(57.8%)	77(37.4%)	4(1.9%)	6(2.9%)	3.7	0.7	Positive
11	Paying attention to non-verbal cues is the best approach to effective communication	141(68.4%)	62(30.6%)	2(1.0%)	-	3.25	0.4	Positive

**Table 2.** 94.6% believe that giving extra time for communication with clients, thorough handover at the nurses change of shift (97.9%), open ended questions and verifying information (95.2%) paying attention to non-verbal communication (99%) were best approaches to effective

communication in nursing practice. Generally, average mean score of 4.0 was recorded revealing that the student nurses in Anambra state have positive opinion on the stated best approaches to effective communication in nursing practice

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**Table 3: Need for Effective Communication in nursing practice?**

s/n	QUESTION	SA	A	D	SD	X	Std	Remark
12	Effective communication brings about positive outcomes & resolves patient's length of hospital stay.	131(63.6%)	69(33.5%)	6(2.95%)	-	3.5	0.5	Positive
13.	It is an essential tool in nursing practice as the nurse stands at the centre when it comes to client care.	113(54.9%)	79(38.3%)	10(4.9%)	4(1.9%)	3.75	0.7	Positive
14.	It provides means of co-ordination among health workers.	130(63.1%)	72(35.0%)	3(1.5%)	1(.5%)	3.5	0.5	Positive
15.	Adequate knowledge of Effective communication skills equips the nurse to function effectively in her role as clients advocate and mediator.	152(73.8%)	53(25.7%)	1(.5%)	-	3.25	0.5	Positive
16.	Proper use of Effective communication makes the nurse a valuable, reliable and active member of the health care team.	131(63.6%)	73(35.4%)	2(1.0%)	-	3.5	0.5	Positive
17.	It raises clients confidence in the nurse	119(57.8%)	77(37.4%)	4(1.9%)	6(2.9%)	3.7	0.7	Positive
18.	Effective communication a means of quantifying the economic value of nursing in the health care arena as well as the larger society.	90(43.7%)	84(40.8%)	30(14.6%)	2(1.0%)	4.2	0.7	Positive
19.	Effective communication is one of the quality tools needed to meet the professional standards in nursing practice.	118(57.3%)	76(36.9%)	10(4.9%)	2(1.0%)	3.7	0.6	Positive

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**Table 3. Showed that** 97.1% were of the view that effective communication brings about positive outcomes and resolves patient's length of hospital stay 93.2% view it as an essential tool in nursing practice since the nurse stands at the centre when it comes to client care. 98.1% believe that it provides means of co-ordination among health workers. 99.5% were of the opinion that adequate knowledge of effective communication skills equips the nurse to function effectively in her role as clients advocate and mediator. 99% believe that proper use of effective communication makes

the nurse a valuable, reliable and active member of the health care team. 84.5% were of the opinion that effective communication is a means of quantifying the economic value of nursing in the health care arena as well as the larger society and 94.2% view effective communication as one of the quality tools needed to meet the professional standards in nursing practice. Generally, average mean score of 3.6 was recorded showing that student nurses in Anambra State have a positive opinion on the need for effective communication in nursing practice

**Table 4: cogs in the wheel of effective communication in nursing practice**

S/N	QUESTION	SA	A	D	SD	X	Std	Remark
20	Time is barrier to effective communication in nursing practice.	99(48.1%)	67(32.5%)	30(14.6%)	10(4.95)	4.5	0.9	Positive
21	Inadequate staffing and language barriers affect effective communication	113(54.9%)	74(35.9%)	11(5.3%)	8(3.9%)	4	0.8	Positive
22	Inadequate knowledge of effective communication skills hinders effective communication in nursing practice.	119(57.8%)	76(36.9%)	8(3.9%)	3(1.5%)	3.75	0.7	Positive
23	Integrating communication into routine nursing actions takes extra time.	58(28.2%)	78(37.9%)	50(24.3)	20(9.7%)	5.25	1.0	Positive
24	Conflicts among health workers affects effective communication in nursing practice.	115(55.8)	73(35.4%)	16(7.8%)	2(1.0%)	3.75	0.7	Positive
25	Factors like Age difference, Social class & heavy work load constitute barriers to effective communication.	71(34.5%)	73(35.4%)	34(16.5%)	28(13.6%)	5.25	1.0	Positive

