

## Examining nursing students' communication skills development: A descriptive study

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### Abstract

**Background:** Teaching communication in the nursing curricula is significant, both nursing students and educators value the communication skills competencies for quality of nursing care given to patients and clients. Moreover, nursing care expressed through interpersonal relationship should include all kinds of communication. Therefore, there is a need to evaluate the development of communication skills among nursing students. **Objective:** This study aims to examine the development of communication skills among nursing students. **Setting:** This study was carried out in Nursing Education Department at the Faculty of Nursing, Alexandria University **Subjects:** The subjects of this study comprised all nursing students enrolled in health education course in the first semester of the academic year 2019-2020. **Tools:** one tool was used by researchers; Development of Communication Skills Assessment Scale (CSAS). **Results:** It was found that development of communication skills related to the following aspects: role of nursing faculty members, students' personal characteristics, theoretical knowledge about communication in health and nursing, individual characteristics of patients and the health-disease process, finally the profile of health team. It can be concluded that development of communication skills in nursing students depends heavily on several factors, some related to the role of nursing faculty members, while others, related to students' personal characteristics, or individual characteristics of patients, and finally the profile of health teams, respectively. **Recommendations:** Educational workshops should be conducted to all nurse educators about communication skills development and interpersonal sciences. Also, teaching communication science as a mandatory course for all newly admitted nursing students.

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**Keyword Wards:** Communication Skills development, and Nursing Students.

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### Introduction

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The purpose of any system is to provide services with optimal quality and quantity of the health care systems with no exception. One of the best ways to gain the patients' satisfaction, as major

clients of health care system, is through establishing effective and appropriate communication (Bramhall, 2014; Norouzinia, Aghabarari, Shiri, Karimi & Samami, 2015). Communication, as a key element in providing high quality health care services, leads to patients'

satisfaction and better health (Amudha, Hamidah, Annamma & Ananth, 2018).

Communication is a multi-dimensional, multi-factorial phenomenon and a dynamic, complex process, closely related to the environment in which an individual experiences are shared (O'Hagan et al., 2014). Since the of Florence Nightingale 19<sup>th</sup> century until today, specialities and nurses have paid a great deal of attention to communication and interaction in nursing. So, effective communication is an important aspect of patient care, which improve nurse-patient-relationship and has a profound effect on the patients' perceptions of health care quality, and treatment outcome (O'Hagan et al., 2014).

Bandura, (1986) stated that Social-cognitive Theory (SCT) provides a framework for explaining its value by high-lighting how students may learn effective communication skills, and make decisions based on internal factors such as emotions, habits, and knowledge, as well as external factors such as; institutional rules, social approval, and the physical environment which are in turn influenced by behaviour (Steckler, 2012).

Moreover, when internal and external factors are not aligned, people may change their minds but not their actual behaviour. Thus, in-order for individuals to communicate effectively, effective communication skills needs to be taught focusing on internal and external influences (Steckler, 2012).

The authors suggest individuals may acquire such skills through several ways; become informed and motivated by

reinforcement, and they may gain awareness and observations through modelling and then imitating effective behaviours. Therefore, providing examples of nurses working in palliative care settings, interacting with hospices team, and communicating with patients and care givers may provide the modelling behaviours necessary to nursing students learn how to communicate more effectively ( Zhang & Zhang, 2013). However, good communication is not only based on the physical abilities of nurses, but also on educational background and life experiences ( Zhang & Zhang, 2013).

Nursing as a health care science, focuses on serving the needs of human as a biopsychsocial and spiritual being. Its practice requires not only scientific knowledge, but also interpersonal, intellectual, and technical abilities and skills. This means composition of knowledge, clinical work, and interpersonal communication (Kourkouta & Papathanasiou, 2014).

Nursing care is expressed through interpersonal relationships and it includes forms of communication. To do that, it is a necessity for nurses to invest in communication skills, decoding the meaning of the messages being sent, and establishing a plan of care that is appropriate to and consistent with the patients' needs (Betsy & J., 2003; Oliveira & Braga, 2016).

