

**PERCEPTIONS OF NURSE EDUCATORS REGARDING SELECTION CRITERIA OF  
FIRST-YEAR NURSING STUDENTS IN THE WEST RAND REGION NURSING  
COLLEGE**

by

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at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**SUPERVISOR: DR TE MASANGO**

**AUGUST 2017**

Student number: 5012-620-2

**DECLARATION**

I declare that **PERCEPTIONS OF NURSE EDUCATORS REGARDING SELECTION CRITERIA OF FIRST-YEAR NURSING STUDENTS IN THE WEST RAND REGION NURSING COLLEGE** is my own work and that the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



02 February 2017

.....

.....

**SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

(Ruth Sampie Simelane)

# **PERCEPTIONS OF NURSE EDUCATORS REGARDING SELECTION CRITERIA OF FIRST-YEAR NURSING STUDENTS IN THE WEST RAND REGION NURSING COLLEGE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The shortage of nurses is a global problem and the selection and education of nursing students is of primary concern. At present, nurse educators at some nursing colleges in Gauteng Province experience problems with the type of students accepted for training and education. The situation is exacerbated by the difference in selection criteria applied for the acceptance of nurse students. Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to explore nurse educators' perceptions of the current selection criteria and describe the criteria that they would recommend for better selection, retention and training of nurses.

The study was conducted at a nursing college in the West Rand Region, Johannesburg. The college trains first-year nursing students before promotion to second-year level at Chris Hani Baragwanath Nursing College, where they complete their training. The researcher selected a qualitative, exploratory and descriptive research design and data was collected from 19 participants, aged between 35 and 60, in three focus group discussions. A grand tour question and probing questions were asked to elicit deep, rich discussion and data. The researcher took field notes during the interviews.

The findings of the study revealed discrepancies between the selection criteria applied by the Gauteng Department of Health, the Department of Labour, the SANC and the nursing college management; nurse educators' feeling of disempowerment related to non-participation as stakeholders in student nurses' selection; students' inability to cope with course content revealed that there is a gap between Gauteng Department of Health, Gauteng nursing college management, nurse educators and labour department and a need for review of selection criteria for nursing students, and lack of support from management. The study makes recommendations for practice and nursing education which should assist all the stakeholders in developing selection criteria for nursing students and course content.

**Keywords:** Nurse educator; nursing college; perception; selection; student nurse.

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## *Dedication*

*This study is dedicated to Unathi, Ndumiso, Gauta and Musa, my grandchildren, for the blessing, joy and light they bring to my life ... and being the reason that I undertook this study.*

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

APS	Appointment Point Score
DOH	Department of Health
GDOH	Gauteng Department of Health
GPGDHSD	Gauteng Provincial Government Department of Health and Social Development
HG	Higher Grade
M SCORE	Messod Score
PTAS	Parent Teacher Association
SANC	South African Nursing Council
SG	Standard Grade
USA	United State of America
WHO	World Health Organization

# CHAPTER 1

## ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa, like all other countries in the world, is faced with a shortage of nurses (Mulaudzi, Daniels, Direko & Uys 2012: 26). According to the Bureau of Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) 2006 report, the U.S. nursing shortage will grow to more than one million nurses by the year 2020 (Littlejohn, Campbell, Collins-McNeil & Khanyile 2012:23). This therefore means that proper recruitment and selection of student nurses is of primary concern and nursing colleges should select students with the aim of attracting the best individuals with the necessary intelligence, personal values and attributes that are required in the profession. Recruitment is a process of searching for prospective students for education and training as professional nurses. The recruitment process consists of a sequence of steps that need to be followed to ensure that the best applicant is appointed. These steps include the following (Thebe & Van der Waldt 2014:5):

- Step 1: identifying the need to recruit
- Step 2: Updating specification and profile
- Step 3: Determine the key performance of the recruitment planning
- Step 4: Consult the recruitment policy and procedures
- Step 5: Consider the sources of recruitment
- Step 6: Choose the appropriate recruitment method
- Step 7: Develop the recruitment advertisement
- Step 8: Place the advertisement in the most appropriate and suitable communication medium
- Step 9: Ensure availability of applicant blanks/ensure pool of potential qualified applications/allow sufficient time to respond
- Step 10: screen responses
- Step 11: Recruitment evaluation and control

Selection is the process of choosing an appropriate candidate amongst applicants and starts after the recruitment process (Thebe & Van der Waldt 2014:5). The selection process also consists of distinct steps. These are:

- Step 1: Reception and initial screening interview
- Step 2: Application form
- Step 3: Indepth selection interview
- Step 4: Background and reference checking
- Step5: Medical examination
- Step 6: Assessment centres
- Step 7: Make final recruitment decision
- Step 8: Final decision and make fair selection offer

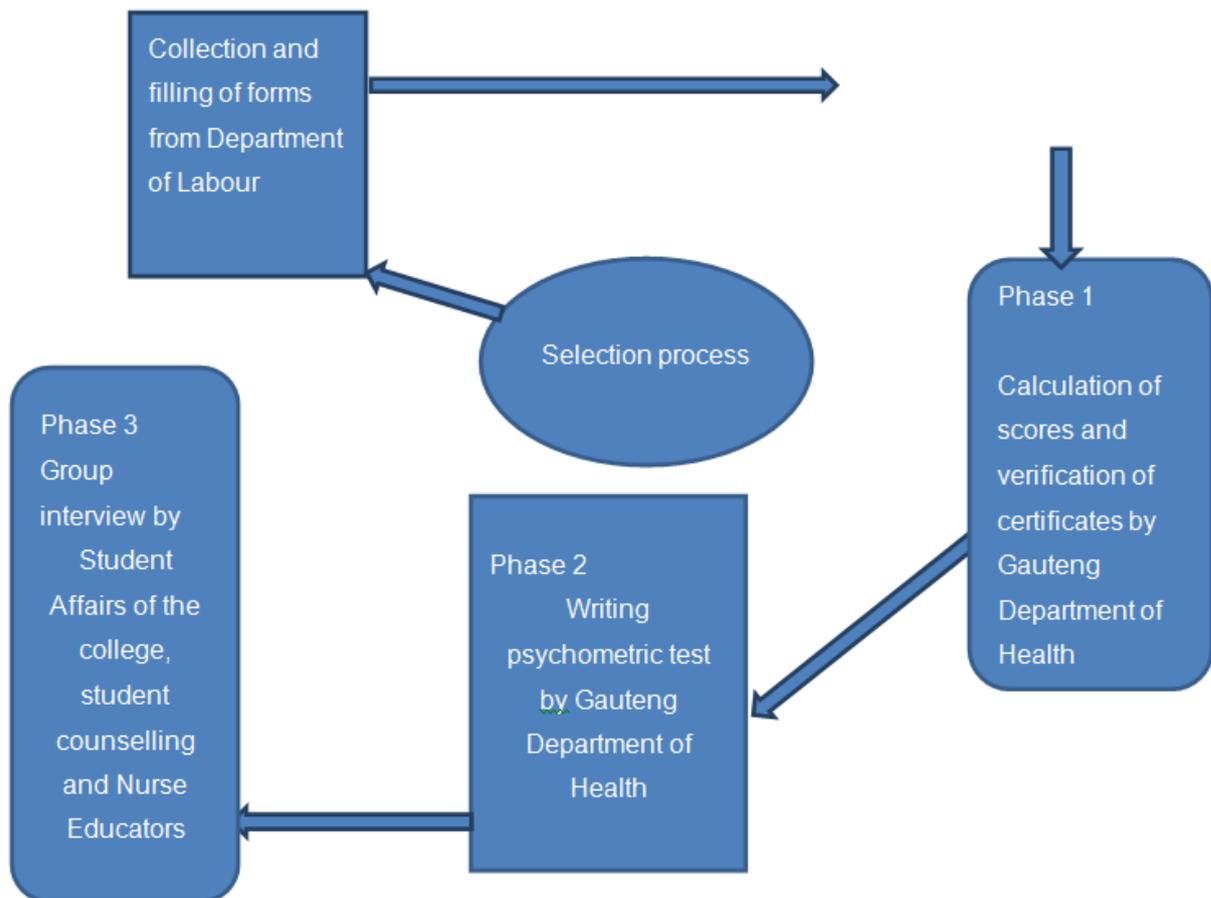
The college under study utilises the guidelines that are laid down by Gauteng Department of Health. The guidelines include, amongst other things, educational qualification, age, and performance during the selection interviews. An ideal recruitment and selection criteria is important to ensure achievement of outcomes of the organisation/institution as this will address the current shortage of nurses. Literature both in South Africa and globally indicates that the selection criteria is almost similar and includes educational qualifications, aptitude tests/psychometric tests, interpersonal skills, commitment and health (Roberts, Wild, Washington, Mountford, Capewell & Priest 2010:42).

This study aims to describe the perceptions of nursing educators regarding recruitment and selection. This is achieved by describing the perceptions of nurse educators regarding the recruitment and selection criteria used at one of the nursing colleges in Gauteng Province West Region.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND TO AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

The process of recruitment and selection of nursing students at the college under study is undertaken amongst three categories of prospective candidates: The first category consists of employees in the Gauteng Department of Health in the nursing profession already in a lower rank than professional nurses i.e. enrolled nurses or enrolled nursing

auxiliaries applying for basic training, or clerks, drivers, cleaners or any other person in possession of a Grade 12 (matriculation) certificate (Gauteng Department of Health, 2000). This group of individuals was referred to as Group A Internal Candidates. The second category of candidates consists of job seekers within government departments. These candidates completed Grade 12 a long time ago, have a Grade 12 (matriculation) certificate and are seeking work at Department of Labour. This group were referred to as Group B External Candidates). The third category consists of the current Grade 12 learners. They are visited at schools and given information about nursing as a career, how to apply, where to apply, duration of the course and the selection criteria needed. This group were referred to as Group C External Candidates. What is of concern to the researcher is that the recruitment and selection criterion used does not involve nurse educators. Nurse Educators are only involved at the end of the process during group interviews. Makhoba (2015) recommends that a selection policy for nursing students should consider inputs from tutors, counsellors and psychologists to ensure accurate selection of candidates and a broader perspective and input from professional nursing policy professionals, practitioners and experts alike. This is in line with the recruitment and selection steps by Thebe and Van der Waldt (2014:5) in Figure 1.1.



**Figure 1.1: Selection process**  
(Thebe & Van der Waldt 2014)

This has a negative impact on the quality of candidates selected for professional nurse training and education (R425) and ultimately on the teaching and learning outcomes (Thebe & Van der Waldt 2014:5).

### 1.3 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The selection of nursing students at the college under study is conducted by two departments, namely the Department of Labour and the Gauteng Department of Health at the exclusion of nursing colleges. What is of concern to the researcher is that recruitment and selection criteria used does not take into consideration important attributes such as age, motivation and, interpersonal skills as suggested by Pugachov, Maxwell, Youmans and Wahnschaff (2015:27). Nurse educators would have considered these attributes if they were involved in the recruitment and selection process. This has a negative influence on the quality of candidates selected for professional nurse training

and education (R425) and ultimately, on the teaching and learning outcomes. For instance, in 2009 total, the intake was 532 students: 360 students passed while 163 failed. In 2010, 454 students were admitted for education and training. Out of this total, 211 students passed and 243 failed. In 2011, 450 students admitted: 317 passed and 133 failed. In 2012, the intake of nursing students was 399: 299 passed and 100 failed. In 2013, 386 were admitted: 213 passed and 173 failed (Chris Hani Baragwanath Nursing College 2017).

This is unacceptable as huge sums of tax payers' money is used to fund nursing education programmes. Student nurses in Gauteng Province are paid a stipend on a level three (3) salary, which is currently R6000.00 per month (Gauteng Department of Health 2013b). It is estimated that the province spends R153 923.46 per annum per student (Gauteng Department of Health 2013b).

Table 1.1 reflects total intake, pass and failure rate from 2010-2013 for the college under study.

**Table 1.1: Statistics of student nurse intake, pass and failure rate from 2009 to 2013**

2009			2010			2011			2012			2013		
TOTAL INTAKE	PASS	FAIL												
532	360	163	454	211	243	450	317	133	399	299	100	386	213	173

This poor performance is contrary to the Gauteng Department of Health strategic plan which mandated nursing colleges to increase the intake of nursing student by 25% each year as a developmental need and the strategy to improve capacity to train more student nurses (Gauteng Department of Health GDoH 2013a).

## **1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study was to explore and describe the nurse educators' perceptions of the current selection criteria for the college in order to enhance the teaching and learning process and academic outcomes.

## **1.5 OBJECTIVES**

The objective of the study were to explore and describe the nurse educators' perceptions of the current selection criteria used at the college under study.

## **1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In order to achieve the purpose, the study wished to answer the following question:

- What are the nurse educators' perceptions on the current selection criteria used?

## **1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Burns, Grove and Gray (2012:214) describe a research design as a blueprint for conducting a study that maximises control over factors that could interfere with the validity of the findings. A research design gives greater control and thus improves the validity of a study. De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delpont (2011:142) define a research design as "the process of focusing on the end product and all the steps in the process to achieve the outcome anticipated". According to Polit and Beck (2012:741), a research design is "the overall plan for addressing a research question, including the specifications for enhancing the integrity of the study".

The researcher considered a qualitative design appropriate for the study in order to explore the nurse educators' perceptions of the selection of nursing students at the selected college (Streubert & Carpenter 2011:22).

To achieve the purpose and objectives of the study, a qualitative, exploratory, descriptive and contextual research design was used.

### **1.7.1 A qualitative research design**

Qualitative research is a systematic, interactive, subjective approach that is conducted to describe and promote understanding of human experiences such as caring, comfort and pain and give them meaning (Burns & Grove 2015:67). According to Polit and Beck (2012:14), qualitative research design is a naturalistic inquiry that places emphases on the understanding of the human experience, as it is lived, through careful collection and analysis of subjective, qualitative materials and narratives. It is further mentioned that those meanings are directed towards certain things and provides the researcher with a broader view on what the participants experienced. It further explained that there is a need for interaction between the participants and the researcher so that the researcher understands the participant's voices and interpretation.

### **1.7.2 Explorative design**

Exploratory design is conducted to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or individual (De Vos et al 2014:95). According to Polit and Beck (2012:227), exploratory qualitative research components seek to explore and give answers in different ways about how phenomena and processes occur. It was further mentioned that written narratives and focus groups are the appropriate chosen methods of data collection.

### **1.7.3 Descriptive study designs**

Descriptive designs presents a picture of specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship, and focuses on "how" and "why" questions. The researcher, therefore, begins with a well-defined subject and conducts research to describe it accurately (De Vos et al 2014:96).

In this study the descriptive designs enabled the researcher to explore and describe the nurse educators' perceptions of the current selection criteria used at the college under study.

#### **1.7.4 Contextual**

According to Polit and Beck (2012:18), contextual design seeks to explore and give answers into different ways about how phenomena and processes take place. The context in which the study was conducted was a nursing college in which nurse educators were interviewed in a form of focus groups .Researcher used this design to explore and describe the nurse educators' perceptions of the current selection criteria of first-year nursing students at a college in the West Rand region. The design enabled the researcher to collect first-hand information directly from the participants.

### **1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology is the plan for conducting the specific steps of a study (Burns & Grove 2013:707). Qualitative research methodology is both flexible and evolving as the researcher explores the depth, richness and complexity of the information (data) (Burns & Grove 2013:62). Research methods are “the techniques researchers use to structure a study and to gather and analyse information relevant to the research question” (Polit & Beck 2012:741). The research methodology includes the setting, population, sampling and sample, data collection and analysis, measures to ensure trustworthiness, and ethical considerations.

#### **1.8.1 Setting**

The setting for the study was a selected nursing college in the Westrand Region, Gauteng Province.