**Table 4. revealed that** the greater number of the students with an average mean score of 4.4 were of the opinion that Time (80.6%), inadequate staffing and language (90.8%), inadequate knowledge of effective communication skills

(84.7%), conflicts among health workers (91.2%), age difference, social class and heavy work load (69.9%). constitute challenges in the application of effective communication among nurses

**Table 5: Showing chi-square analysis of hypothesis one**

Gender	S. Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Total
Male	28	5	0	33
Female	137	35	1	173
Total	165	40	1	206

### Chi-square tests

	Value	Df	P-value
Chi-Square parameter	0.670	2	0.692

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As shown in Table 5, gender did not significantly influence the perception of student nurses in Anambra State on

effective communication practices and challenges among nurses, p-value (0.692). At alpha level of 0.05 and df 2.

**Table 6: showing chi-square analysis of influence of Training institution**

Training institution	S. Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	S. Disagreed	Total	
SON Ihiala	25		23	1	3	52
SON Nnewi	33		19	0	0	52
Dep. Of Nursing		68	32	1	1	102
Total	126	74	2	4		206

### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	p-value
Chi-Square parameter	10.007	6	0.106

From the results of the chi-square analysis in Table 6, p-value is greater than 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ), training institution was not also a significant factor influencing their perception (alpha level of 0.05 and df 6).

## 4. DISCUSSION

Findings from the study showed that the majority of the students (83.9%) are females while (16.1%) of the respondents are males. (49.6%) are from Department of Nursing Science Nnewi and 25.2% from School of Nursing Nnewi while 25.2% are from School of Nursing Ihiala. 17% of the respondents are in 200level, 44% in 300level, and 27% in 400level while the remaining 12% is in 500level.

Study reveals that the majority of the students 99.5% saw effective communication to mean a two-way process through which the sender conveys a message that the receiver readily receives and understands. 96.1% saw it as feedback, documentation, report writing and handover. 97.1% saw it to embrace patient education, informed consent and involving client in his care. And 98.6% saw active listening and body language as effective communication skills. Generally, average mean score of 3.3 was recorded showing that the student nurses in Anambra State have a positive perception on what constitutes effective communication in nursing practice. The findings is in agreement with the findings of O'Hagan, Manias, et al in 2014 who stated in their study on what counts as effective communication in nursing that the aspects of communication relevant for effective nurse-patient interactions in clinical practice are determined by: approach to patients and patient care, manner towards patients, techniques used for interacting with patients and generic aspects of communication. It is also in consistent with the opinion of Casey and Wallis (2011) who noted that documentation, communication during handover, information sharing, and reporting incidents and concerns are the more formal aspects of communication and the main focus of effective communication in nursing practice. It is in

line with the findings of Amewonye and Davies in 2011 at Agogo Presbyterian Hospital Ghana that investigated the registered nurses perception on the use of non-verbal communication skills in nursing, in which all the respondents (40 registered nurses) perceived proficient usage of non-verbal communication skill as an integral component of the nurse-patient relationship and 20% of the population demonstrated that non-verbal messages are more expressed during interaction.