However, education is defined as an interactive process. Therefore, nursing education is a process that based on theoretical and practical teaching learning experience. In this process, the professional knowledge is given to

students and reflected on their behaviours, helping them to develop their-self, providing them with effective communication skills with healthy and ill persons, families, society, other professional members, and friends. So, communication between faculty and students in the teaching learning process is vitally important to be able to learn desired behaviours. Because of communication process will affect both the individual's behaviours as well as their learning, healthy communication needs to be established and maintained, particularly in the educational environments (Heath, 2018; Doctors of Nursing Practice [DNP], 2020).

Thus, it is essential that nursing students acquire knowledge about the theoretical and methodological framework of human communication, from the beginning of their academic career (Oliveira & Braga, 2016). Studies showed that the nursing students had a moderate ability in communication skills in the clinical experience. Thus, paying attention to standard education, curriculum revision, and adding some specific theoretical lessons for improving communication skills are mandatory during the bachelor's degree (Shafakhah, Zarshenas, Sharif & Sabet Sarvestani, 2015).

Furthermore, nurses are expected to be competent communicators in terms of teaching patients and family members about their health care. Without proper training, nurses may be viewed as incompetent if their communication skills are not up to standards. In turn, it is crucial that nurses have training necessary to become effective communicators (O'Daniel & Rosenstein,

2008; Steckler, 2012). Communication within nursing field is a core clinical skill. So, spotting the light on the importance of developing effective communication skills among nursing students is a must; the ability to communicate plays an important role in the modern society. When information and meaning cannot be conveyed effectively within a short period of time, misunderstandings are likely to occur. Hence, considerable attention must be paid to the evaluation of professional communication competencies. Moreover, reaffirming the importance of nursing faculty members having communication skills to establish effective role modelling and enhancing teaching learning relationships, **that is why this study was conducted.**

#### **Aim of the study:**

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This study aims to examine the development of communication skills among nursing students.

#### **The research question:**

What is the communication skills development level among nursing students?

#### **materials and method**

##### **I. Materials**

##### **Design:**

A descriptive exploratory research design was utilized in this study.

##### **Setting:**

This study was carried out in Nursing Education Department at the Faculty of Nursing, Alexandria University.

### Subjects:

The subjects of this study consisted of all nursing students enrolled in health education course where it is a selective course submitted at Nursing Education Department at the Faculty of Nursing, Alexandria University during the first semester of the academic year 2019-2020. The study participants should be passed at least two semesters in the faculty of nursing.

### Tools:

One tool was used by researchers for the purpose of data collection:

#### **Tool I: Development of Communication Skills Assessment Scale (DCSAS) Questionnaire**

This tool was developed by the researchers after a thorough review of related literature (Bramhall, 2014; Oliveira & Braga, 2016) to examine the nursing students' perspective regarding the development of their communication skills. It consisted of two parts:

**Part one:** Personal and academic data, it included data about the nursing students' personal and academic data such as age, sex, academic year.

**Part two:** It was distributed into five dimensions as follows: 1. six statements related to the nurse Students' personal characteristics that may affect the development of their communication

skills from their perspectives; 2. Four statements related to Individual characteristics of patients and the health-disease process; 3. Four statements related to Profile of health team; 4. Four statements related to Theoretical knowledge about communication in health and nursing; 5- Eleven statements related to Nursing faculty member's role in developing these skills. These statements were distributed over the 5 point-likert scale started from (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree to (5) strongly agree. The scoring system of this tool consisted of three levels: > Low perspective: Score less than 33.3% > Moderate perspective: Score ranging from 33.3% - 66.67% > High perspective: Score more than 66.67%.

### Method

Formal consent from The Research Ethics' Committee of Alexandria Faculty of Nursing was obtained before conducting the research.

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing, Alexandria University.

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the head of Nursing Education Department at the Faculty of Nursing, Alexandria University.

