STUDENT NURSES’ EXPERIENCES DURING CLINICAL PRACTICE IN THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE

by

BERNARD TENDANI MABUDA

submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

HEALTH STUDIES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROF E POTGIETER

JOINT SUPERVISOR: DR UU ALBERTS

JANUARY 2006
DECLARATION

I declare that STUDENT NURSES’ EXPERIENCES DURING CLINICAL PRACTICE IN THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and that this work has not been submitted before for any other degree at any other institution.

SIGNATURE                  DATE ......................................

(Mr BT Mabuda)
Clinical learning experiences form an integral part of the student nurse’s training, for it is in the clinical setting that students acquire the knowledge, skills and values necessary for professional practice.

The purpose of this research was to explore student nurses experiences during clinical practice. A qualitative, exploratory, descriptive and contextual design was utilised, employing the phenomenological method. Unstructured interviews were conducted with student nurses in their final year of the four year nursing programme at a nursing college campus in the Limpopo Province. Tesch’s method of data analysis was used.

The findings indicate that there are aspects which impact negatively on student nurses’ clinical learning experiences, such as lack of teaching and learning support, lack of opportunities for learning, poor theory-practice integration, and poor interpersonal relationships between the students, college tutors and ward staff.

Recommendations to enhance the clinical learning experiences of student nurses were made.

**KEY CONCEPTS**

Clinical learning environment, clinical learning experience, clinical practice, clinical preceptor, clinical supervision, mentorship, student nurse, unit manager, ward sister.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to the following persons and institutions:

- Professor E Potgieter and Dr UU Alberts, my supervisors at UNISA, for the many hours they spent guiding me throughout this project
- Mrs T Burger, the subject librarian for Health Studies at UNISA, for assisting me with the literature review
- The Department of Health and Social Development, Limpopo Province, for granting me permission to conduct the study
- Ms L Brown, for editing this dissertation
- The institutions and participants who agreed to participate in the study
- Special thanks to:
  - My wife, Konanani, for her support and understanding throughout my studies
  - My children, Thendo, Thikho, Thama and Tendani, for your understanding and denying yourselves the playing of computer games, so that I could spend hours and hours behind the family computer while completing this dissertation.
  - Mr AC Tshivhase and his family, for the support you have given me during the course of the study