The greater number of the students (94.6%) believe that giving extra time for communication with clients facilitates effective communication in nursing. 97.9% are of the opinion that thorough handover at the nurses change of shift is a good approach to effective communication in nursing practice. 95.2% are of the opinion that asking open ended questions and verifying information are best approaches to effective communication in nursing practice and 99% perceive that paying attention to non-verbal communication is a good approach to effective communication in nursing practice. Generally, average mean score of 4.0 was recorded revealing that the student nurses in Anambra state have positive opinion on the stated best approaches to effective communication in nursing practice. The result of this study agreed with the assertion of Patidar (2013) that open-ended questions encourage the client to communicate more and more, whereas, close-ended questions discourage communication. The findings however, are not in consistent with the findings of Chan, Jones, Fung and Wu 2012 on the Nurses perception of time availability in patient communication in Hong Kong which stated that by integrating communication into routines as intended actions, nurses demonstrate that communication and relationship



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building with patients take no extra time. Good communication and good relationships, they added help nurses save time. It is in agreement with the assertion of Anderson (2013) that we need to pay attention to our body language, eye contact, and tone of voice when addressing patients and families, when addressing nursing delegation with nursing supervisors, co-workers, and virtually everyone else. Findings however, does agree in part with the findings of Amewonye and Davies' 2011 study to investigate the registered nurses perception on the use of non-verbal communication skills in nursing at Agogo Presbyterian Hospital Ghana in which only 20% of the population demonstrated that non-verbal messages are more expressed during interaction. Meanwhile, it is in agreement with the finding of Patidar (2013) which purported that nonverbal cues are more important than the verbal message because 60 percent of the impact from every conversation made comes from nonverbal cues. These He said, include eye contact, posture, and the gestures. The nonverbal cues indicate what you think, even if your words say something else entirely. Furthermore, this finding agreed with the findings of a cross-sectional online survey by Streeter in 2010 that sought to identify specific communication behaviors associated with what nurses say constitute a communicatively competent patient handoff at the nursing change of shift which revealed that a nursing handoff is a critical juncture in a patient's care that happens two to three times every day. Study revealed that the majority of the students (97.1%) were of the view that effective communication brings about positive outcomes and resolves patient's length of hospital stay 93.2% view it as an essential tool in nursing practice since the nurse stands at the centre when it comes to client care. 98.1% believe that it provides means of co-ordination among health workers. 99.5% are of the opinion that adequate knowledge of effective communication skills equips the nurse to function effectively in her role as clients advocate and mediator. Almost all the students (99%) believe that proper use of effective communication makes the nurse a valuable, reliable and active member of the health care team. 84.5% are of the opinion that effective communication is a means of quantifying the economic value of nursing in the health care arena as well as the larger society and 94.2% view effective communication as one of the quality tools needed to meet the professional standards in nursing practice. Generally, average mean score of 3.6 was recorded showing that student nurses in Anambra State have a positive opinion on the need for effective communication in nursing practice. These findings supported the work of Lamontagne in 2013 on the Perceptions and Experiences of Student Nurses and Nursing Faculty at several levels in their program in two pre-licensure schools of nursing in Massachusetts who concluded in his study that effective communication and collaboration between healthcare providers is an important component of quality patient care. The findings is in

agreement with the assertion of McCarthy, O'Donovan and Twomey (2014) who said that nurses use effective communication skills on a daily basis to: gather information; reassure; facilitate patient expression; harness attitudes, views and opinions; encourage critical thinking; reduce anxiety; facilitate liaison with other disciplines; and promote continuity in patient care. It is also in consistent with the assertion of Kirk (2013) that effective communication between a nurse and his supervisor can boost the nurse's job satisfaction by making the nurse feel he can make a difference.