The research tool was developed by the researcher after extensive review of related literature.

Content validity for the tool was tested by five experts in the related fields

then the necessary modifications were done accordingly.

A pilot study was carried out on 10% of the nursing students. Twenty students from student's list were randomly selected, the aim of study explained, and they took the questionnaire. Necessary modifications conducted, accordingly.

The reliability of the tool was tested using Cronbach's Alpha test. Tool was reliable and the coefficient values were (0.900)

Data was collected over a period of three months starting from the end of September 2019 and continued till the end of December 2019.

The students' communication skills were assessed using a self-administered questionnaire. Where, the study Tool was distributed to nursing students who were in Health Education course in the academic year 2019-2020 in their classes after explaining the aim of the study. The questionnaire took approximately 30 minutes.

The researchers introduced themselves to students and explained the purpose of the study, then assured them that their responses would cause no harm to them; their responses would be kept confidential and indicated their consent to participate in the study.

All the students were given the same instructions by the researchers about how to fill the questionnaire. They were told to read it carefully and answer it thoroughly.

Statistical analysis of the data: Data were fed to the computer and analysed using IBM SPSS software package version 20.0. (Armonk, NY: IBM Corp) Qualitative data were described using number and percent. Quantitative data were described using range (minimum and maximum), mean, and standard deviation, Significance of the obtained results was judged at the 5% level.

## Results

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**Table (1) and fig., (1,2):** shows the distribution of nursing students according to their personal and academic characteristics. It was found that 72.9 % of the nursing students had less than 20 years, and almost one quarter of them 23.9% had 20-22 years, while only 3.2% of them were aged more than 22 years.

Regarding gender, it was observed that most nursing students 82.4% were females. while the male nursing students represented only 17.6% of them.

**Table (2):** shows the distribution of nursing students' perspective according to their **communication skills**. Regarding to students' personal characteristics, it was found that most nursing students agreed that the experience of difficult and easy aspects of communication is primarily correlated with the individuality of the student.

In relation to, individual characteristics of patients and the health-disease process, also it was observed that most nursing students agreed that the more the patients were well and willing to communicate, the easier the communication. Moreover, there were

differences regarding the profile of health team's effect on developing communication among nursing students.

Finally, regarding theoretical knowledge of nursing students about communication in health and nursing and nursing faculty member's role in developing these skills were perceived by most of students as important aspect for developing such skill.

**Table (3):** shows the level of assessment of nursing students' communication skills development as a health care giver from their perspective. Regarding the students' personal characteristics, it was found that more than half of them 55.3% had moderate level. In relation to the Individual characteristics of patients and the health-disease process, it was observed that more than three quarter of the students 87.2% had moderate level. Concerning the Profile of health teams, it was found that more than three quarter of the students 84.6% had moderate level.

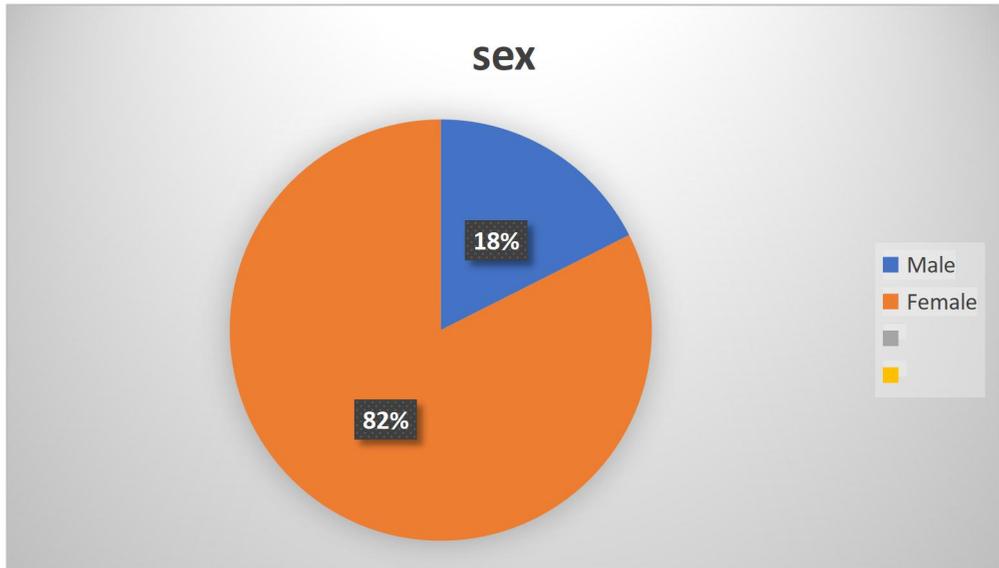
On the other hand, the level of assessment of nursing students' communication skills development regarding the theoretical knowledge about communication in health and nursing, nursing faculty member's role were 55.9% and 69.1% of them had high level respectively.