#### **1.8.2 Population**

A research population refers to all the individuals, elements or objects in which a researcher is interested and that meet the designated criteria (De Vos et al 2011:222). In this study, the population consisted of the nurse educators teaching first-year students at the selected college. Both males and females were included in the study and a total of twenty-nine (29) nurse educators involved in teaching, either theory or practice, were involved.

### **1.8.3 Sample and sampling**

A sample refers to a portion of the population selected to represent the whole population. Sampling is the process of selecting the portion for the study (Burns & Grove 2013:546; Polit & Beck 2012:741). Purposive sampling was used to select the participants.

### **1.8.4 Data collection**

Data was collected by means of unstructured focus group interviews. A grand tour question and follow-up probing questions were used to elicit in-depth discussions. The focus groups consisted of 6-7 participants at a time.

The researcher made an appointment with the principal of the college to arrange days and times for the focus group interviews that would not interfere with teaching. The number of focus group interviews would be determined by data saturation. Data saturation occurs when no additional or new information emerges (Burns et al 2013:371). Chapter 3 discusses the research design and methodology in detail.

### **1.8.5 Measures to ensure trustworthiness**

To ensure the truthfulness, appropriateness and meaningfulness of the data, the participants confirmed verbally that the transcriptions were a true reflection of what was said in the interviews. The participants were informed before the interviews, therefore, that they would meet with the researcher again after one week to verify the transcriptions. Trustworthiness was ensured according to the criteria of credibility, dependability and conformability (De Vos et al 2011:420)

- **Credibility**

Credibility is an evaluation of whether or not the research findings represent a “credible” conceptual interpretation of the information from the participants’ original data (Lincoln & Guba 1985:296). To ensure credibility, the researcher established rapport and a relationship of trust with the participants by spending sufficient time for adequate understanding of the topic. The researcher did member checks by asking the

participants to read the transcripts of the interviews, re-checking with them that their words matched what they actually intended, and ensuring that the facts had not been misconstrued. In addition, the interviews were tape-recorded.

- **Dependability**

The dependability of qualitative data refers to data stability (reliability) over time and conditions (Brink, Van der Walt & Van Rensburg 2012:119). Peer auditing was done to maintain standards of quality, improve performance, and provide credibility.

- **Confirmability**

Confirmability refers to the degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest (Brink et al 2012:119). Confirmability guarantees that the findings, conclusions and recommendations are supported by the data and that there is internal agreement between the researcher's interpretation and the actual evidence. The researcher undertook to keep the audio-recordings and field notes for at least 5 years after completion of the study.

### **1.8.6 Data analysis**

Data analysis entails categorising, ordering, manipulating, summarising and describing the data in meaningful terms (Brink et al 2012:170). Qualitative data analysis is a rigorous and logical process by which data are given meaning (Grove, Burns & Gray 2013:493). The researcher analysed the data through integration and synthesis of narrative, non-numeric data and identifying themes and categories by means of open coding. Open coding is the "naming and categorising of phenomena through close examination of the data" (Grove et al 2013:503). Tesch's eight-step method (De Vos et al 2011:402-403) was used to analyse the data:

- Form a sense of the whole by reading all the transcripts and jotting down ideas.
- Choose one transcript and write down thoughts as they occur
- Cluster similar topics together and form columns according to major topics.
- Return topics to original transcribed data.

- Turn wording of the topics into categories and reduce the number of categories.
- Decide on appropriate abbreviation for the various categories.
- Assemble data together and analyse.
- Use codes and compare the data with the results

The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. The tapes, transcriptions and field notes were kept safely under lock and key.

## **1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethics deals with matters of right and wrong. Ethical considerations are essential in any research involving human subjects in order to protect the rights of the research participants (Polit & Beck 2008:167). In this study, the researcher obtained permission to conduct the study and upheld the participants' rights to self-determination; privacy, anonymity and confidentiality; fair treatment, and protection from discomfort and harm (Burns et al 2012:164).

- **Permission**

The researcher obtained written permission from the Research and Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa, Gauteng Department of Health and the Principal of Chris Hani Baragwanath Nursing College to conduct the study (see Appendix A).

- **Right to self determination**

The right to self-determination is based on the ethical principle of respect for persons. The participants were treated as autonomous agents who could decide whether to participate or not. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and that participation was voluntary. They were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty should they wish to do so. The participants were given an information leaflet explaining the purpose and processes of the study and asked to read through it carefully. They were then allowed to ask any questions. All the participants who agreed to participate signed an informed consent form (see Appendix G).

- **Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality**

The researcher ensured the participants' privacy, anonymity and confidentiality. The participants' identity was kept anonymous by giving them codes to use and no data given could be linked to any participant. Moreover, the researcher kept the master list and every document safely under lock and key to safeguard participants' identity. Confidentiality refers to the researcher's responsibility to protect all data collected within the scope of the project from being divulged or made available to any other person. On completion of the study a research report in the form of a dissertation and a scientific article will be written. No participant will be identifiable in the dissertation or article (Burns et al 2013:169). The final report will be available to participants. The data will be kept for 5 years after completion of the study (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:338).

- **Right to fair treatment**

The researcher treated all the participants with respect, fairly and the same, irrespective of race or creed, and did not discriminate against any nurse educator who did not wish to participate in the study (McMillan & Schumacher 2010-338).

- **Right to protection from discomfort and harm**

The right to protection and harm is based on the principle of beneficence, which holds that one should do good and not harm. The researcher explained that no discomfort was expected during the study, but advised the participants to report any discomfort they should feel at any stage. Should it be necessary, a participant could be referred to a counsellor (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:338).

## **1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The recommendations of the study on the selection criteria for first-year student nurses should assist the Gauteng Department of Health, the Department of Labour and all nursing college to streamline student acceptance. Suitable selection criteria would enhance the academic performance of students and guide nurse educators' teaching

practice. This would contribute significantly to training and retaining suitable nurses and enhance the quality of health care service provision.

### **1.11 LIMITATIONS**

The study was limited to nurse educators involved in teaching first-year nursing students and one selected nursing college in the Westrand Region, Gauteng Province, therefore the results cannot be generalised to other nursing colleges or provinces.

### **1.12 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS**

In this study, the following key terms were used as defined below.

**Perception.** Perception is the ability to see, hear or become aware of something through the senses; the organisation, identification and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the environment (world). In this study, it referred to how the participants perceived or understood the selection criteria for admitting nursing students.

**Nurse educator.** A nurse educator is a registered nurse with an additional qualification in nursing education who has successfully completed a one-year course of study and who is registered with the SANC as a nurse educator in accordance with Regulation R118 of 23 January 1987.

**Criteria.** A criterion is a standard, rule or test on which a judgement or decision can be based; a rule or principle for evaluating or testing something; criteria is the plural. In this study, criteria referred to the standards by which the Department of Health and the Department of Labour evaluated candidates to be admitted to first-year nursing studies.

**Selection.** Selection is the action or fact of choosing someone or something as being the best or most suitable for a purpose. In this study, selection referred to the selection of candidates for nursing.

**Nursing student.** A nursing student is a person who follows a four-year comprehensive course leading to registration with the SANC as a nurse (General, Psychiatry, Community) and midwife (SANC Regulation R425, 1985:1).

**Nursing college.** A nursing college is a post-secondary educational institution which offers professional nursing education at basic and post-basic level where such nursing education has been approved in terms of section 15(2) of SANC Regulation R425 of 1985, as amended. In this study, it referred to the selected nursing college.

### **1.13 LAYOUT OF THE STUDY**

The study consists of five chapters:

Chapter 1 outlines the problem, purpose, research design and methodology and ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter 2 discusses the literature review undertaken for the study.

Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodology in detail.

Chapter 4 presents the data analysis and interpretation, and results.

Chapter 5 presents the conclusions of the study and makes recommendations for practice and further research.

### **1.14 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented the research problem, purpose and objectives of the study. The research design and methodology, including the population, data collection and analysis, measures to ensure trustworthiness, and ethical considerations were briefly discussed and key terms defined.

Chapter 2 discusses the literature review conducted for the study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 1 described the problem, purpose and significance as well as research design and methodology of the study. This chapter discusses the literature review conducted for the study.

A literature review is an organised, written presentation of what has been published on a topic (Burns & Grove 2013:163). The purpose of the review is to convey to the reader what is currently known on the topic of interest. In addition, it assists researchers to comprehend and extend their knowledge of the phenomenon under study (Polit & Beck 2008:105). A literature review places the study in the context of the general body of knowledge, which minimises the possibility of unintentional duplication and increases the probability that the new study makes a valuable contribution. It compares the findings of existing studies with those of the study at hand (Brink et al 2014:71).

The literature review covered nurses' training in SA; nursing student profile; selection of nursing students; diversity in students' learning; critical thinking appraisal; theoretical framework; South African and international selection criteria, the effects of poor student selection, and attrition.

#### **2.2 PROFESSIONAL NURSE EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN SA (R425)**

The South African Nursing Council (SANC) as a regulating body of the nursing profession in conjunction with the Minister of Health stipulates regulations relating to the minimum requirements for the education and training of a nurse (General, Psychiatric and Community) and Midwife, in terms of section 45(1) of the *Nursing Act, 50 of 1978*.

- **Admission to the course of study**

In order to be admitted to a course of study, a person must be the holder of at least a senior certificate or an equivalent certificate which gives admission to formal post-secondary education.

- **Duration of the course of study**

The duration of the study course is four academic years.

- **Curriculum**

Submission of curriculum to council.

The curriculum shall be submitted by the university or nursing college concerned to the council for approval in terms of section 15(2).

- **Programme objectives**

On completion of the course of study where the student trained under R425 and followed the curriculum, the student shall:

- Show personal, professional development, respect for the dignity and uniqueness of man in his social-cultural and religious context, and approach and understand him as a psychological, physical and social being.
- Be skilled in the diagnosing of individual, family, group and community health problems and in the planning and implementing of therapeutic action and nursing care for the health service.
- Be able to take care of the sick in all stages of life, including death and dying.
- Show professionalism and maintain the ethical and moral codes.
- Communicate well with other professionals and practise independently and accept responsibility.
- Easily accept change in the profession and manage a health service unit effectively, using a scientific approach to problems.

- Promote community involvement at any point and know the importance of the environmental health services.
- Use cognitive, psychomotor and affective skills to serve as a basis for effective practice and for continuing education.
- **Subjects**

The curriculum shall consist of at least the following subjects and the approach shall be the integration of the various fields of study, particularly in their clinical application:

- Fundamental Nursing Science, ethos and professional practice - at least one (1) academic year.
- General Nursing Science - at least three (3) academic years.
- Psychiatric Nursing Science - at least two (2) academic years.
- Midwifery - at least two (2) academic years.
- Community Nursing Science - at least two (2) academic years.
- Biological and Natural Sciences - at least two and a half (2½) academic years.
- Pharmacology - at least half (½) an academic year.
- Social Sciences - at least two (2) academic years.

- **Examinations**

All subjects include formative/practical and summative/theoretical assessments. An examination mark of at least 50% shall be obtained in each subject as a requirement for the student to go to the next level.

## **2.3 NURSING STUDENT**

A student nurse is a person who is studying to acquire a qualification in the art and science of nursing profession and meet certain prescribed standards of education and clinical competency. This person is registered as such under section 23 of the Nursing Act, 33 of 2005 at the South African Nursing Council (SANC) to undergo a basic four (4) year nurse training programme as stipulated by regulation R425. As the study focuses on first-year student nurse, this person is training under R425 and his or her curriculum

content consists of Fundamental Nursing Science, ethos and professional practice; General Nursing Science, Biological and Natural Science; Pharmacology and Social Science, and the approach is the integration of the various fields of study in his or her clinical application within an academic period of 44 weeks in a calendar year (SANC 1988, Paragraph 6(3)[a, b, f, g and h]). Gauteng Department of Health has formulated its own system of selection of these students for training. That includes (1) Selection, and (2) group interview. The process of selection is undertaken amongst three categories of candidates. The first category is the candidates coming straight from matriculation (Grade 12), the second category are job seekers, and the last category are enrolled nurses at a lower qualification than a professional nurse who want to pursue their education.

## **2.4 PROFILE OF THE NURSING STUDENT**

Students entering the nursing profession come with varying previous experience and levels of readiness for learning (Mellish, Brink & Paton 2009:63). They come with high expectations from how they were motivated to come to nursing. Some are still young, inexperienced adolescents who are finding themselves, seeking a self-image. They are from different cultures, socialised in a different way, and follow the values, beliefs and traditions of their own cultures. They struggle to adjust easily thus suffer from insecurities about their safety, acceptance, affection and achievements. They tend to worry about many things and are afraid of making mistakes and harming patients in the end (Mellish et al 2009:62). Nurse educators need to find out students' needs and have strategies to deal with their challenges (Mellish et al 2009:3). The following are factors that influence the profile of the nursing student.

### **2.4.1 Age**

Age is one of the challenges that differentiate the profile of the students. Any candidate is selected, irrespective of age. Armstrong, Geyer, Mngomezulu, Potgieter and Sebudar (2011:88-90) express concern about the quality of nurses recruited into nursing. Many come between the age of 34 and 40 which has both advantages and disadvantages for the profession. Older ones are more respectful and focused, but have a shorter working life span. Younger ones are more materialistic and only interested in the salary. This raised questions about selection criteria. It is clear that academic criteria alone are not

sufficient and should be combined with other criteria, such as personality and people skills. The researcher was also concerned about age as it is one of the criteria ignored in the current selection process. Although older people are respectful and focused, they either cannot understand the content or comprehend what is being taught.

#### **2.4.2 Selection criteria requirements**

Candidates differ according to qualification and subject requirement during the selection process. Three categories are selected for the same programme. The first category includes employees in the health department, either in the nursing profession already with a lower rank to a professional nurse, or clerks, drivers, cleaners or any other person as long as they have a Grade 12 certificate. The second category consists of job seekers within government Departments. These candidates passed Grade 12 a long time ago and are looking for work at the Department of Labour, but not employed by the Gauteng Department of Health. The third category consists of the current Grade 12s. Grade 12 students are encouraged to apply in their current year of study using their Grade 11 results for tentative selection.

#### **2.4.3 Intellectual skills and level of motivation**

Students are expected to be critical thinkers. Intrinsic motivation requires no external incentives and enhances motivation to engage again in the future. It is associated with enhanced comprehension, creativity, cognitive flexibility, achievement, and long-term well-being. Extrinsic motivation is often associated with negative indicators of achievement and well-being. There are also possible motivational benefits of having both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for activities. A procedure like giving injections, for example, involves motor skills as well as the application of mental rules (Lepper & Henderlong, 2000). According to Mellish, Brink and Paton (2009), students are expected to learn skills that execute performance which involves the use of muscles.

#### **2.4.4 Preferred learning style**

Preferred learning style refers to the way in which individuals perceive, think, interpret, solve problems, interact with others and organise information around them. Students are different and use different learning styles. According to Mellish, Brink and Paton

(2009:66), the majority of students have either activist or reflector learning styles. Activists are characterised by openness to new experiences and a sociable nature whereas reflectors learn best by having time to think back on experiences, tend to be cautious and like to explore things carefully before coming to a decision.

#### **2.4.5 Self-concept**

Self-esteem is more often used to refer to the affective or emotional aspect of self and generally alludes to how individuals feel about or value themselves. This is sometimes used as a synonym for self-worth, although some suggest self-worth as a more central concept (Crocker & Wolfe 2001). This relates to whether one's being or one's action is more important to constructing one's self view. The self-concept can also refer to the general idea people have of themselves and self-esteem can refer to particular measures about components of the self-concept.

### **2.5 NURSING STUDENTS AS ADULT LEARNERS**

According to Malcolm Knowles' (2013) andragogic theory, students as adult learners are mature, self-directed and responsible for their own learning. Adult learners learn more effectively through discussion and problem solving. This also is driven by what they feel they need to know and do. They are able to apply new knowledge and skills which they learn straight away which call for a problem-solving and task-centred approach, hence the educator must involve the learners in decisions about their method of learning. Learners must be encouraged to formulate their own learning objectives, learning resources and evaluation of their learning. Adult learners move from dependence to independence during maturation.