Findings from the study revealed that the greater number of the students with an average mean score of 4.4 is of the opinion that the following constitute challenges in the application of effective communication among nurses: Time is a barrier to effective communication in nursing practice (80.6%); Inadequate staffing and language barriers and Conflicts among health workers (91.2%) affect effective communication (90.8%); Inadequate knowledge of effective communication skills hinders effective communication in nursing practice (84.7%); Integrating communication into routine nursing actions takes extra time (66.1%) Factors like age difference, social class and heavy work load constitute barriers to effective communication practices (69.9%). This finding agreed in part with the findings from a study on nursing the patient with complex communication needs: time as a barrier and a facilitator to successful communication in two metropolitan hospitals by Hemsley, Balandin and Worrall in 2012 which revealed that Nurses identified time as a barrier and a facilitator to successful communication. Time was perceived by nurses as both an enemy and friend for improving communication. However, the findings differs from the findings of Chan, Jones, Fung and Wu 2012 on the Nurses perception of time availability in patient communication in Hong Kong who found out that by integrating communication into routines as intended actions, nurses demonstrate that communication and relationship building with patients take no extra time. Good communication and good relationships help nurses save time. Findings is however, in line with the findings of Anoosheh, Zarkhah, Faghihzadeh, and Vaismoradi, in 2009 on Nurse-patient communication barriers in Iranian nursing which related that heavy nursing workload, hard nursing tasks and lack of welfare facilities for nurses were the main communication barriers according to nurses views. From patients' views, unfamiliarity of nurses with dialect, having contagious diseases and sex differences between nurses and patients were determined as the main communication barriers. The shared communication barriers were age difference, social class difference and having contagious diseases. It is also in consistent with the opinion of Tay, Hegney and Ang (2011) who opined that a supportive ward environment increase facilitative behaviour in nurses, whereas conflict among the staff lead to increase use of blocking behaviours. In addition the findings supported

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Magee, 2014's assertion that effective communication takes time: time to determine the patient's condition, time to explain and educate, time to confirm that the patient understands. He added that the shortage of nurses in many medical settings can lead to lack of time. Without enough nurses on staff, the amount of time available for each patient declines. Furthermore, the finding of this study in relation to inadequate knowledge of effective communication skills a hindrance to effective communication in nursing practice, concurred with the findings of Lamontagne in 2013 on the Perceptions and Experiences of Student Nurses and Nursing Faculty at several levels in their program in two pre-licensure schools of nursing in Massachusetts which revealed the need for a considerable room for improvement in communication between student nurses, faculty and staff nurses; and a need to increase the education for student nurses to better prepare them for the complex communication in the healthcare setting.

Findings from the study revealed that gender does not play significantly role in the perception of student nurses in Anambra State on effective communication practices and challenges among nurses ( $p > 0.692$ ) is greater than 0.05.

Study also revealed that training institution is not a significant factor influencing the perception of student nurses in Anambra State on effective communication practices and challenges among nurses  $p$  cal = 0.106 which is greater than 0.05.

### CONCLUSION

Student nurses in Anambra State perceive that feedback, documentation, report writing and handover, manner of approach to client, patient education, informed consent and involving client in his care, active listening and body language constitute effective communication in nursing practice. The best approach to effective communication in nursing practice includes: giving extra time for communication with clients, creating rapport with clients, paying attention to non-verbal communications and thorough handover at the nursing change of shift. The cogs in the wheel of effective communication in nursing practice include: time, inadequate staffing, and language barrier, inadequate knowledge of effective communication skills, conflicts among health workers, age difference, social class and heavy work load. Gender and training institution do not play significant role in the perception of student nurses in Anambra State on effective communication practices and challenges among nurse. The positive perception of these students should be harnessed by their lecturers and nurses in the clinical area so as to bring it into play in caring for clients for effective and efficient client out come From this point of view also, adequate staffing in medical settings need to be considered and issues that cause conflict among nursing staff addressed, in order to make communication in nursing practice effective. It is only when these students overcome these difficulties that they will be better able to

apply communication effectively in nursing practice. Nursing managers and healthcare system planners should focus on eliminating or modifying these barriers. It is suggested that understanding the cultural aspects of nurse-patient communication barriers in various contexts can help nurses. Measures to overcome the cogs in the wheel of effective communication in nursing practice should be put in place for effective and efficient patient outcome.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Lectures on communication and its skills should be given to the students in both native (Igbo) and English languages. Language translators should be provided and used to reduce language barrier in communication. Seminars and workshop on ways to overcome the cogs in the wheel of effective communication in nursing practice should be organized for both the trained nurses and students. Adequate staffing should be provided in hospitals to enable them communicate effectively

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Researchers declare that there was no conflict of interest among them in the course of the study.

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