**Table (4):** shows the distribution of nursing students according to the score of assessment of their communication skills development as a health care giver from their perspective. From this table it can be observed that the scores of nursing students' communication skills rated as follows; role of nursing faculty members, students' personal characteristics, theoretical knowledge about communication in health and nursing, individual characteristics of patients and the health-disease process, finally the profile of health teams 34.6, 17.54, 11.88, 10.16, 9.95 % respectively.

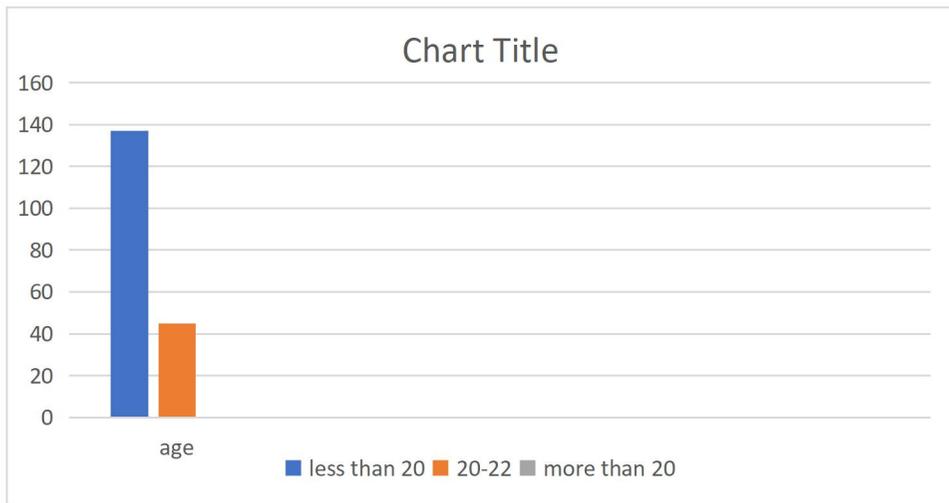
**Table (5):** Shows the relation between overall nursing students' communication skills development and demographic data, it was observed that there was no significant relationship between them.

**Table (1):** Distribution of the studied nursing students according to demographic data (n = 188).

	No.	%
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	33	17.6
Female	155	82.4
<b>Age (years)</b>		
<20	137	72.9
20-22	45	23.9
≥ 22	6	3.2
Min. – Max.	18.0 – 25.0	
Mean ± SD.	19.38 ± 1.04	



**Fig. (1):** Distribution of the studied nursing students according to demographic data (n = 188).



**Table (2):** Distribution of the studied nursing students according to Assessment of nursing students' communication skills development as a health care giver from their perspective items (n = 188).