### **2.6 NURSING STUDENT QUALITIES**

According to Mellish et al (2009:17-19), nursing students are expected to:

- Be creative, intellectual and understanding, and have imaginative powers and problem-solving skills.
- Have the capacity to sustain independent and high quality work.
- Be self-aware.

- Be able to practise responsibility and accountability within legal, ethical, professional, and institutional parameters.
- Possess critical thinking, enquiry, analytic and research skills.

## **2.7 SELECTION OF STUDENT NURSES**

Student nurses should undergo a rigorous selection process by the nursing education institutions to attract suitable candidates to the profession (GDoH 2013:10). In the South African context, the selection of student nurses is outlined in the regulatory framework of the South African Nursing Council (SANC), the body that controls the education and training of nurses. The pre-admission requirements and selection criteria are outlined in the *Nursing Act, 33 of 2005*. Currently South Africa has an estimated population of 55,91 million people and therefore nursing education institutions should provide an adequate number of nurses to provide efficient health care services to the population (Statistics South Africa 2016). To ensure sustained quality nursing care, the World Health Organisation (WHO) estimated that a minimum of 200 nurses per 100 000 of a population would be needed to meet the health-related UN Millennium Development Goals (Wildschut & Mgqolozana 2008:20). According to Roos (2014:2), the success of this plan relies greatly on nurses working in the public sector to provide and manage health care of 85% of the population.

## **2.8 SELECTION CRITERIA**

Nursing institutions and educators have an obligation to utilise admission criteria and academic standards that are reasonable and fair, yet become effective indicators of student success as well. It is imperative for nursing programmes to be inclusive of efficient and reliable criteria that will ensure selection of candidates who will successfully complete the nursing programme in order to prevent human and financial resources wastage resulting from student failure and attrition (Shulruf, Wang, Zhao & Baker 2011:727). Some of the most successful selection criteria to select nursing students are described next.

### **2.8.1 Pre-entry level testing**

Pre-entry level test scores are used as an entry requirement in most undergraduate nursing programmes (Roos 2014:34). The results of application tests determine a student's competency to do a certain type of work, at a specified level. The purpose of this testing is to determine a student's readiness for academic studies at a higher education facility and to advise the higher educational institution of the type of academic support students might need to succeed in their studies.

### **2.8.2 Personal interview**

A candidate who has complied with the first phase, where subjects as pre-entry level are considered, will then proceed to the next phase, the interview phase by the selection panel, "which is the final phase of the selection process" (Gauteng Provincial Government 2000:1). Candidates who do not meet all the criteria for admission to the four-year course, but have the general mental ability and English proficiency scores of level 5 or more and are found to be suitable on interview will be shortlisted in order of merit (GPGDHSD 2000:6). Personal interviews are conducted to determine those non-academic factors, personal characteristics and behavioural skills not portrayed on the application form that could influence a nursing student's successful completion of an undergraduate programme (Roos 2014 b:34).

### **2.8.3 Personality profiling**

Due to the unique nature of the nursing profession, it is beneficial to determine the prospective candidate's personal profile type before selection (Baldacchino & Galea 2012:419). Knowledge of the type of personality of the applicant is not only beneficial to choose an appropriate candidate for the profession, but also to ensure a successful nursing student, who will be able to qualify, register and join the nursing profession. Nursing students with higher neuroticism personality scores are more likely to discontinue courses, as they tend to be impulsive, apathetic and emotionally cold. They have a tendency not to make an effort to succeed and mostly perform poorly. Baez (2013:9) refers to personality and emotional intelligence in general employment. According to Baez (2013:2), many employers utilise personality tests in the employment selection process to identify people who have more than just the knowledge and skills

necessary to be successful in their jobs. The workplace is full of people whose personality is a mismatch for the positions they hold. Psychology has the ability to measure personality and emotional intelligence which can provide employers with data to use in the selection process. Although cognitive measurement tools are good predictors of job success, they are not perfect, however, because human personality is an important factor in job success. This means that this is not the only method that can be used in employee selection.

Rankin (2013:2718-2719) emphasises that emotional intelligence enhances value-based practice and compassionate care in nursing and suggests that emotional intelligence be embraced in recruitment and selection process and in the practice assessment tool for student nurses. Rankin (2013) adds that information about emotional intelligence can contribute to the prediction of retention, academic achievement and performance in clinical practice by first-year nurse students.

According to Lyon, Trotter, Holt, Powell and Roe (2013:41-43), there is a strong relationship between emotional intelligence and clinical practice performance Lyon et al (2013:41) describe compassion as an essential part of nursing and is linked with emotional intelligence. Heffernan et al (2010) point out that the use of emotional intelligence tests is controversial and support for such tests is weakened by the lack of correlation between them. Some of the tests test for different things, such as personality or cognitive ability, which may not be emotional intelligence. Such doubts raise concern about the rigour and fairness of selection process involving emotional intelligence.

#### **2.8.4 Wellness and health questionnaires**

Wellness and health questionnaires are included in a selection process to determine the actual physical and emotional wellness and health of a prospective nursing student before admission. Health is the means whereby the individual is capable of continuing to grow and develop expertise in areas which contribute to personal and community living. It is the ability to meet self-demand that contributes to the maintenance and promotion of structural integrity, functioning, and development (Mellish et al 2009:17-19). The WHO (2000) defines health as encompassing a high level of overall physical, mental and social functioning, a general adaptive maintenance level of daily functioning, and absence of illness. Criteria such as school leaving certificate and good health,

subjects and percentages gained from those subjects, evidence of interest in community work and satisfactory performance and behaviour at school are important. Mellish et al (2009:297) refer to a psychological test as one of the influential and, in some instances, crucial criteria in selecting candidates to nursing college. It is therefore beneficial to determine the general wellness and health of a prospective candidate before selecting the person, as well as keep the wellness and health profile updated. This can be achieved by allowing nursing students to complete a wellness and health questionnaire annually. It is furthermore recommended that health promotion be included as part of the undergraduate curricula (Van Lingen, Douwman & Wannenberg 2011:405; Bryer, Cherkins & Raman 2013:414). The nursing profession requires an ability to perform certain physical tasks that can strain the musculo-skeletal system and any previous injuries must be noted to prevent further damage (Sorrentino & Remmert 2012:247). Candidates should be able to manage stress and challenging situations which will not affect their health and well-being during the undergraduate nursing programme. The aim of determining the health status of prospective candidates beforehand is not necessarily to exclude them from the nursing programme, but to offer appropriate support to nursing students should they finally enrol in the nursing programme (Pitt, Powis, Levett-Jones & Hunter 2012:908).

### **2.8.5 Past academic performance**

Academic performance is a determinant of students' grasp and understanding of their studies, including their coping mechanisms and accomplishment of different tasks allocated to them by their teachers (Belle 2011). The use of past academic performances to assist in identifying at-risk students is a valuable tool. Previous academic performance is calculated by appointment point score (APS). To gain entry into an academic programme at a South African university, a similar method is used to determine past academic performance. This method is known as Admission Point Score (APS) and point values are allocated to the level of achievement obtained for subjects at National Senior Certificate Level. Gauteng nursing colleges also use the APS and require a candidate to obtain level 4 in English and level 4 in Life Sciences. It is advisable, however, to always use previous academic achievements in combination with pre-entry level tests, personality tests and personal interviews and not just as a single factor to determine admission to the undergraduate nursing programme (Schmidt & McWilliams 2011:171).. Once the at-risk student is identified, strategies for academic

support can be implemented (Cameron, Roxburgh, Taylor & Lauder 2010:1379). Past academic performances that should be taken into account to identify the at-risk student include secondary school achievements and pre-admission testing. Good former academic results and better pre-admission levels result in better performance during the nursing programme, and these are one possible means to improve the through-put rate of undergraduate students (Pitt et al 2012:907).

### **2.8.6 Academic and clinical support**

In a study on the factors that have an influence on completion rates amongst second-year college-based nursing students, Ramahlafi (2015:13) referred to Salamonson and Andrew (2006:342-349) who found that employment status possibly influenced students' success. Students who worked more than 16 hours per week were unlikely to complete their studies, as a result of exhaustion. Roos (2014 a: 37) states that the key factors influencing nursing students to discontinue an undergraduate programme include inability to reach theoretical and clinical outcomes as well as academic unpreparedness. Personal factors within the clinical area may also have an impact as students who are anxious are likely to make more errors, especially in clinical performance, and may not succeed in training. Working might also, result in inadequate time to study which is compounded by students who work having to travel backwards and forwards to the clinical area and also due to tiredness after working in the clinical areas (Ramahlafi 2015:38). The South African Department of Health is proposing a funding model for nursing students to include support for tuition fees, textbooks and study materials, living costs, as well as medical aid and indemnity fees (South Africa, DoH 2014:36).

## **2.9 SELECTION CRITERIA: SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE**

The education and training of nurses in South Africa is regulated by legal means through the, (Nursing Act, Act No. 33 of 2005) (South Africa 2005) as amended in various government gazettes in conjunction with applicable regulations of the South African Nursing Council (South Africa 2005). In accordance with the country's federal system of governance, various provincial health departments then enforce relevant provisions of the Nursing Act and SANC regulations with regard to the selection of student nurses.

The education and training of nurses should take place at an approved nursing college or institution, which is defined as a post-secondary education institution which offers professional nursing education at basic and post-basic level where such nursing education has been approved in terms of section 15(2) [of the Nursing Act No 33 of 2005] (SANC 2005:1).

This study is done in the nursing college of a public Gauteng health institution.

## **2.10 SELECTION OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS**

The Gauteng Department of Health requires that three phases be instituted in the selection of prospective nursing students. Potential students must be recruited to the nursing profession. Before students are being selected to the profession, the college need to campaign and people responsible for that campaign to have clear picture of the characteristics required of the student nurse. Selection should be reviewed constantly against the success rate of student selected. Other factors that make the selection of students for nursing programme difficult include, different educational background, Candidate enter nursing profession when they are already old and experience challenges during facilitation in class. Shomoossi, Rad & Rhakhsani (2013:137-144) pointed that even though the recruitment, admission, retention and graduation of proficient nurses are essential to provide the workforce to meet the demands of multicultural community. Currently, most students find themselves at a disadvantage in reading comprehension, for instance, because of false feelings of knowing English. However, the current status of English as an international language puts further commands on university graduates. Nurses are expected to take care of foreign patients. Based on the results as well as the experiences of the researchers from Iranian learners of English at medical universities, a feeling of inefficiency will remain as long as the revision is ignored. Therefore a closer look at the possibility of English language development issues and revision of the overt hidden and null curricula is recommended. Armstrong and Rispel (2015:1) Nursing Council (SANC) Key informants talked about unsuitability of most nursing students and criticised lack of national staffing norms, suboptimal governance by both the SANC and the Department of Health, outdated curricula that are unresponsive to the population and health system needs, lack of preparedness of nurse educators, and the unsuitability of most nursing students.

They elaborated on lack of prioritisation of nursing, resources constrains in both the nursing education and the health training facilities and general implementation inertia. They believe social accountability which is an essential component of transformative education that intention be paid to appropriate student recruitment and selection. They also talked about the advanced age of students on commencement of training which reduces the pool of nurses for further specialised training and the relatively high attrition of students resulting in wastage of time and money in training them. They concluded that even if there are so many applicants that could be accommodated in the program, they either did not meet the criteria whenever they wanted to go or nursing is their second or even third choice. This is a huge concern to the researcher because this is happening in South Africa and our Department of Health. They suggested the revision of the curricula for the population and health system needs in South Africa even though there is still lack of finalisation of the training Regulation and the scope of practice which brings major barrier to transformation of nursing education curricula.

**Table 2.1 Nursing selection criteria**

Senior Certificate			National Senior Certificate
SYMBOL	HG	SG	
A	6	5	English level 4
B	5	4	Life science level 4
C	4	3	Life Orientation ½ mark of the level obtained
D	3	2	Appointment score 25 and above
E	2	1	Add all other subjects and the candidate is expected to have appointment score of 25.
F	1	0	
M score 15 and above			Appointment score of 25 and above

(Department of Labour 2013)

### **Phase 1 = Matriculation (Grade 12) screening and allocation of points/score**

The Senior Certificate was used for candidates who passed their matric before 1994. The candidates' Messod (M) Scores were calculated by allocating scores to the symbols they obtained in each subject. The National Senior certificate was used for candidates who passed their matric post 1994. This type of certificate used level scores

for each subject. The candidates were then allocated appointment scores according to the level they obtained (Department of Labour 2013).

### **Phase 2: Assessment test**

When the candidate has successfully complied with the GPGDHSD's pre-entry matriculation requirements, i.e. First phase is then invited for an assessment by means of psychometric test. Psychometric tests are scientific means of identifying and measuring a person's cognitive abilities and behavioural characteristics used to determine the extent to which a person is suitable for a given task (Fernandes 2015:1)

### **Phase 3: The personal interview**

Having successfully complied with the two abovementioned assessments, the next phase is the interview phase. This is the final phase of the selection process. (Gauteng Provincial Government 2000:1). Section 6.1.3 of the GPDHSD's Circular Minute No 22 (dated 19 July 2000) stipulates that the interview is the final arbiter in the selection of professional registered nursing: Candidates who do not meet all the criteria for admission to the four-year course, but have general mental ability and English proficiency scores of 5 or more and are found to be suitable on interview will be shortlisted in order of merit. (GPGDHSD 2000:6). Interviews are conducted in the groups of five to eight students by two faculty members and a nurse from the community. Interviews are always subjective and interviewer may prefer another person present to help conduct the interviews. It is important that when interviews are conducted some questions be related to nursing as a career and the interest in working with other people (Mellish et al 2009:299) Bullock (2012:2-8) points out that structured interviews, general mental ability, and situational judgement tests are among the most effective and universal employee selection tools. Although no method is without drawbacks, the key is to find the one that best fits the hiring strategy and can most easily be aligned with the existing processes and procedures. General mental ability is effective in predicting future performance in every type of job at all levels. Structured interviews and situational judgment tests are extremely good at predicting performance when applied properly. The test is good in predicting how the applicant will respond to complicated decisions and preferably for managerial and technical positions (Mellish et al 2009:299; Bullock 2012: 2-8).

### **2.10.1 Academic ability**

The South African Nursing Council as the regulating body of the nursing profession in conjunction with the Minister of Health set regulations relating to the minimum requirements for the education and training of a nurse (General, Psychiatric and Community) and Midwife, in terms of section 45(1) of the Nursing Act, 50 of 1978. Therefore each college where students are trained under this Regulation has a right to raise its own educational requirements for making sure that the symbols that the candidates obtain for entry are acceptable, can avoid the attrition rate and gain the reputation of being a successful training institution (Mellish et al 2009:299). Nursing requires intelligent academic potential and the ability to combine study with practical work. Students must be made aware that nursing is not easy. They need to be academically committed to the profession. Students must be both physically and mentally healthy, hence medical surveillance is considered during selection process. It has been found that students who are academically weak but chose nursing with passion can do better than s who are academically good but lack interest in the profession. Nursing involves a lot of emotional strain and deals with people's lives and a person who chooses to be a nurse should have a desire to help others like sick patients. A nurse is supposed to be strong with a sense of loyalty, reliability, high moral code, patience and tolerance towards other people and their failings. Based on all these abilities, a nurse will fit the profile (Mellish et al 2009:294-295)

### **2.10.2 Recommendation forms**

In order to introduce young people and Grade 11 and 12 learners to the nursing environment, recruiting information leaflets could be designed by the college and distributed to schools, community centres and parent-teacher associations (PTAs). Learners could be taken through a hospital and shown what nursing is like so that they can make an informed decision and not be shocked when they see this for the first time. They can be given the opportunity to spend a day or two with a student nurse on routine to see all the activities involved. It is important that careful selection of students is done to counteract the attrition rate among student nurses. The determination of valid selection criteria against which to predict success in nursing career needs serious attention. The present criteria include entrance examinations, letter of recommendation,

parents and siblings in a health profession, and previous interest in participation in the activities of the organisations (Mellish et al 2009:294-295).

### **2.10.3 Diversity in student learning**

Diversity means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity within each individual. Student diversity characteristics do impact negatively on the clinical experience of nursing students specifically age, English language literacy, finance and parental status. Many older students feel that English as a first language is compromised in the clinical environment. Age and ethnicity may increase intolerance, prejudice and racism shown towards them in the clinical learning environment (CLE) (Koch, Everett, Phillips & Davidson 2014:4849). Koch et al (2014:4849) maintain that cultural diversity standards in education must be introduced and implemented in teaching practice.

### **2.10.4 Model on selection of students**

The model of education implemented in South Africa is outcomes-based and emphasises specific key concepts. The model focuses on the achievement of objectives. Outcomes must be planned by all stakeholders and the learner must achieve these by the end of a defined and agreed-on study period. This must be planned in such a way that the learners are involved in finding and interpreting information themselves, thus they learn to think critically, reason and reflect, and then act. During this period assessment is planned for an ongoing basis.

### **2.10.5 Pre-selection and compassion**

Managers and employers need to exercise compassion for others and self, conversely self-compassion takes that idea and turns it towards oneself, differing from global self-esteem in that self-compassionate people tend to have higher resilience and are better

able to cope with failure as they are driven by a desire to learn. Practising transparency in recruitment and compassion is important. Candidates understand the exact requirement for any position, share the mechanism by which they will be evaluated, and share the results of the evaluation. Satisfaction with recruitment process means clarity on why they were (or were not) selected. Give feedback and ensure they know where to grow, develop and facilitate new opportunities (Martin & Alexanderson 2013:1).

#### **2.10.6 Tertiary entry ranking**

Jacobs, Chapman, Birks and Motlag (2015:5) maintain that using the current selection criteria for nursing students, based predominantly on academic scores from high school, may exclude potentially competent students from admission to nursing undergraduate degrees. The emphasis is always on the “shining stars” and the plodders or ordinary students fall through the cracks, are overlooked – and this happens right from pre-school. Today especially, parents are so busy ‘currying up’ to the teachers etc. It’s sick and very sad.

#### **2.10.7 Critical thinking appraisal score**

Admission criteria for the selection of students are determined by the educational institutions (Crouch 2014:3). Furthermore, in the USA at present there is no objective instrument currently recognised as the sole predictor of successful nursing programme completion. Regarding predictors of students' success in community college nursing programmes, Seago, Keane, Chen, Spetz and Grumbach (2012:494) found that successful programme completion could be predicted from testing prior to entry, and introducing measures to guide admission procedures. In addition, entering students could receive counselling on the potential for successful completion of the nursing programme. Seago et al (2012:494) state that since thinking critically is necessary in a practice discipline where individuals are faced with making life and death decisions daily, the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal score could be used as part of predicting successful completion. Nursing students must be able to develop and use critical thinking abilities to render safe, effective patient care.

### **2.10.8 Student behaviour in an academic setting**

The recruitment of nursing students is of a concern to nursing colleges and educators. In a study of nurse educators' experiences and perspectives of incivility among nursing students in a South African school of nursing, Vink and Adejuma (2014:178) reported unpleasant encounters of nurse educators with students. This required the nursing school management to examine the extent and causes of the problem. Many nurse educators had experienced low morale and confusion due to managers' overlooking of the troubling classroom experiences.

### **2.11 SELECTION CRITERIA: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

The researcher explored the international context of nursing student selection criteria to compare how other countries could be compared with South African practices and trends in respect of selection criteria. Some of the criteria and methods applied to employment and employees, but the points raised apply equally well to nurse students. The selection criteria applied in India, the USA (specifically, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky), Scotland, Australia and Malaysia are briefly discussed next.

- **India**

In a study of the recruitment and selection process in Faridabad, India, Neeraj (2012:34) found that selecting the right employee was important for three main reasons: performance, costs and legal obligations. These should be considered when admitting student to avoid any unnecessary wastage of money and valuable resources. Employment law requires non-discriminatory selection procedures for selected groups and it was necessary to make a systematic effort to avoid the concept of negligent hiring by obtaining relevant information about the applicant and verifying all the documents. Neeraj (2012:34) emphasises that students with the right skills do a better job for any company therefore it is important to screen and choose better candidates who can effectively contribute to company success.

- **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (PA), USA**

Regarding the employee selection process, Suttle (2015:2) maintains that it must include drug or personality tests before candidates are hired. In the USA, employers often use tests and other selection procedures to screen applicants for hire and employees for promotion. There are many types of tests and selection procedures, including cognitive tests, personality tests, medical examinations, credit checks, and criminal background checks that can be used. Recruitment and selection are the most expensive part of human resource management and an essential component of any organisation because when organisations appoint the right people for the job and train them properly, the people not only produce good results but also tend to stay with the organisation longer (Suttle 2015:12).

- **University of Kentucky, Lexington**

The College of Nursing of the University of Kentucky in the USA lists three students' pre-admission criteria. The candidate should possess aptitude, abilities, and skills in five areas, namely: observation, communication. Sensory and motor coordination and conceptualisation, integration, and quantification of behavioural and social skills, abilities, and aptitude test.. The candidate should be in a satisfactory state of health to execute all the functions of a registered professional nurse. In addition to the range of cognitive and non-cognitive qualities, the nursing student selection criteria emphasise the nursing candidate's physical fitness and preparedness to withstand the rigours and demands of nursing practice (University of Kentucky 2015).

- **Scotland**

In a study on the inclusion of lay people in the pre-registration selection process, Roberts, Wild, Washington, Mountford, Capewell and Priest (2010:42) suggest including service users in the selection of nursing students to find out what is acceptable and helpful in a nurse's qualities and skills. During this process, they can offer views on the quality of communication; help explore values and attitudes to equality of diversity, and help uncover motivation and commitment to nursing as a career. The inclusion of service users and carers in the selection process for nurses would benefit the employer in identifying values and attitudes. The University of Scotland has begun involving

patients in the recruitment of nursing students with the aim of helping to bring down the attrition rate. The university can verify an applicant's personal statement and that can also evaluate cognitive and non-cognitive skills (Hudson 2010).

- **Australia**

The selection criteria for students in Australia use Tertiary Entry Ranking. The aim is to determine any linkages between the pathway of entry to pre-registration nursing course and the academic achievement of these prospective students. Information is gathered from students enrolled in four different streams of a Bachelor of Nursing programme over a 12-month period and then compared with their academic records. This has been found a significant indicator of a student completing a university course (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent & Scales 2008:1).

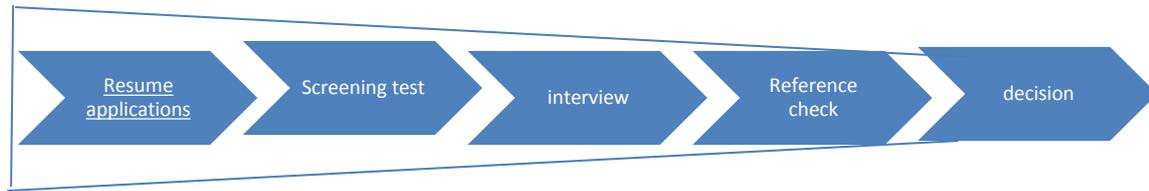
- **University of Malaysia**

The Malaysian context of nursing student selection rationalises that aspiring nursing candidates should possess satisfactory social skills, including communication and interpersonal relational skills (Subramaniam, Ariff & Idris 2012:243). The University of Malaysia focuses on pre-, post and labour market entry selection criteria. (Subramaniam et al 2012:243). Teacher and family involvement are major considerations in the pre-selection criteria. The teacher factor includes the impact of the teacher's advice in career selection as a role model. The family factor includes the influence the family has in the student's choice of career. Labour market factors consider the post-entry selection, which involves whether the course selected will enable the students to get a job in the labour market (Subramaniam et al 2012:246).

## **2.12 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

A theoretical framework is the abstract, logical structure of meaning that guides the development of a study and enables the researcher to link the findings to the body of knowledge used in nursing practice (Burns & Grove 2009:39). Selection is the process of choosing from among applicants the best qualified individual or individuals for a particular job or position (Marquis & Huston 2009:354).

The researcher used Carlevaro, Croissant and Hoareau (2009:24) multiple hurdle model steps in the selection process as the theoretical framework for the study.



**Figure 2.1: Steps of the Multiple Tobit Model**

(Carlevaro et al 2009)

- **Resume applications**

All candidates who have a Grade 12 (matriculation) certificate must have passed English with Symbol C in standard grade or Symbol D in Higher grade (in the old Matric certificate). Those that are in possession of the National Senior Certificate must have obtained English at level 4. Those candidates will be considered to go to the next stage of selection, which is the screening test.

- **Screening test**

A candidate who meets the requirements for first stage, which is submission of application and Grade 12 (matriculation) certificate, will be invited to write a psychometric test. Psychometric tests are a scientific means of identifying and measuring a person's cognitive abilities and behavioural characteristics used to determine the extent to which a person is suitable for a given task. Rothenburg (1978) (cited in Mellish et al 2009:297) refers to psychological tests as one of the influential and, in some instances, crucial criteria in selecting candidates to nursing colleges. Following the psychometric test, the candidate will go for a medical check-up. The prospective candidate's health status is important. This is not done necessarily to exclude the candidate from the nursing programme, but to offer appropriate support to the nursing student should he/she finally enrol in the nursing programme (Pitt et al 2012:908).

- **Interviews**

An interview is a situation in which a personnel selector observes behaviour through personal contact in order to assess the candidate's suitability for a post with the objective of predicting the candidate's probable behaviour in a particular job situation. Following the results of screening test, the candidate will be called for an interview at the college of choice. Interviews are conducted in groups of five to eight students by two faculty members and a nurse from the community. Interviews are always subjective and interviewer may prefer another person present to help conduct the interviews.

- **Reference check**

Employers often request background checks on job candidates for employment screening, especially on candidates seeking a position that requires high security or a position of trust, such as in a school, courthouse, hospital, financial institution, airport, and government. These checks are traditionally administered by a government agency for a nominal fee, but can also be administered by private companies. Results of a background check typically include past employment verification, credit history, and criminal history. These checks are often used by employers as a means of judging a job candidate's past mistakes, character, and fitness, and to identify potential hiring risks for safety and security reasons. Background checks are also used to thoroughly investigate potential government employees in order to be given a security clearance (Haider 2013:4)

- **Decision**

Once the last candidate has been interviewed, the selection committee must reach consensus on the most suitable applicant for the post. The selection committee must be guided by the internal recruitment policy, namely the *Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998* and the *Public Service Act, 103 of 1994*. In addition, their recommendation should also be supported by a wide range of evidence, including whether the applicant has the necessary skills, qualifications and competency to meet the inherent requirements of the post. Therefore, it is advisable to use as many methods as possible. Verify the selected candidate's qualifications. Candidates are expected to have obtained English with Symbol C in standard grade or Symbol D in Higher grade in the old Matriculation

certificate. Candidates who have the National Senior Certificate must have obtained English at level 4. The candidate is exempted from English if she or he has an additional qualification for a period of a year and more. All other subjects are given scores and are regarded as admission criteria. Candidates with the old Matriculation certificates are expected to have 15 points and National Senior Certificates 25 points.

### **2.13 EFFECTS OF POOR STUDENT SELECTION**

Poor student selection has four main negative effects, namely: wrong career choice, poor academic performance; academic failure, and attrition.

- **Wrong career choice**

Nursing students enter into the profession misinformed about its intensity. Once the nursing student enters the reality of the clinical environment itself, disillusionment with the nursing profession can occur. This is mainly due to the misrepresentation portrayed by society that nurses are trained vocationally and do not need complex knowledge. Not all prospective nursing students are exposed to different undergraduate nursing programmes beforehand and when difficulty is experienced, it becomes another cause of leaving the programme (O'Donnell 2011:55). Although nursing might be the student's first career choice, poor working conditions and remuneration packages, limited career opportunities and subordination to medical doctors cause many students to lose interest and discontinue the programme (Wright & Maree 2007:597). The Gauteng Department of Health faces the same challenge with the selection criteria where candidates can be selected to join the profession simply because they are due for upgrading, but do not have the passion (Gauteng Provincial Government 2000:1).

- **Poor academic performance**

Nyandwi (2014:22) indicated that a candidate who scored below the standard during basic education is a high risk to poor academic performance even in tertiary education. He further stressed that academic failure is not only frustrating to the students and the parents; its effect are equally grave on the society and the economy. Education at secondary school level is supposed to be the base and the foundation of higher (tertiary) education. It is an investment and instrument that can be used to achieve more

rapid economic, social, political, technological, scientific and cultural development in a country.

- **Academic failure**

When students are admitted to a higher education institution, it is assumed that they will be capable of successfully completing the course for which they have enrolled (Khan, Ahmad and Kousar (2013:79-84). Therefore, it is necessary to have entry requirements that permit valid student selection decisions. However, there can be no guarantee that these students will eventually satisfy the requirements for graduation. Many factors can contribute to the high dropout rates, such as low commitment to study; drug use; lack of motivation or interest, or lack of parental involvement and supervision. However, these individual reasons are not the only factors that lead to dropping out. University was traditionally considered a ladder out of poverty for young working class people. According to Khan et al (2015:153), dropping out from classes is nothing new. The completion of even the first arts course leading to a Bachelor's degree is not the rule but the exception. This is so because 25% to 35% of registered students left university as Bachelors, and less than 16% as Masters. The main reasons for their leaving were personal characteristics, environmental characteristics, and academic factors. Furthermore, students drop out because of lack of motivation, lack of interest, boredom, apathy, rejection of the teaching programme, the feeling of not receiving anything from the course, lack of purpose, and uncertainty in the occupational orientation. Academic failure is attributed primarily to lack of study, poor time management, and inadequate goal setting. However, a better understanding of the factors or variables that influence academic failure and those that motivate students to engage persistently in their studies might also hold the key to improved student performance at institutions of higher learning (Khan et al 2015:153).

- **Attrition**

There is a growing attrition of undergraduate nursing students at South African universities. Roos (2014:20) found that one of the reasons for undergraduate nursing students to discontinue education and training programmes is academic failure. Masango (2014:1-9) -found that academic failure was the main reason why students drop out of the four-year comprehensive programme. In an analysis of college-based

nursing students' performance in biological science in South Africa, Mohudi (2013:8-10) found that attrition is highest in the first year, and that 30% of students drop out in the first year with graduation rates of only 15%, indicating very poor throughput rates. According to Andrew, (2007:342-349), students revealed that the main reasons for them leaving the course were family, academic, financial and health reasons and wrong career choice. While each of these aspects could be examined in turn, it is probably more useful to accept that academic failure or attrition happens as a result of a complex interaction of individual, institutional and political factors which all have an impact, and to use this information to select the students who are most likely to succeed (Lancia, Petrucci, Giorgi, Dante & Cifone 2013:33).

## **2.14 CONCLUSION**

This chapter discussed the literature review conducted for the study, which explored and described international and local perspectives, trends, and practices regarding the selection criteria of students for the nursing profession. International perspectives were included to compare it with local South African.

Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodology of the study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology of the study. The purpose of the study was to explore and describe nurse educators' perceptions of the selection criteria that they would recommend for the selected college in order to enhance the teaching and learning process and academic outcomes.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A research design is “the blueprint for conducting a study that maximises control over factors that could interfere with the validity of the findings” (Grove et al 2012:214). A research design gives a researcher greater control and thus improve the validity of the study. The researcher considered a qualitative approach appropriate for the study as it allowed the participants to share their perceptions of the selection of nursing students (Streubert & Carpenter 2011:22). To achieve the purpose and objectives of the study, the researcher used a qualitative, exploratory, descriptive and contextual research design.

##### **3.2.1 Qualitative**

Qualitative research is a systematic, subjective means of exploring and describing life experiences and how individuals give them meaning (Creswell 2012:246). Researchers in nursing use a qualitative approach to look at participants' life experiences, actions, beliefs and perceptions. The researcher used this approach to explore the relationships and experiences within the research setting.

##### **3.2.2 Explorative**

According to Polit and Beck (2012:227), exploratory qualitative research components seek to explore and give answers in different ways about how phenomena and

processes occur. It was further mentioned that written narratives and focus groups are the appropriate chosen methods of data collection in qualitative study. The researcher used focus group interviews guided by a grand tour question to explore the perceptions of nurse educators on the selection criteria of nursing students at the college under study. The exploratory design assisted the researcher to gain insight into perceptions of nurse educators regarding the current selection criteria in order to enhance the teaching and learning process and academic outcomes.

### **3.2.3 Descriptive**

Descriptive designs presents a picture of specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship, and focuses on “how” and “why” questions (De Vos et al 2014:96).

In this study, descriptive design enabled the researcher to explore and describe the nurse educator’s perceptions regarding the current selection criteria for nursing students in order to ensure that the selected candidates have capacity to complete their studies. The researcher utilized focus group interviews.

### **3.2.4 Contextual**

According to Burns and Grove (2009:693), the context is a philosophical feature of qualitative research which maintains that the world or reality is unique to each person within which that person can be understood. In this study, the context referred to the background to and setting in which the study was conducted. The study was thus contextual in that, by engaging with the participants who were involved in teaching first-year student nurses, the researcher took into account all aspects of the context.

## **3.3 SETTING**

The research setting refers to where a study is conducted. The setting for the study was a selected nursing college in the Westrand region, Gauteng, which trains nurses under R425 (General, Psychiatric and Community) and Midwife, in terms of section 45(1) of the *Nursing Act, 50 of 1978*.

### **3.4 POPULATION**

A research population refers to the aggregate or entire set of elements, individuals or objects with some common characteristics in which a researcher is interested (Babbie & Mouton 2011:174; Polit & Beck 2008:337). The population encompasses all elements that meet certain criteria for inclusion in a study (Burns & Grove 2013:544). The population were nurse educators teaching at the selected nursing college. To be included in the study, the participants had to teach first-year students. The college under study caters for first year nursing students only. Nurse educators at this college are experienced and mostly have long service.

### **3.5 SAMPLE**

A sample comprises elements or a subset of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which researchers are interested (De Vos et al 2011:224; Babbie & Mouton 2011:174). Nurse educators who taught first- year students were recruited for the study because they had knowledge and information that the researcher wished to explore in order to answer the research question.

### **3.6 SAMPLING**

A purposive sampling method was used to obtain data. This approach was considered the most appropriate to allow for the inclusion of only those participants who had relevant knowledge and were willing to share this with the researcher. The researcher had a meeting with all nurse educators of the college under study and explanation and request for them to participate in the study was discussed. Those that had interest were given the information leaflet to go through it to understand before data collection dates and appointment were set. Attached to the information leaflet was the consent form which was then signed by the participants willing to participate.

### **3.7 DATA COLLECTION**

In qualitative studies, the researcher's goal is to obtain authentic insight into the participants' life-world and experiences. Data was collected by means of focus group

interviews. The focus group sessions were conducted in a small lecture hall allocated for the purpose. Privacy was maintained and the participants relieved each other for their tea and lunch breaks. The researcher introduced herself and the research assistant and welcomed the participants. The research assistant explained how the data would be collected and that in answering the participants should not mention their names to avoid linking information to any person during recording. The right to anonymity and confidentiality were adhered to by using letters of the alphabet from A to F and A to G, instead of participants' names. The participants were informed that the information collected would not be shared with anyone except people directly involved in the study.

Three focus group interview sessions were conducted. Two of the focus groups consisted of 6 participants each and one consisted of 7 participants. The researcher was assisted by a research assistant who is a specialist in qualitative research. The research assistant collected data on behalf of the researcher. The researcher is employed at the college under study. A grand tour question and follow-up probing questions were used to elicit in-depth discussions. The research objectives and the grand tour question were displayed for the group to keep in mind when responding. The research question was: "What selection criteria would nurse educators want to use in order to enhance the teaching and learning process and academic outcomes of their students? The two objectives were to (1) explore the participants' perceptions of the current selection criteria and (2) describe the criteria that they would recommend.

A tape recorder was used and field notes taken throughout the process. The researcher assisted in taking field notes throughout the session. The first focus group session took place on 18 February 2016 from 11.00 am to 12.00 pm with six participants. The second session took place on 19 February 2016 from 11.00 am to 12.00 pm with seven participants. The third session took place on 08 March 2016 from 10.30 to 11.30 am with six participants. The research assistant summarised what was discussed and thanked the participants for their participation. Refreshments were served after each focus group and the participants went back to their work stations. The study has a total of 19 participants, all of which were female.

### **3.8 FOCUS GROUP PROCEDURES**

As the participants were all nurse educators, the interviews were conducted in English, which is the official language of instruction at the college under study. Informed consent was obtained from each participant. Each focus group answered the grand tour question (see section 3.7), and probing questions were asked for clarification, when necessary. Other communication techniques were also used to enhance the quality of the interview, including minimal verbal responses, probing and summarising:

- Minimal verbal responses: Verbal responses that correlate with nodding; for example, “mm-mm”, “yes” or “I see” would indicate to the participant that the data collector was listening and paying attention.
- The research assistant used probes like, “please explain what you mean by...” and “please tell me more” etc. Probes are used when greater clarity is required or elaboration, meaning or reasons (Holloway & Wheeler 2010:92).
- Summarising participants’ statements was done to encourage more feedback from the participants.

With the explicit and informed consent of the participants, a tape recorder was used to record the interviews. A high quality audio- tape recorder with a built-in microphone was used. The tape recorder allowed the research assistant to capture all the information without having to rely solely on writing. This ensured that a record of the interview was available and could later be transcribed for analysis.

In all the sessions the venue provided comfort, privacy, adequate lighting, and freedom from noise and other distracters. During the interview the research assistant maintained eye contact, showed genuine interest and listened actively. The research assistant showed sensitivity and respect to each individual participant. The researcher continued to take field notes during each session.

### **3.9 FIELD NOTES**

In addition to recording the interviews, data were generated through the use of field notes. The researcher made field notes during and after the interviews. Field notes are a written account of the things the researcher hears, sees or experiences and thinks

about in the course of interviewing. These notes or notations may describe observations, assumptions about what is heard or observed, or a personal narrative about the researcher's feeling during a particular encounter. This exercise is regarded as an interpretive attempt at attaching meaning (Creswell 2009:183) Taking field notes immediately after each interview allowed the researcher to conceptualise the data. This complemented the data obtained in the interviews and helped to validate the recorded information. The field notes were kept secure in a safe place and only the researcher had access to them.

### **3.10 DATA ANALYSIS**

The participants' responses were tape-recorded and the researcher took field notes throughout the sessions. The researcher listened to the recordings and transcribed them verbatim. The transcripts were typed. The researcher read all the typewritten transcripts and used coding for data analysis. Coding refers to the "naming and categorising of phenomena through close examination of the data" (Strauss & Corbin (1998) cited in Burns & Grove 2011:503). Coding is the process of organising and sorting data. The researcher used the services of a co-coder. The researcher and the co-coder held two meetings where they discussed data analysis to promote validity. The data was analysed using Tech's method of qualitative data analysis (De Vos et al 2011:403). A list of topics extracted from the transcripts was written in the margins. Similar topics were clustered together then arranged into columns. The most descriptive words for topics were turned into themes. The themes obtained from three focus groups were collapsed and four themes finally emerged. Categories and subcategories were developed from the themes. The researcher and co-coder agreed on the themes.

### **3.11 MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS**

Trustworthiness was ensured according to the criteria of credibility, dependability and confirmability (De Vos et al 2011:420). To ensure the truthfulness, appropriateness and meaningfulness of the data, the participants verbally confirmed that the transcriptions were a true reflection of what was said, summarised and discussed.

### **3.11.1 Credibility**

Credibility is an evaluation of whether or not the research findings represent a “credible” conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants’ original data (Lincoln & Guba 1985:296). To ensure credibility, the researcher spent adequate time with the participants to gain adequate understanding of the topic and establish a relationship of trust. The researcher did member checks by reading back what was discussed with them to re-check that their words matched what they actually intended, and to ensure that the facts had not been misconstrued since they were tape-recorded. Data was collected until saturation. Data saturation occurs when no new or additional information emerges (Burns & Grove 2011:371).

### **3.11.2 Dependability**

Dependability is another criterion to establish the trustworthiness of a study (Brink et al 2012:119). According to De Vos et al (2011) dependability is the alternative to reliability, in which the researcher attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for the study as well as changes in the design created by refined understanding of the study. The dependability of qualitative data refers to data stability (reliability) over time and conditions. All processes of data analysis were confirmed with the researcher’s supervisor.

### **3.11.3 Confirmability**

Confirmability is the degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest (Brink et al 2012:119). Confirmability guarantees that the findings, conclusions and recommendations are supported by the data and that there is internal agreement between the researcher’s interpretation and the actual evidence. Confirmability is the exclusion of the researcher’s own prejudices from the research procedure and results. Neutrality is therefore the degree to which the research findings will be the actual product of the participants. The researcher only used the transcribed data and field notes in the analysis and did not add any other information not provided by the participants. The tape recordings and field notes will be kept for at least 5 years after completion of the study.

### **3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Higher Degrees Committee of the University of South Africa, Department of Health Studies. After ethical clearance, permission was obtained from the Gauteng Department of Health and the principal of Chris Hani Baragwanath Nursing College to conduct the study. Ethical principles were adhered to in order to recognise and protect the rights of the participants. The conduct of any study requires honesty and integrity. To render a study ethical, the protection of the participants' human rights is of paramount importance. According to Burns and Grove (2013:164), participants have the right to (1) self-determination, (2) privacy, (3) anonymity and confidentiality, (4) fair treatment, and (5) protection from discomfort and harm.

#### **3.12.1 Right to self-determination**

The right to self-determination is based on the ethical principle of respect for persons. The purpose and nature of the study was clearly explained and the participants were allowed to indicate their availability and willingness to participate. The participants were informed that the sessions would be one hour and given the opportunity to consent before participation. Moreover, they were informed that participation was voluntary and they were free to withdraw at any time should they wish to do so.

#### **3.12.2 Right to privacy**

Time and place was discussed with participants to make sure they were comfortable and free from any disturbance. No names were given and no information could be linked to any participant.

#### **3.12.3 Right to confidentiality**

Confidentiality refers to the researcher's responsibility to protect all data collected from being divulged or made available to any other person. The data will be kept for 5 years after completion of the study (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:339). Letters of the alphabet were placed on the chairs where participants sat during the focus group

interviews which helped the data collector to call participants by letter instead of name to avoid linking data to any person. Data was kept under lock and key, i.e. the field notes and tape recordings until the data had been transcribed. The final report would be made available to participants.

#### **3.12.4 Right to fair treatment**

The researcher did not discriminate against nurse educators who did not wish to participate in the study. The researcher used purposive sampling, which allowed all the nurse educators an equal opportunity to be selected. All the participants were treated the same irrespective of race, creed or ethnic affiliation. The researcher respected the commencement and closing times of the focus group interviews (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:339).

#### **3.12.5 Right to protection from discomfort and harm**

The right to protection and harm is based on the principle of beneficence, which holds that one should do good and not harm. The participants were advised to report any physiological, economic, social and emotional discomfort during the sessions. The researcher also observed participants for any reaction or signs of discomfort that could prevent them from continuing. They were all treated fairly and with respect. No discomfort or harm was experienced or reported (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:339).

### **3.13 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The findings of the study should assist the Gauteng Department of Health and nursing college under study to select nursing students suitable for professional nurse training and capable of completing the course of study on time thus directly addressing the challenge of the shortage of nurses in the country.

### **3.14 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS**

The study was restricted to nurse educators involved in the teaching and learning of first-year nursing students at one selected nursing college in Westrand Region therefore the results cannot be generalised to other nursing colleges.

### **3.15 CONCLUSION**

This chapter described the research design and methodology of the study, including the setting, population, sample and sampling, data collection and analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 presents the data analysis and interpretation, and findings.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION, AND FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the data analysis and interpretation, and the findings. The purpose of the study was to explore and describe the and describe the nurse educators' perceptions of the current selection criteria used at the college under study and what criteria they would recommend for the college in order to enhance the teaching and learning process and academic outcomes.

#### **4.2 DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS**

Data was collected by means of unstructured focus group interviews conducted on three separate days. The focus groups consisted of 6-8 participants at a time and the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim. A total of 19 participants were involved. The participants' privacy, anonymity and confidentiality were protected by allocating codes instead of using their names. All participants were asked the grand tour question followed by probing open-ended questions to elicit deeper discussion. The researcher was assisted by an independent data collector who also holds a Master's degree in nursing education. The researcher took field notes during the sessions. Data was analysed using Tech's eight-step method of qualitative data analysis. An independent co-coder assisted the researcher in data analysis. A list of topics that emerged from the data was written in the margins. Similar topics were clustered together then arranged in columns. The most descriptive wording of topics was turned into themes. The themes obtained from the three focus groups were collapsed and a final four themes emerged. Subthemes were developed. The co-coder and the researcher reached agreement on the themes. Table 4.1 represents the themes and sub-themes.

### 4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

**Table 4.1: Demographic profile of participants**

Criterion	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
GENDER	Female	19	100.00
	Male	0	0.00
Age	30-40 years	6	31.58
	40-50 years	7	42.11
	50-60+years	6	31.58
Qualifications	Dilpoma Nursing Education	2	10.53
	Bcur Nursing Education	15	78.95
	Masters Degree Nursing Education	2	10.53
Teaching experience	5-10 Years	10	52.63
	11-20 Years	5	26.31
	21-30 Years	3	15.78
	31 and Above	2	10.52
<b>Total</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>100.00</b>

According to Table 4.1, nineteen (100%) participants were female. There were no male participants in the study. This shows that nursing is female dominated profession. This was confirmed by Poto (2016) in her study which asserted that nursing is female dominated. Six (31.58%) participants were between 30 and 40 years. Seven (42.11%) were between the age of 40-50 years and the last six (31.58%) were between 50-60 years of age. The last age group has a lot of teaching experience and one can conclude that based on their experience they had the capability to provide informed opinion regarding selection criteria. They are all suitably qualified for the teaching position.

**Table 1.2: Themes and subthemes from focus groups**

Theme	Sub-theme	Category
1 Disempowerment of nurse educators related to non-participation as stakeholders in student nurse's selection process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusion from selection criteria development</li> <li>• Inadequate participation in decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour Act</li> <li>• Government departments and political issues</li> <li>• Nursing Education selection process.</li> <li>• Skills development policies</li> </ul>

Theme	Sub-theme	Category
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited open communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student profile</li> <li>• Varied admission pre-tests</li> </ul>
2 Ineffective coping with academic work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability of students to cope with course content</li> <li>• Inhibition of facilitation of learning</li> <li>• Inadequate management support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student motivation</li> <li>• Student attitude</li> <li>• Adaptation challenges</li> <li>• Impact of unsuitable selected students</li> <li>• Rote learning challenges</li> <li>• Concern re-social relationship with students</li> <li>• Mismanagement of dealing with students who used fake admission documents</li> </ul>
3 Potential risks/threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student dropout</li> <li>• Course extension</li> <li>• Inability to reach target of qualified professional nursing ratios</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worry about high failure rate</li> <li>• Absenteeism of students chronic illness</li> <li>• Concern about student retention and high failure rate.</li> <li>• Production of incompetent professional nurses.</li> </ul>
4 Recommendations to improve criteria development and selection process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition as stakeholders</li> <li>• Contribution of ideas</li> <li>• Ongoing participatory communication with stakeholders</li> <li>• Management support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mutual decision making and consultation</li> <li>• Age restriction</li> <li>• University entrance Matric (Gr 12)</li> <li>• Probation period</li> <li>• Review of pre-assessment selection tool</li> <li>• Review group interview process</li> <li>• Maintenance of professional values and standards</li> </ul>

The themes and sub-themes are discussed in order and participant quotations provided to support the themes.