Assessment of nursing students' communication skills development as a health care giver from their perspective	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>1-Students' personal characteristics:</b>										
-I find it quite easy to communicate.	4	2.1	11	5.9			103	54.8	70	37.2
-I explain as much as possible with appropriate language.	2	1.1	12	6.4			136	72.3	38	20.2
-I repeat whenever necessary.	5	2.7	14	7.4			128	68.1	41	21.8
-My difficulty is the fact that I'm shy, soft-spoken, which unconsciously makes patients insecure.	14	7.4	69	36.7			66	35.1	39	20.7
-I've always had communication difficulties and shyness has always been a problem for me. That is a major barrier for communication with the team and patients.	15	8.0	75	39.9			74	39.4	24	12.8
-I'm a communicative person, I don't have trouble communicating. I find it easy to approach patients about various subjects.	11	5.9	49	26.1			95	50.5	33	17.6
<b>2-Individual characteristics of patients and the health-disease process</b>										
-It's difficult when the patient is quieter and I talk to him, and his speech is very brief, he does not give me opportunities to explore further.	2	1.1	50	26.6			99	52.7	37	19.7
-My communication becomes easier because the patients show interest in their health status and want to resolve many concerns.	1	0.5	27	14.4			103	54.8	57	30.3
-The lack of interest, the hostile way the patient behaves, the pain barrier, all of that will often cause difficulty with relating to the patient.	5	2.7	42	22.3			93	49.5	48	25.5
-Shy and withdrawn patients make contact difficult.	7	3.7	43	22.9			97	51.6	41	21.8
<b>3-Profile of health teams</b>										
-I haven't had much contact with the team in the healthcare environment	10	5.3	50	26.6			96	51.1	32	17.0
- The team where I am is very open to communication and always available to work on my learning.	8	4.3	60	31.9			96	51.1	24	12.8
- The difficulty communicating with professionals is due to lack of "openness" of the professional to relate to the students.	2	1.1	42	22.3			100	53.2	44	23.4
- It's difficult when we can't find professionals willing to collaborate, some have their opinions formed, and do not accept others who are different."	2	1.1	42	22.3			105	55.9	39	20.7

**Table (2):** “continue”: Distribution of the studied nursing students according to Assessment of nursing students' communication skills development as a health care giver from their perspective items (n = 188).

Assessment of nursing students' communication skills development as a health care giver from their perspective	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>4-Theoretical knowledge about communication in health and nursing</b>										
- The greatest difficulty is talking to the patient about his required treatment and care	8	4.3	90	47.9			54	28.7	36	19.1
- My greatest difficulty is making sure of a possible diagnosis I make in my mind, and subsequently the plan of care I'll perform ... doing it all with clarity and absolute certainty is a bit difficult.	5	2.7	47	25.0			92	48.9	44	23.4
- The easy aspects for me were acquired within the nurse-patient relationship courses. I've learned to be more careful in interpersonal and group approaches, as well as paying more attention to non-verbal expressions of people.	2	1.1	31	16.5			114	60.6	41	21.8
- Previous knowledge makes communication easy and effective, as well as the knowledge domain. They make me feel safe	2	1.1	16	8.5			95	50.5	75	39.9
<b>5-Nursing faculty member's role in developing these skills</b>										
- Supporting and encouraging interaction with patients and health teams	3	1.6	11	5.9			95	50.5	79	42.0
- Teaching and advising on interpersonal communication	3	1.6	15	8.0			123	65.4	47	25.0
- Encouraging the participation and expression of thoughts and knowledge in small groups.	3	1.6	28	14.9			97	51.6	60	31.9
- Acts as a mediator, helping build effective communication.	5	2.7	27	14.4			99	52.7	57	30.3
- Teaches about communication and the importance of correct charting.	5	2.7	19	10.1			113	60.1	51	27.1
- Seeks to encourage students to have adequate language with patients, and stimulates us to develop empathy.	3	1.6	30	16.0			99	52.7	56	29.8
- Teaches about the types of communication, how to avoid communication barriers, and how to get around them.	3	1.6	22	11.7			102	54.3	61	32.4
- Mentions what is and what is not adequate to say to patients and the team.	1	0.5	28	14.9			112	59.6	47	25.0
- Encourages the student to talk about the discussed topics, the group dynamics and personal growth.	3	1.6	25	13.3			103	54.8	57	30.3
- Encourages the student to look at them-selves and have a perception of things; has student make sure they can express them-selves because they're in a safe place to do so.	3	1.6	24	12.8			111	59.0	50	26.6
- Stimulating student participation.	2	1.1	30	16.0			93	49.5	63	33.5

**Table (3):** Distribution of the studied nursing students according to level of assessment of nursing students' communication skills development as a health care giver from their perspective (n = 188).