#### **4.4 THEME 1: DISEMPOWERMENT OF NURSE EDUCATORS RELATED TO NON-PARTICIPATION AS STAKEHOLDERS IN STUDENT NURSES' RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS**

Regarding the selection of students, the participants indicated that they were not involved during the formulation and revision of policies and new selection criteria for nursing students. In this process decisions are taken with regards to required subjects and the method of recruitment and selection of candidates. The participants were only involved in the last stage, namely the group interviews. As stakeholders, they emphasised that they were truly disempowered.

##### **1st Session: Participant F**

"I participate in the marketing of student nurses which involves going to schools and giving information about the selection criteria and how to apply to be a nurse. This process is usually decided by the head office as to which selection criteria to use and how to apply. Nurse educators in the marketing department just receive information and deliver to the schools. Other departments also invite the college during open days to share information about nursing as a career."

##### **1st Session: Participant E**

"As an educator, regarding the selection criteria, I would be happy if Gauteng nursing colleges and the Department of Health would call a meeting with nurse educators so that they can agree on the formulation of the selection criteria they want to use. Nurse educators are the people who will end up with the product, i.e. the candidates who will finally come for training."

##### **1st Session: Participant B**

"My perception regarding selection criteria is that we need to start to be involved so that we don't speculate what they do at the Labour Department. As participant E said, we don't have documents that guide us on selection of students."

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Session: Participant F**

“Well ... during interviews ... I only see them during interviews ... There are hospital representatives that come to interviews. I want to suppose that they ... they have a hand in the selection. I think they do have a hand in the selection.”

## **1st Session: Participant E**

“My conclusion. Just to wrap it up, we are asking for nurse educators’ inclusion in the selection criteria. I agree with the recommendation made by participant F where she talks of a good practical nurse. First-year and second-year pupil enrolled nurse courses are ideal to consider when they want internal candidates who are good practical nurses.”

This is not in line with Step 4 of the recruitment process as outlined in Chapter 1. The process clearly states that during recruitment of nursing students, personnel responsible for that process should consult the recruitment policy and procedures. This could assist in that all stakeholders’ responsible for recruitment, selection, teaching and learning in the nursing college should be included in the process (Thebe & Van der Waldt, 2014:5-6). Jooste (2010:19) states that empowerment is really about involvement and starts with truly believing that everyone counts. She further mentioned that there must be participative decision in the empowerment of the followers. She elaborated that management should promote power sharing in management issues such as being part of the decision making process to decide on the number of nurses to admit, recruitment, interviews and decision on their budgetary needs.

### **4.4.1 Sub-theme: Exclusion from selection criteria development**

The participants expressed concern that there was no involvement of nurse educators during development of selection criteria for nursing students. They said that they were the people who facilitated learning in the classroom and yet they were not included in the selection process. Some candidates are exempted from the first and second phase of the selection process hence they feel that the process is not the same and unfair to the candidates who undergo the whole process, that includes subject selection, psychometric test and interviews.

- **Labour Act**

Nurse educators were concerned whether the Department of Labour considered the policies on recruitment and selection and verified that they were following the correct procedure when they were assigned to do selection of candidates. They are perceived as non-stakeholders and doubt that their criteria are the same as those of nursing.

- **Government departments and political issues**

The *Public Service Commission's* (2014/2015:(v)) March report identifies numerous challenges ranging from non-compliance with prescripts, alleged nepotism during recruitment and selection processes, and inconsistency in the implementation of legislation frameworks and policies. The report further recommends establishing recruitment and selection practices that contribute to various human resource management challenges and how they impact on the functionality of selected departments and explore possible solutions that will assist departments in addressing the identified challenges. The Gauteng Department of Health's (2000) policy guidelines regarding the selection of candidates for basic courses offered at Nursing Colleges, consider experience more than qualification with an aim of upgrading employees who have long been in service. According to the Gauteng Provincial Government's strategic plan of 2005, the colleges are mandated to increase the intake of nursing students by 25% each year as a developmental need and strategy to improve capacity to train more nurses. The participants perceived this as political interference in reaction to the pressure of creating jobs.

## **2nd Session: Participant B**

"You hear on the grapevine that some of the candidates have been pushed by the unions to come in. Do they know what the Diploma in General Nursing R425 (General, Psychiatric and Community) and Midwife entails? What it requires, because most of them dropout from the course. I'm also sceptical about students who are drop-outs from the universities or who have actually obtained a certain qualification and completed it ... These types of candidates might come to nursing because they did not receive the results from the university and now want to use the stipend to release the results from the university. Such candidates do not have a passion for nursing. In one of the deliberations, some of the students even verbalised that they only came to nursing for the stipend to use it for studies elsewhere."

### 3rd Session: Participant E

“Some of them even go through RPL to challenge certain examinations. Just because that person has been loyal in area of work, the union influence the decision that the candidate be selected for training.”

Literature suggests that nursing is perceived to be a more secured profession compared to others and students decide to join nursing training even when they lack knowledge and insight regarding the course and what it actually entails. Crunch time comes when students are allocated in the clinical area, get overwhelmed, realise that nursing isn't for them and eventually drop (Cook 2012:27). This statement was confirmed by participant B and participant E who stated that some of the students dropped out from universities and decided to join nursing.

#### 4.4.2 Sub-theme: Inadequate participation in decision making

The participants indicated that all decisions on the selection of students were at national and provincial level.

- **Application forms used for selection of nursing students**

The participants indicated that there was no transparency regarding the availability of application forms. They knew that candidates wrote psychometric tests but they did not know what it entailed. Candidates were interviewed in groups and they copied each other's answers. This was perceived as contributing to the selection of candidates who had no love and passion for the nursing profession.

- **Skills development policies**

The participants perceived that management also had their own selection criterion, known as long service. This process took any person as long as the person was due for career development and admitted them for nursing education and training, irrespective of their passion and the willingness to learn.

#### **4.4.3 Sub-theme: Limited open communication**

There was limited open communication between college management, educators, government officials and the Department of Labour. Each of these entities followed the directives of their chief directorate about recruiting for nursing colleges.

- **Student profile**

During selection, different categories of candidates were identified, namely current matriculants (Grade 12s); those who had completed matric a long time ago, and those called job seekers. The last category consisted of internal candidates employed by the government in various departments, e.g. administrators. They were usually older people who did not have the required qualifications for nurse training and were brought to nursing by the government for career development.

#### **2nd Session: Participant D**

“Colleges end up accepting cleaners at the age of 58 to come for nurse training due to interference of the unions. This is a waste of time and government money.”
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The recruitment of an adult learner in a nursing college may be complicated due to the existence of other parameters. The adult learner is often confronted with problems that relate to the fact that they have other commitments, in addition to training. For instance, an adult may have family, business or social responsibilities (Goulao 2014:237). It was mentioned in Chapter 1 that huge sums of tax payer’s money is used to fund nursing education programmes. Student nurses in Gauteng Province are paid a stipend on a level three (3) salary, which is currently R6000.00 per month (Department of Labour 2013). It is estimated that the province spends R153 923.46 per annum per student (Department of Labour 2013).

- **Varied admission pre-tests**

The participants indicated that internal candidates did not follow all the process of selection. They were not expected to have English level 4 and Life Science level 4 with

an appointment score of 25 like any other applicants. They were exempted from writing a psychometric test and only went for interviews. The participants perceived this as unfair selection process.

#### **4.5 THEME 2: INEFFECTIVE COPING WITH ACADEMIC WORK**

If selection procedures are not followed, the nursing college ends up with students who cannot cope with the course content of the nursing programme. Students then become frustrated and exit the course.

##### **3rd Session: Participant E**

“For example, you’ve got a very loyal enrolled nurse who worked for the hospital for about 10 years or so ... very loyal, very determined ... very good ... and that person is functioning at maximum level. Once you try to push her to a Diploma in General Nursing, R425 (General, Psychiatric and Community) and Midwife course, you will find she is not coping with the course. But because she is linked to the unions, she is encouraged to come and try to get the Diploma in General Nursing R425 (General, Psychiatric and Community) and Midwife. They battle and they just cannot make it; sometimes it breaks them as people as well ... so we need to centralise selection of our applicants.”

According to Lancia, Petrucci Giorgi and Cifoni (2013:12), nursing student’s academic failure is a phenomenon of concern in nursing because it negatively affects the availability of future nurses in different health care systems. To recruit the students with the highest probability of academic success is a challenge for the nursing colleges as they should only recruit students who demonstrated a superior scholastic attitude which appears to be associated with greater likelihood of academic success. However, the fact that candidates who are enrolled nurses were pushed into R425 is contrary to the accepted practice as alluded to by Lancia et al (2013).

##### **4.5.1 Sub-theme: Inability of students to cope with course content**

Most of the students did not complete the course, they repeated and others were given course extension but still performed poorly, until they exited the course. Much as those on study leave were clinically experienced, they struggled to comprehend as they did

not have life sciences as a subject. The participants observed that nursing was used as a stepping stone to other careers. When candidates realised that they were not coping with the nurses' four-year comprehensive diploma course, they used the stipend they received to register with other faculties.

- **Student motivation**

Most of the students were attracted by the stipend they received during training and did not have any intrinsic motivation to be nurses. They lacked passion and interest in the profession. The participants stated that during interviews some prospective candidates indicated that nursing was not their career of choice but were pushed by their families to join the profession.

### **2nd Session: Participant A**

"I think students are more attracted by the stipend that they're getting, so maybe the stipend should be an anti-recommendation because they are here for the stipend." They lacked passion and interest in the profession.

### **2nd Session: Participant D**

"To me, I can quote one student that is at Baragwanath nursing college. His mom is a professional nurse at one of the clinics. It's a male student. He said his mother wrote the speech for him, stating why he wants to become a nurse You know? He actually said the mother's exact wording so to me! So that student, I don't know whether he will ever reach fourth year because it seems like he came because the mother was actually pushing to say if you are not qualified, you won't get a job; come to this programme. "This to me the mother wanted her child to have job not profession.

Several studies have explored students' reasons for becoming nurses. Both intrinsic factors ,such as altruistic motivation to help other people and personal interest in health care, and intrinsic factors, including job security, social status, employment opportunities and the ability to enter tertiary education appears to influence career choice. Moreover, with past experiences, students chose nursing for altruistic and professional reasons, where they see nursing as a profession focused on saving lives

and improving healthcare through professional knowledge, which requires expertise and exercising responsibility with regards to professionalism. Their perception changed as they progressed and moved from having a lay image to a professional image of nursing. They revealed less idealistic views of nursing in terms of caring and helping people, and they spoke of nursing in more professional terms as they progressed in their programmes (Hoeve, Jansen, Jansen, and Roodbol 2017:19). Children are misinformed about nursing roles and base their perceptions on those of their parents which are inaccurate and based on an old –fashioned representation (Straughair 2012:240)

- **Student attitude**

Some students came as dropouts from other careers and came to nursing and pursued other courses with the same stipend they were receiving. A group interview was regarded as an unreliable tool. Attitude in a group was not easily measured. The aspect of students' attitude to education is the value they see in what they have to learn. There is a significant relationship between student attitudes and academic performance (Mendezabal 2013).

- **Adaptation challenges**

Students are allocated to the clinical setting to learn and practise the art of nursing as a component of their training. They are exposed to traumatising procedures, like last rites. When students deal with such procedures daily, they become demoralised and that affects their performance and they decide to quit.

#### **4.5.2 Sub-theme: Inhibition of facilitation of learning**

If students were not properly selected or no method of selection followed, they end up resorting to rote learning because they cannot follow the methods of facilitation and cannot think critically and understand what is presented in class.

- **Impact of unsuitable selected students**

The participants were concerned that by the time they met candidates at the group interviews, it was only then that they realised that the candidates are not suitable for the

nursing profession. They also indicated that the group interview was a quick fix to get the process done hence the selection of unsuitable candidates. Candidates listened to what the others said and stated exactly the same things thereby resulting in all of them being admitted to the programme. This also contributed to lack of independent thinking.

### **1st Session: Participant D**

“So I have been worrying as a person that I am not sure that the students that are finally taken are the ideal candidates for the profession. I worry about that probably because of how they were selected by either the Department of Labour or whoever is in the middle between the Department and us. Because of the large numbers, we do group interviews and in the group interview they listen to others and are likely to repeat what others are saying. As a result, we choose students that are not ideal for nursing. I will end there for now.”

Muller (2015:37) suggests that value based recruitment that will ensure the best chance of success. It evaluates the student’s ability to integrate values in their academic work and performance in clinical placement. Roos (2014:34), in her study, proposed pre-entry level testing with the purpose of determining a student’s readiness for academic studies at a higher education facility and to advise the higher educational institution of the type of academic support students might need to succeed in their studies. Ahmad and Kousar (2013:79) also agree with Roos (2014:34) in that it is necessary to have entry requirements that permit valid student selection decisions. There, however, can be no guarantee that these students will eventually satisfy the requirements for graduation.

#### **4.5.3 Sub-theme: Inadequate management support**

The participants felt that they received inadequate support from management.

- **Mismanagement of dealing with students who used fake admission documents**

This was evident from online applications because this process has gaps of identifying qualifying candidates.

## **4.6 THEME 3: POTENTIAL RISKS/THREATS**

The participants perceived rural candidates as being disadvantaged because of not having on-line facilities and therefore missing opportunities to be nurses.

### **1st Session: Participant D**

“There are candidates who stay in rural areas who do not have access to on-line facilities. When candidates come to college to be assisted on how to apply on line, we refer them to switchboard because we also don’t know the process and they end up not being assisted. They miss the opportunity to be selected for nurse training.”

There is shortage of nurses particularly from remote and rural areas. The low acceptance rate is coupled by their inability to access the services for recruitment and selection. The acceptance rate of rural students in to the profession is significantly lower than those in urban areas as they can easily access the recruitment services. There should be support in addressing issues related to a lower acceptance rate and recruitment and selection for those interested in pursuing nursing as a career (Mixon & Bigbee 2013:1). Effective student nurse recruitment is essential to ensure that all prospective and appropriate individuals are selected. Higher education institutions should use a range of strategies to facilitate recruitment of nursing students. To recruit the most appropriate student nurses, educators must ensure that contemporary robust marketing campaigns broaden public awareness of the diverse nature of nursing (Straughair 2012:239)

### **4.6.1 Sub-theme: Student dropout**

The participants were concerned about the high failure rate. Their concern was of students who did not qualify for the selection criteria and this was only discovered by nurse educators when they were already in class at college. Others come because they want money to finish at the university. When they are done they go to where their passion is.

- **Worry about high failure rate**

Student fail because nursing was not their first choice of profession. They came to already having their qualifications and only interested in the stipend.

### **1st Session: Participant B**

We have so many students that indicate:

“If I am not here for what I am supposed to be here for I will run away.”

“I have a degree in this; I have a degree in Commerce; I have a degree in Psychology; I have a degree in Electrical Engineering.”

It is better not to take these students so that they can follow their career path because they have chosen their profession already. “I was studying with UJ doing my second year or my third year.”