	Low (<33.3%)		Moderate (33.3-66.67%)		High (≥ 66.67%)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1-Students' personal characteristics	1	0.5	104	55.3	83	44.1
2-Individual characteristics of patients and the health-disease process	2	1.1	164	87.2	22	11.7
3-Profile of health teams	7	3.7	159	84.6	22	11.7
4-Theoretical knowledge about communication in health and nursing	0	0.0	83	44.1	105	55.9
5- Role of nursing faculty members	1	0.5	57	30.3	130	69.1
<b>Overall</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>63.3</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>36.7</b>

**Table (4):** Distribution of the studied nursing students according to score of assessment of nursing students' communication skills development as a health care giver from their perspective (n = 188).

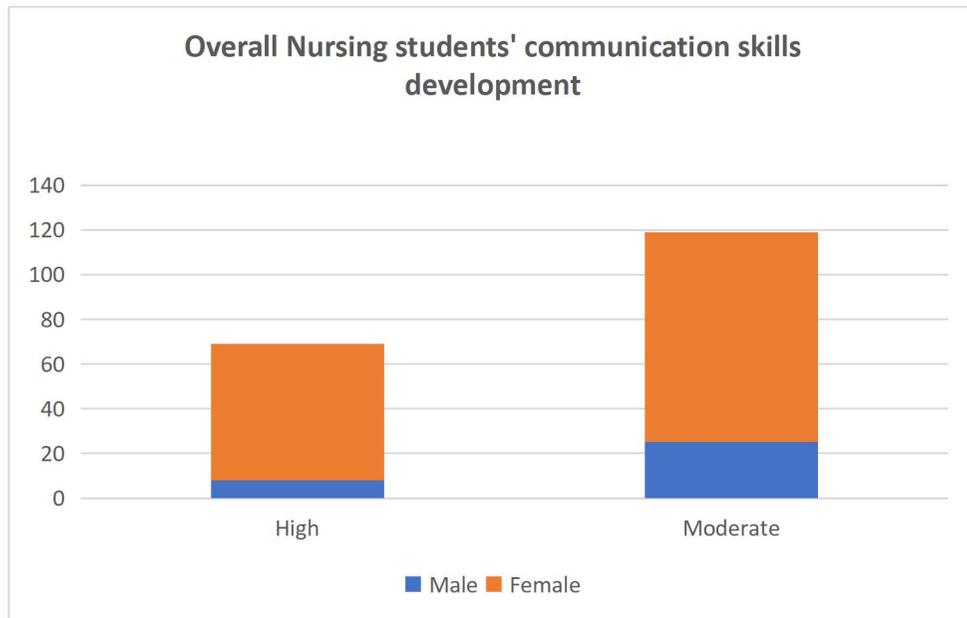
	Total Score	% Score
1-Students' personal characteristics	17.54 ± 2.0	64.10 ± 11.10
2-Individual characteristics of patients and the health-disease process	10.16 ± 1.25	51.37 ± 10.41
3- Profile of health teams	9.95 ± 1.37	49.60 ± 11.41
4-Theoretical knowledge about communication in health and nursing	11.88 ± 1.60	65.69 ± 13.34
5- Role of nursing faculty members	34.60 ± 4.91	71.52 ± 14.89
<b>Overall communication skills</b>	<b>84.14 ± 7.06</b>	<b>63.38 ± 8.11</b>

**Table (5):** Relation between overall nursing students' communication skills development and demographic data (n = 188).

Demographic data	Overall Nursing students' communication skills development				$\chi^2$	P
	Moderate (33.3-66.67%) (n = 119)		High (≥ 66.67%) (n = 69)			
	No.	%	No.	%		
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	25	21.0	8	11.6	2.675	0.102
Female	94	79.0	61	88.4		
<b>Age (years)</b>						
<20	87	73.1	50	72.5	0.622	MC <sub>p</sub> = 0.825
20-22	29	24.4	16	23.2		
≥ 22	3	2.5	3	4.3		

$\chi^2$ : Chi square test MC: Monte Carlo

\*: Statistically significant at  $p \leq 0.05$



**Fig. (2):** Overall Nursing students' communication skills development.

## Discussion

The current study aimed to explore the development of communication skills among nursing students in the teaching learning process from nursing students' perspective. The study included 188 first, second, third and fourth-year nursing students. The prevalent age groups were less than 20 years. Regarding gender, there was a prevalence of female, with the overall participation of 155 students. The previously mentioned results in line with Abed Elazeem, Shehata and Ahmed (2019) who conducted a study titled "Challenges facing medical surgical nursing students in the clinical learning environment" and they found that the majority were females and their age less

than 20 years. Moreover, the results of the current study showed that the development of communication skills depends on several aspects such as: students' personal characteristics, individual characteristics of patients and the health-disease process, profile of the health team, theoretical knowledge about communication in health and nursing and the role of nursing faculty members.

Regarding **students' personal characteristics**, the results of the current study showed that development of communication is predominantly connected to the individuality of the student, i.e., his/her personality. This result may be regarded to the development of effective communication skills is depends greatly on the overall state of students. Moreover, it may be

explained through the fact that communication is a two-way interrelationship which could not be successfully done without its partnership "students and patients". This result is consistent with Grassi, Caruso and Costantini (2015) who conducted a study titled "communication with patients suffering from serious physical illness" he viewed communication as the cornerstone of a relationship with a patient in all medical settings with the aims of creating a positive interpersonal connection, exchanging information, and making successful treatment-related decisions.

Additionally, Grant and Jenkins (2014) conducted literature review entitled "Communication education for pre-licensure nursing students" they concluded that effective communication is fundamental for quality nursing care and are therefore important for nursing students to develop. Also, this result in line with Çunkuş, Yiğitoğlu and Solak (2021) who concluded that there was a relationship between the psychological state of nursing students especially; worry and comfort levels and their communication skills. Knowing about the worry and comfort levels of nursing students who take part in practices will affect their statuses of coping with worry in their future professional and social experiences and may increase their clinical success.

The importance of the nurse's self-knowledge is highlighted by Brehmer and Ramos (2014) who viewed that the need for nurses to invest in understanding their actions, and reactions of individuals with whom they interact to establish effective communication. Also, self-knowledge is essential to care, because the more nurses

know, the more they will be able to minimize or avoid influences of their beliefs and values when interacting with the patients.

Spotting the light on, **individual characteristics of patients and the health-disease process**, the result explained same inferences as the development of communication linked to the uniqueness of student, it also linked to characteristics of patients and the health-disease process itself. Moreover, this result can affect to a greater degree the way of communication either positively or negatively, such as: the impossibility of verbal and nonverbal expression in critically ill patients, pain, prolixity, shy patients, those resistant to treatments, procedures, and opinions.

Moreover, Ammentorp et al. (2014) conducted a study about "Mandatory communication training of all employees with patient contact" they said that treating the psychological stress associated with hospitalization in intensive care units has a positive effect on patient quality of life. Furthermore, they have suggested that trust and relationships can be built when health professionals are skilled in communicating with their patients, as such relationships facilitate patient adherence to treatment. On the other hand, from the researchers' point of view regarding this aspect, communication skill is a talented skill and fortunately a learnt skill as well, that is to be explained that when the condition of patients hinders effective communication it is the responsibility of the nursing staff to initiate and continue communication effectively. During illness states, it is a necessity to maintain rapport with

patients and reassure them even without spoken words.