An increased student dropout rate has been identified to be affecting nursing student’s progress (Mnikina, Mayeye & Murray 2015:23-31). According to Mohudi (2013:8) in an analysis of college-based nursing students’ performance in biological science in South Africa, attrition rate is highest in the first year, and 30% of students drop out in the first year with graduation rates of only 15%, indicating very poor throughput rates. One is able to pick up that the students had financial constraints; not that nursing is her/his passion. This is also mentioned by Masango (2014:1) who indicated in her study that academic failure is the main reason why students drop out of the four-year comprehensive programme.

### **2nd Session: Participant A**

I asked her,

“Are you only here to receive stipend because I see you as a psychologist? Maybe you were supposed to be in a class of clinical psychologists in your honours level.”

and she said,

“M’am because of finances, I am just here and when I am fine financially then I will go back to the university.” And she dropped out, she did not write the exam.”

## **2nd Session: Participant D**

“As for the unions, they must hear from us. They must hear from the college; they must hear from the nursing educators. Having to take cleaners, gardeners, who have no clue as to what nursing is all about, it’s a waste of time and it’s a waste of tax payers’ money because most of them drop out. Thank you.”

Chester, Bushy, Forti, Kasten and Mckendall (2013) suggested the development, support and evaluation of admission policies and procedures that do not use any favouritism towards candidates. They further states that colleges should adapt the policies where requirements for admission are in line with scores of successful candidates. Those candidates should also follow steps as outlined in the Multiple Hurdle Tobit Model (Carlevaro et al: 2009). This also entails that resume applications, screening, interviews, reference checks and decisions must be guided by the internal recruitment policy, namely the *Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998* and the *Public Service Act, 103 of 1994*. This will intern safe the tax payer’s money because candidates will be able to complete their training.

### **4.6.2 Sub-theme: Course extension**

The participants indicated that most of the students had family challenges. If students could not balance work and family, they did not perform well academically and ended up with course extension.

- **Absenteeism of students with chronic illness**

The participants were concerned about chronically ill students who were a risk for course extension because they did not disclose their illnesses until they failed to attend lectures and to meet SANC requirements. Some were married and obligated to be pregnant and were also granted maternity leave.

### **4.6.3 Sub-theme: Inability to reach target of qualified professional nursing ratios**

The participants expressed concern because compared to the input; the output of professional nurses on completion of training had deteriorated. This was due to students exiting before completion thus causing frustration to the profession by not producing enough qualified professional nurses. It lowered graduation/pass rate.

- **Concern about student retention and high failure rate**

The participants indicated that they were forced to use the vernacular in class for such students to understand. Some students indicated to the lecturers that they were there to get a salary so that they could go and finish their studies with the universities; it was not that they were interested in nursing.

#### **1st session: Participant D**

“And when we checked their documents, they were not supposed to have been called in. Now my question is: I don’t know how it came about and how it happened. They end up being students with documents that do not even meet the criteria for admission to the 4-year comprehensive diploma programme as set out in the admission policy for the course. And because they have already been called, it is very difficult to take them out of the programme. I will quote an example; in 2014 it was very difficult for the HOD. I remember she reported the matter to Head Office in the hope that the students could be terminated but she was told that it was not the students’ mistake. Students continued with training. Now we have these students who were not supposed to be in class, and what do they do? They add to the failure rate because they were actually not supposed to be in class.”

The determination of valid selection criteria against which to predict success in nursing career needs serious attention (Mellish et al 2009:294). Nursing Council (SANC) key informants raised an issues of unsuitability and unqualified candidates brought to the nursing profession for training. This impact negatively on their academic performance as this was not their first choice of profession. They get overwhelmed by the intensity of the course and at the end they realise that nursing isn’t for them and eventually drop (Cook 2012:27). Jooste (2010:167) suggests checking the candidate’s information prior

selection for suitability and evaluate the possibility of course completion by giving them test before being accepted. This should be in line with information outlined in, Table 2.1: Nursing Selection Criteria (Department of Labour 2013). According to the researchers observations, if all these processes could be followed , no candidate will be accepted with documents that do not meet the selection criteria .

## **2nd session: Participant D**

“And if, you know, like you hammer ... if. I don't want to say drill but you hammer a person to understand one thing, even in clinical; you say one thing for many times without them being able to understand exactly what you are saying ... Eventually, for them to understand, you have to use a vernacular language, which does not benefit them because when they are writing theory they are not going to be asked in Sesotho or any of the vernacular languages. That's why I'm saying, let's check their matric results.”

Roos (2014:34) in her study suggests entry requirements that permit valid student selection decisions. This was supported by Chester, Bushy, Forti, Kasten and Mckendall (2013) who emphasised the use of admission policies and procedures that do not use any favouritism towards candidates. In the same breath those candidates should also follow steps as outlined in the Multiple Hurdle Tobit Model (Carlevaro et al 2009) which should be guided by the internal recruitment policy, namely the *Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998* and the *Public Service Act, 103 of 1994*.

- **Production of incompetent professional nurses**

Incompetency of professional nurse starts with how they were selected in the beginning. If the students were borderline achievers, there will be content and skills that are not properly internalised hence they complete the course without the required skills that make them work independently thus compromising the values and standards of the profession.

## **4.7 THEME 4: RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS**

Most of the participants agreed that they should work together with other stakeholders, the Department of Health and trade unions during development of selection criteria for nursing students in order to attract the most appropriate candidates for the nursing profession.

### **4.7.1 Sub-theme: Recognition as stakeholders**

The participants maintained that they needed to be consulted for more inputs with regard to the development of selection criteria.

- **Mutual decision making and consultation**

During identification of prospective candidates and formulation of policies. Participants raised a point that they need to be recognised so that when decisions are being taken they should be consulted so that they can also contribute to the decision to be taken.

### **4.7.2 Sub-theme: Contribution of ideas**

- **Probation period**

Implementation of preliminary entrance course which takes three to six months before being selected for training. The candidates should be tentatively taken and be on training for six months while being facilitated in skills and theory. The candidates should be assessed at the end of six months. Any candidate who did not perform well should be terminated after six months and not be granted permanent entry for training. It would be ideal for the preliminary test to be set by college and marked by nurse educators who know the type of candidates to be selected for nurse training.

The participants recommended the following selection criteria:

- **Age restriction**

Recommended age restriction of 18 to 35 years. Review of selection procedure/ processes/criteria.

- **University entrance Matric (Grade 12)**

Matriculation (Grade 12) qualification should be at the level of university entrance. For example, the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg considers entry level 4 of English, Life Sciences, and Mathematics.

### **1st Session: Participant E**

“Ideal candidates must be young students who had good matriculation pass marks. If we continue to take candidates who obtained 40% in their matric, we are just increasing the failure rate. It is very difficult to push a student to reach 45% in that case. If we really want to keep the standard of nursing high, we need to compete with the universities.”

### **1st Session: Participant A**

“You know, I mean with the selection of internal candidates, the nursing service managers determine who goes for nurse training. That to me, is simply like a queue to say this one has been in the institution for long and needs to develop her career. They are brought to interviews just to formalise the process, but they already know who they want to send for nurse training.”

### **2nd Session: Participant B**

“Thank you. Looking at the age, I was thinking probably between the age of 16 and 25 including the matric results, which should be at university entry level. Age 18 to 25 on the basis of conceptualisation of the information. Matric university entry and including science subjects because we deal a lot with science in nursing so it makes life easy for students to understand the science subjects at entry or first level. Probably 35 looking at the internal candidates but we also need to consider when last they engaged in educational development or activities whilst they are in clinical area because the longer they stay and without studying anything, the problem is understanding the conceptualisation because we are looking at candidates that are coming from school and those that are working in health disciplines.”

This is an alarming amount of students dropping out of their programs, and with it comes many burdens. When a student drops out or fails, the school loses money they would have otherwise generated. Additionally studies have shown that, explanation for student attrition is admission of minimally qualified students to nursing programs who do not demonstrate adequate preparation to begin the rigorous curriculum. (Hamilton 2011:27). In turn, with the national nursing shortage, it is essential that colleges explore what options there are to best predict whether a student is ready to handle the rigors of nursing. Nursing as a profession has many requirements that extend beyond academic capabilities and, nonacademic characteristics are qualities which may provide a better appreciation of student suitability to nursing school and the nursing profession (Hamilton 2011:27).

During training, students should not receive stipend. Students misused the opportunity of receiving the stipend and did not focus on their studies.

- Students should be checked for whether they were currently studying with any other university/institution of higher learning. Any students who were registered with any other institution should be terminated. Students used the stipend to assist them with studies for other careers.
- The psychometric test tool should be reliable to measure students' maturity and good personality traits that would enhance continuity in the profession. The tool should also be able to measure attributes such as compassion, empathy and passion. The nurse educators should also be put through and have knowledge on how the tool identifies suitable candidates and be transparent. Francis (2013:1-3) stresses the need to recruit into nursing courses only those who possess "the appropriate values, attitudes and behaviours". Furthermore, student nurses need to be intelligent, caring and possess an intrinsic desire to help others and impact life positively in the country as a whole (Francis 2013:1-3).
- Recognition for prior learning. The assessment tool used to challenge examinations should be reviewed. Internal candidates should be in possession of a nursing qualification. Gardeners, cleaners, porters and drivers should be excluded, irrespective of their period of services in the Department of Health and motivations by their unions. Those who qualify to be recognised for career development should undergo all the stages of recruitment and selection i.e.

application on-line or through hospital management. Following that they should also sit for psychometric test and interviews. Many of them have been in service for a long time during which some of the attributes and professional standards have been lost along the way.

- There should be collaboration and participation of nurse educators as stakeholders in the selection process. All Gauteng nursing colleges should come together to collaborate and participate in the selection process and development of policies. The Department Labour, trade unions and hospital management should communicate their decisions timeously if they intend to make changes with regard to the selection of nursing students. This communication should happen right at the onset so that the nurse educators can have their inputs because they are the ones to facilitate learning with a diversity of students in the classroom.
- Candidate who are on chronic healthcare are a risk to course completion/course extension. Therefore, thorough medical surveillance should be done for all applicants prior to selection to exclude chronic illnesses and pregnancy that will lead to frequent absenteeism, student missing tests and class content thus increase high failure rate and student turnover.
- The college should organise open days for the community to attend sessions where they would be informed about nursing as a career. This would assist people to make good choices before applying for the nursing profession. Nurse educators in the marketing department should attend career exhibitions to disseminate information to the community.
- Online applications should be reviewed if that is regarded as the only method to recruit candidates. Candidates complete irrelevant information and falsify qualifications because there is no thorough scrutinising of documents. The college should verify documents (matric or school-leaving certificates) submitted by prospective candidates with the Department of Education before admission to nurse training. Once students are already in the profession, it is difficult for management to expel them. Approval of on-line applications should be in such a way that it rejects candidates during application if they do not qualify. On-line facilities must be made available to candidates from rural areas as they are deprived of the opportunity through lack of such facilities.

### **4.7.3 Sub-theme: Ongoing participatory communication with stakeholders**

All decisions taken should be communicated in advance to all relevant disciplines, including the Gauteng Department of Health, Department of Labour, nurse educators, college management, and trade unions.

- **Review of pre-assessment selection tool**

There should be on going participatory communication with other stakeholders with regard to reviewing pre-selection assessment tools and policy.

- **Review group interview process**

Group interviews should be stopped and individual interviews conducted. Candidates are inclined to copy information from the first candidate and that does not guarantee the panel that the candidate has independent thinking, hence wrong decisions are taken by the panel to select students. The participants perceived that as a quick fix.

### **4.7.4 Sub-theme: Management support**

Decisions on the selection of candidates should be made in a manner that does not constitute unfair labour practices, Managers are the ones who determine who can be sent for study leave. This creates a serious problem because these candidates selected through favouritism by management cannot cope with course content.

- **Maintenance of professional values and standards**

Management should ensure that selection processes are free and fair. The participants raised a concern that management receive bribes for a candidate to be included in the programme that does not maintain nursing professional values and standards.

## **4.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter discussed the data analysis and findings of the study on the perceptions of nurse educators regarding the selection criteria that they would recommend for the

college in order to enhance the teaching and learning process and academic outcomes. The four themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data were discussed thoroughly and recommendations made to improve the selection of nursing candidates in order to improve the pass rate. This would contribute to solving the serious shortage of trained nurses in the province and the country. The findings were substantiated by the literature reviewed.

Chapter 5 concludes the study, briefly discusses the findings and limitations of the study, and makes recommendations for nursing education and practice, and future research.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter concludes the study, briefly summarises the study, describes the findings, limitations and significance, and makes recommendations for practice and further research.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY**

The shortage of nurses is a global problem. The selection and education of nursing students is of primary concern. At present, nurse educators at some nursing colleges in Gauteng Province experience problems with the type of students accepted for training and education. For example, some of the students are over 50 years of age, which makes it difficult for them to comprehend what is being taught. Others lack knowledge and interest in science subjects because they are granted study leave as they have been in the for a Department of Health long time. The situation is exacerbated by the difference in selection criteria applied for the acceptance of nurse students. This motivated the researcher to explore nurse educators' perceptions of the current selection criteria.

The study was conducted at a public nursing college in the West Rand region of Gauteng Province. To achieve the purpose and objectives of the study, a qualitative, exploratory, descriptive and contextual research design was used. The participants were nurse educators teaching first-year students at the selected college. The entire twenty-nine (29) males and females educators who taught either theory or practice were recruited to participate in the study. Nineteen (19) participants who were only females consented and were purposely sampled for the study. Data was collected by means of three focus group interviews.

## **5.3 FINDINGS**

The findings of the study emerged under three themes, each with sub-themes. The three themes were disempowerment of nurse educators related to non-participation as stakeholders in student nurses' selection; ineffective coping with course content, and potential risks and threats.

### **5.3.1 Nurse educators' disempowerment**

The participants indicated that they were not involved during the formulation and revision of policies and new selection criteria for nursing students. In this process decisions were taken on required subjects and the method of recruitment and selection of candidates. The participants were only involved in the last stage, namely the group interviews. As stakeholders, they emphasised that they were truly disempowered. The participants expressed concern that there was no involvement of nurse educators during development of selection criteria for nursing students. They said that they were the people who facilitated learning in the classroom and yet they were not included in the selection process. All decisions on the selection of students were at national and provincial level. In addition, there was no transparency regarding the availability of application forms. They knew that candidates wrote psychometric tests but they did not know what these entailed. Candidates were interviewed in groups and they copied each other's answers. This was perceived as contributing to the selection of candidates who had no love and passion for the nursing profession. Furthermore, there was limited open communication between college management, educators, government officials and the Department of Labour. Each of these entities followed the directives of their chief directorate about recruiting for nursing colleges.

### **5.3.2 Ineffective coping with course content**

The participants pointed out that they (nurse educators) were excluded from selection development. If selection procedures are not followed, nursing colleges end up with students who cannot cope with the course content of the nursing programme. Students then become frustrated and exit the course. The participants emphasised that the selection of nursing applicants should be centralised.

### **5.3.3 Potential risks/threats**

The risks/threats identified were rural candidates being disadvantaged; high student failure and dropout rate; inability to reach target of qualified professional nursing ratios, and student retention. The participants perceived rural candidates as being disadvantaged through not having access to on-line facilities and therefore missing opportunities to be nurses.

The high dropout and failure rate was of grave concern. One problem was students who did not qualify for the selection criteria and this was only discovered by nurse educators when they were already in class at college. Moreover, many students had family challenges. If students could not balance work and family, they did not perform well academically and ended up with course extension. Then there were chronically ill students who were a risk for course extension because they did not disclose their illnesses until they failed to attend lectures and to meet SANC requirements. Some students only came because they wanted money to finish at university and when they were done, they went elsewhere and followed their passion. Compared to the input, the output of professional nurses on completion of training had deteriorated. The high failure rate was a great frustration to the colleges and the nursing profession through failure to reach the target of qualified professional nursing ratios, by not producing enough qualified professional nurses. The participants emphasised that the incompetency of professional nurses starts with how they were selected in the beginning. If the students were borderline achievers, there will be content and skills that are not properly internalised hence they complete the course without the required skills that make them work independently thus compromising the values and standards of the profession.

## **5.4 LIMITATIONS**

Limitations of a study can be theoretical or methodological in nature. These are restrictions or problems in study that may decrease the generalizability of the findings. Theoretical limitations are weaknesses in the study framework and conceptual and operational definitions of variables that restrict the abstract generalisation of findings. Methodological limitations are weaknesses in the study design that can limit the

credibility of the findings and restrict the population to which the findings can be generalised (Grove et al 2013:598).

The study was limited to one selected nursing college in the West Rand Region, Gauteng Province, and to nurse educators involved in teaching first-year nursing students therefore the results cannot be generalised to other nursing colleges or provinces.

## **5.5 SIGNIFICANCE**

Notwithstanding the limitations, the findings and recommendations of the study on the selection criteria for first-year student nurses should assist the Gauteng Department of Health, the Department of Labour and the nursing college under study to streamline student acceptance. Suitable selection criteria would enhance the academic performance of students and guide nurse educators' teaching practice. This would contribute significantly to training and retaining suitable nurses and enhance the quality of health care service provision.

## **5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher makes the following recommendations which should assist the Department of Health, Department of Labour, nursing colleges, management and nurse educators in developing selection criteria for nursing students and course content. Currently, these stakeholders have a conflict of interests in the selection and education of nursing students.

### **5.6.1 Selection criteria**

The Gauteng Department of Health in conjunction with the Department of Labour and the South African Nursing Council should revise the selection criteria for nursing students. There is a need for an adequate number of nurse graduates to meet societal demands and success is a concern for all nursing colleges (Harris, Rosenberg & O'Rourke 2014:31). If candidates who are not properly selected are accepted for training, they will not complete the training and this affects the output, therefore all

candidates who do not meet the selection criteria should not be accepted to the programme.

The selection criteria should be able to predict candidates who will succeed and complete their four-year comprehensive diploma course leading to registration in the South African Nursing Council (SANC) as professional nurses. Before potential student nurses start their training, they should undergo an aptitude test designed to ensure that they are willing to undertake hands-on care and are capable of doing this, and are not just interested in the more technical aspects of nursing. The thinking behind this test is not to assess knowledge but to check that prospective students have the caring and compassionate qualities to be a good nurse (Francis 2013).

### **5.6.2 Involvement of nurse educators in the selection of nursing students**

All relevant stakeholders should constantly communicate and collaborate on changes or decisions/mandates on policies, procedure and developments on the selection criteria of student nurses. There should be transparency and standardisation of entry requirements to the nursing profession.

### **5.6.3 Nursing education**

Regarding nursing education, it is recommended that:

- Nursing students should not have a dual status and should not receive a stipend. Nursing students should be on a bursary system to enable them to concentrate on their studies, and improve their academic performance.
- Recruitment and marketing of the nursing profession should be done by nursing colleges. This will enable the colleges to attract and recruit prospective candidates suitable for the profession, such as those who meet the requirements, show an interest, have the potential to complete training, and have a passion for the profession.
- Selection criteria requirements should be standardised for all prospective nursing candidates.

#### **5.6.4 Encouragement and support for further study/research**

According to the findings, there seems to be a need to do research on the high drop out and failure rate amongst nursing students at nursing colleges in Gauteng province. The Department of Health together with Gauteng (and other provinces) nursing colleges should give researchers academic support during the study period. They should do follow-ups on how their progress and enquire about challenges that the researchers face during their studies. This would assist researchers can complete their studies on time. Presently, researchers often do not complete their studies due to lack of academic support. Researchers also face frustration and anxiety at universities because the people responsible for issuing approval letters following the ethical clearance from the university fail to do so on time. Researchers are sent from pillar to post to get approval letters, which is time consuming and demoralising.

#### **5.6.5 Further research**

Further research should be conducted on the following topics:

- Nurse educators' perceptions of selection of first-year nursing students (in other nursing colleges in Gauteng and other provinces).
- Nurse educators' perceptions of present policies on nursing education and admission of nursing students.
- Second-year nursing students' perceptions of problems in the first-year curriculum.

#### **5.7 DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS**

The last phase of the research process is to prepare research reports in order to communicate the findings to the appropriate audience. The researcher's report will be peer reviewed by independent colleagues in the same field who did not participate in the study. The peer review will ensure objectivity and increase likelihood of a valid and reliable report. The results will be disseminated to the participants. The researcher will present a paper at national and international conferences to which she will submit the abstract. The study will also be published in an accredited journal.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

Selection criteria for nursing students are of serious concern. Nursing students do not complete their training which subsequently impacts negatively on the nursing profession. This study examined the nurse educators' perceptions of current selection criteria and their recommendations for suitable criteria. This chapter summarised the study and the findings, described the limitations and significance of the study, and made recommendations for practice, nursing education and further research.

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# **ANNEXURES**

**APPENDIX A**

**Ethical Clearance Certificate from the Department of Health Studies, Unisa**



**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA  
Health Studies Higher Degrees Committee  
College of Human Sciences  
ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**REC-012714-039**

**HS HDC/433/2015**

Date: 12 August 2015 Student No: 5012-620-2

Project Title: Perceptions of nurse educators regarding selection of first year nursing students in the West Rand Region, Nursing College.

Researcher: Ruth Sample Simelane

Degree: MA in Nursing Science Code: MPCHS94

Supervisor: Dr TE Masango

Qualification: PhD

Joint Supervisor: -

**DECISION OF COMMITTEE**

Approved



Conditionally Approved



**Prof L Roets  
CHAIRPERSON: HEALTH STUDIES HIGHER DEGREES COMMITTEE**

**Prof MM Moleki  
ACADEMIC CHAIRPERSON: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH STUDIES**

**PLEASE QUOTE THE PROJECT NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRES**

**APPENDIX B**

**Agreement to comply with the ethical principles set out in the Unisa policy on research ethics**

**SECTION C  
DECLARATION**

**CANDIDATE'S AGREEMENT TO COMPLY WITH THE ETHICAL PRINCIPLES SET OUT IN UNISA POLICY ON RESEARCH ETHICS**

**(1) Student agreement**

I Ruth Sampo Simelane (Name of student), student number 5012-620-2 have accessed, and have read, the Unisa Policy on Research at

[http://om.unisa.ac.za/content/departments/res\\_notices/docs/ResearchEthicsPolicy\\_appxCourc\\_21Sep107.pdf](http://om.unisa.ac.za/content/departments/res_notices/docs/ResearchEthicsPolicy_appxCourc_21Sep107.pdf)

Yes.  No

is a true and accurate reflection of the methodology I intend to apply, and the possible ethical implications of the research methodology and domain issues and that I have reported on all of these. I shall carry out the study in strict accordance with the approved proposal and the ethics policy of UNISA. I shall maintain the confidentiality of all data collected from or about research participants, and maintain security procedures for the protection of privacy and anonymity. I shall record the way in which the ethical guidelines, as suggested in the proposal, has been implemented in my research. I shall work in close collaboration with my supervisor(s) and shall notify my supervisor(s) in writing immediately if any change to the study is proposed. I undertake to notify the Higher Degrees Committee of the Department of Health Studies (UNISA) in writing immediately if any adverse event occurs or when injury or harm is experienced by the participants attributable to their participation in the study.

I also declare that all data to be used to answer the research question and to attain the research aims from the target population(s) as indicated in the

Signature

Date

14/09/13

**(2) Approved by Supervisor:**

DR T E MASANGO

(Name of supervisor) acknowledged that I have checked that this form is complete, and that I approved the submission of the proposal for ethical clearance

*[Signature]*

04

14

Signature

Date

## APPENDIX C

### Request for permission to conduct the study (Gauteng Department of Health)

18 STUMKE STREET  
WITPOORTJIE  
1724

TO : DR B. IKALAFENG  
OFFICE 2105  
RESEARCH DEPARTMENT  
BANK OF LISBON  
GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

FROM : MS R. SIMELANE  
MCUR STUDENT NURSING SCIENCE—UNISA  
LECTURER: CHRIS HANI BARAGWANATH NURSING  
COLLEGE (BONALESEDI CAMPUS)

DATE : 24 JULY 2015

SUBJECT : REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I, Ruth Simelane, a Lecturer at Chris Hani Baragwanath Nursing College and UNISA student, registered for a Master Study in Nursing Science, herewith request permission to conduct research for the proposed study: *Perceptions of Nurse Educators Regarding selection of first year Nursing Students in the West Rand Region*. The research will be conducted at Bonalesedi Campus (Westrand Region)

The purpose of this is to explore and describe the perceptions of nurse educators regarding the selection criteria that they would recommend for the college in order to

enhance the teaching and learning process and academic outcomes. The study will come up with recommendations on the selection criteria that should be followed when selecting first year student nurses. These may be implemented not only by the nursing college under study but by the entire Gauteng province. Suitable selection criteria could enhance academic performance of students and guide teaching practices of nurse educators.

Ethical consideration to protect the study participants/respondents as well as protecting the rights of the institution in which the research is conducted will be maintained during the research. Permission will furthermore be obtained from the public nursing education institution of Gauteng College of Nursing, from the acting College Principal herself (Ms N.Mqokoza), through submission of a letter to request permission to conduct the research together with the letter from the Provincial Ethical Committee granting approval to conduct research in the province (based on approved proposal as well as the letter of ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Committee of the University – see attached). There will be no financial implications/expenses to the Province/Gauteng Department of Health.

The study will be reported in the form of a dissertation to the University of South Africa (the University of Study for examination purposes), at scientific gatherings such as conferences and in scientific journals. In communicating the results of the study, ethical considerations will be maintained to protect the respondents and Institution involved.

The supervisor for this study is Dr T.E Masango (masante@unisa.ac.za) of the Department of Health Studies (UNISA), contact telephone no.: (012) 4293386.

Thanking you in advance



Ms R. Simelane

Email: [ruth.simelane18@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.simelane18@gmail.com)

Tel. no.: (011) 896 8300 (ext. 8367) (office hours)

## APPENDIX D

### Request for permission to conduct the study (Chris Hani Baragwanath Nursing College)

18 STUMKE STREET  
WITPOORTJIE  
1724

TO : MS NONTUTUZELO MQOKOZO (ACTING PRINCIPAL)  
CHRIS HANI BARAGWANATH NURSING COLLEGE

FROM : MS R. SIMELANE  
MCUR STUDENT NURSING SCIENCE—UNISA  
LECTURER: CHRIS HANI BARAGWANATH NURSING  
COLLEGE (BONALESEDI CAMPUS)

DATE : 24 JULY 2015

SUBJECT : REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I, Ruth Simelane, a Lecturer at Chris Hani Baragwanath Nursing College and UNISA student, registered for a Master Study in Nursing Science, herewith request permission to conduct research for the proposed study: *Perceptions of Nurse Educators Regarding selection of first year Nursing Students in the West Rand Region*. The research will be conducted at Bonalesedi Campus (Westrand Region)

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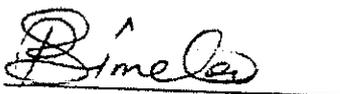
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The study will be reported in the form of a dissertation to the University of South Africa (the University of Study for examination purposes), at scientific gatherings such as conferences and in scientific journals. In communicating the results of the study, ethical considerations will be maintained to protect the respondents and institution involved.

The supervisor for this study is Dr T.E Masango (masante@unisa.ac.za) of the Department of Health Studies (UNISA), contact telephone no.: (012) 4293386.

Thanking you in advance



Ms R. Simelane

Email: [ruth.simelane18@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.simelane18@gmail.com)

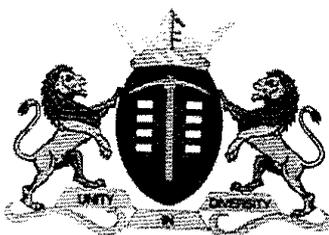
**Tel. no.: (011) 696 8300 (ext. 8367) (office hours)**

**Cell no.: 084 602 8390**

**(Lecturer: Chris Hani Baragwanath Nursing College /Bonalesedi Campus)**

## APPENDIX E

### Outcome of Provincial Protocol Review Committee (PPRC)



## GAUTENG PROVINCE

HEALTH  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### OUTCOME OF PROVINCIAL PROTOCOL REVIEW COMMITTEE (PPRC)

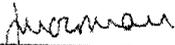
Researcher's Name (Principal investigator)	Ruth Sampie Simelane
Organization / Institution	Chris Hani Baragwanath Nursing College, Bonalesedi campus
Research Title	Perceptions of Nurse Educators Regarding selection of first year Nursing Students in the West Rand Region Nursing College.
Contact number	Address: N/A Contact no: 011 696 8367 Cell: 084 602 8390 Email: Ruth.sismelane@gauteng.gov.za
Protocol number	N/A
Date submitted	17/11/2015
Date reviewed	26/01/2016
Outcome	Approved

It is a pleasure to inform you that the Gauteng Health Department has approved your research on Perceptions of Nurse Educators Regarding selection of first year Nursing Students in the West Rand Region Nursing College.

Study sites: Leratong Hospital

The Provincial Protocol Review Committee kindly requests that you to submit a report after completion of your study and present your findings to the Gauteng Health Department.

Approved/Not approved

  
Dr. Julia Moorman  
Chairperson PHRC: Clinical Service

Date: 28-1-16

## APPENDIX F

### Approval from Chris Hani Baragwanath Nursing College to do research



**GAUTENG PROVINCE**  
HEALTH  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

CHRIS HANI BARAGWANATH NURSING COLLEGE

ENQUIRIES: Ms N.J. Mqokozo (Acting Principal)

TFI : (011) 983-3008

EMAIL: [Nontutuzelo.Mqokozo@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:Nontutuzelo.Mqokozo@gauteng.gov.za)

#### MEMORANDUM

**TO :** MRS R. SIMELANE  
CHBNC: BONALESEDI CAMPUS

**FROM:** MS N.J. MQOKOZO  
ACTING PRINCIPAL (CHBNC)

**SUBJECT:** RESEARCH REQUEST APPROVAL

Dear Mrs Simelane

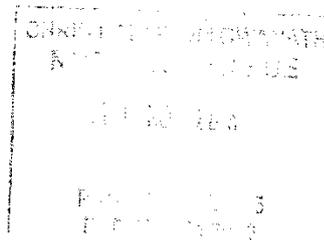
I hereby notify you that your request to do research on **perceptions of Nurse Educators regarding selection of first year nursing students** has been approved.

On completion of your research, the College will appreciate a copy of your research and the presentation of your findings during the College research day.

Sincerely yours

  
N.J. Mqokozo (Acting Principal)  
Chris Hani Baragwanath Nursing College

14.11.2015



## APPENDIX G

### Informed consent to participate in the study

I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Ms. R.S. Simelane about the nature, process, benefits, discomforts and risks of the study. I have also received, read and understood the participant information leaflet regarding the study.

I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details will be anonymously processed into the research reports.

I may, at any stage without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in this study. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in this study.

Participant's name : MOTSELISI LEBETE-SEHALAHA (please print)

Participant's signature:  Date 8/3/2016

**APPENDIX H**  
**Editor's letter**

Cell/Mobile: 073-782-3923

53 Glover Avenue  
Doringkloof  
0157 Centurion

02 February 2017

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

I hereby certify that I have edited Ruth Sampie Simelane's master's dissertation, **Perceptions of nurse educators regarding selection of first-year nursing students in the West Rand Nursing College**, for language and content.

*IM Cooper*

Iauma M Cooper  
192-290-4