**Regarding the profile of health teams,** results showed that the cooperation level of health team affect communication greatly. This result may be related to that the way they are welcomed, receptivity, attention and resistance to students' opinions, can facilitate or develop barriers to the relationship that they establish with this group of professionals. Therefore, communication between members of an interdisciplinary team and teamwork are considered key elements contributing to the quality of care in any health care settings (Ballangrud, Hall-Lord, Persenius & Hedelin, 2014). Moreover, Brehmer and Ramos (2014) carried out a study about "the implications of the teaching-service integration for training in nursing from the perspective of faculty members", they found that students and professionals of health services, points to evidence of weaknesses in the context of interpersonal relationships, resistance, and indifference of professionals towards nursing students, because they think that supporting them in learning is an overload given their work demands.

From the researchers' view, this issue can be solved if the managers utilized clinical teaching models such as, preceptorship, mentorship, or partnership models. These models allow the nursing staff to be motivated to help nursing students without being burnt out and they will guide the students' thinking and acting, assuring accuracy and thoroughness. Also, at the time of evaluation, they can be of beneficial because they have provided direct supervision and instruction for students.

**Moreover,** results showed that how important it was to know the **theoretical framework of interpersonal communication,** students' opinions showed that when there was no previous theoretical knowledge, they felt insecure interacting with patients. However, when they are cognitively strengthened, they felt more confident and prepared to initiate interactions with patients and build an effective professional relationship. This result in line with Arnold et al. (2015) and Carlson, Spain, Muhtadie, McDade-Montez and Macia (2015) who asserted that most of the complaints received from health professionals are related to ineffective communication skills and not to the lack of clinical skills. Thus, Hsu, Huang and Hsieh (2014), believed that there is a necessity to conduct educating and training for all university students in health sciences about communication skills. Finally, regarding this point, from the researchers' point of view, it is vital to point out that the students in this study emphasized the importance of theoretical knowledge in interpersonal communication and nursing for establishing effective emotional interactions in health environments, emphasizing that a deficit of theoretical frameworks can undermine these interactions.

**Regarding the nursing faculty member's role** in developing these skills, the students participating in the study recognized and valued the faculty members' teaching and instruction on the acquisition of communication skills. They emphasized nurse educators as facilitator and mediator who should provide support, clarify concerns, and help them interact with patients and health teams, and

encouraging them to practice communication freely and effectively. Moreover, nurse educators should encourage participation and expression of thoughts and knowledge especially in small groups. Oliveira and Braga (2016) conducted a study about approaching the teaching-service integration in professional training demonstrated the difficulty with health team professionals participating in academic activities, considering it a constant challenge to integrate the students' practices into the daily health service routine. From the researchers' viewpoint, examining of communication skills development is very important to be considered, that was the purpose of conducting this study.

### **Limitation**

Limitations of the current study may be the unrepresentative population from all nursing faculties. Also, inclusion criteria to be mentioned regarding subjects.

### **Conclusion**

The current study highlighted the importance of improving the students' communication skills. Moreover, it can be concluded that development of communication skills in nursing students depends heavily on several aspects such as role of nursing faculty members, students' personal characteristics, theoretical knowledge about communication in health and nursing, individual characteristics of patients and the health-disease process, and finally the profile of health teams, respectively.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the current study, the following recommendations are to be considered:

#### **Recommendations related to nursing education:**

- Educational workshops should be conducted to all nurse educators about communication and interpersonal sciences.
- Teaching communication science as a mandatory course for all newly admitted nursing students during bachelor's degree.

#### **Recommendations for further studies**

#### **Further studies should be conducted regarding the following:**

- Conducting a comparative study on a larger number of students and educators from different faculties of nursing about their perspective regarding communication development.
- An experimental study about the effect of communication skills on nursing students' clinical competence acquisition and patients' satisfaction.

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