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RESEARCH ARTICLE

TEACHER RELATED CHALLENGES CONFRONTING UNDERGRADUATE NURSING EDUCATION AS PERCIEVED BY NURSING STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITIES WITHIN SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA

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Manuscript Info

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Abstract

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Nursing education in Nigeria is faced with a lot of challenges. The aim of the study was to identify the teacher-relatedchallenges confronting undergraduate nursing education as perceived by nursing students in universities in south-east Nigeria. Descriptive cross sectional design was used for this study. A sample size of 367 was used which was made up of the students from second year to fifth year levels of the Nursing Program. Multistage sampling technique was used and the instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. Findings from the study showed thatteacher-related challenges as perceived by the students included inadequate teaching styles among nurse educators, mean = 1.87,insufficient number of nurse educators, mean = 2.04, low motivation to teach among nurse educators, mean = 1.96, excess workload for nurse educators, mean = 2.27 andlack of nurse educators to change teaching methods to meet the needs of learners, mean = 1.87. There was no significant difference in teacher-relatedchallenges experienced by undergraduate nursing students across the Universities in southeast as the p-value was 0.389.Also the demographic variables of the students had no significant influence on their perception of the teacher-related challenges. In conclusion, the teacher-related challenges as perceived by university nursing students in South-East Nigeria were associated with deficiencies. Recommendationswere given based on the findings from the study

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Introduction:-

University nursing education combines professional and collegiate education programs, making it possible for the graduands to acquire degree (BNSc) and Professional certificates for registration by the Professional Body (Chinweuba et al., 2019). The educational system in Nigeria is known as mutually exclusive bipartite education in which a group of students and teachers work together simultaneously for both professional certification and a Bachelor degree in Nursing Science. The instructors according to Chinweuba et al. (2019) are guided by the curriculum of the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (N&MCN) for general nursing education and the National Universities Commission (NUC) for BNSc in order to offer all pertinent courses to students during this

five-year program. Furthermore, instructors get students ready for the pre-professional and professional examinations for General Nurses and Midwives in their fourth and fifth years, respectively. Within the fifth year of study, certain departments additionally prepare students for Public Health Nursing Examination (Chinweuba et al., 2019).

Researchers such as Weerasinghe and Fernando (2018) proposed that factors affecting undergraduate students satisfaction with their education include challenges involving quality of university academic staff.

Alshammari, Saguban, Pasayan, Altheban, and Al-shammari (2018) opined that teacher related component is a very significant factor affecting undergraduate nursing students education. In addition, George, Lakra, and Kamath (2017) stated that teacher characteristics is a significant factor affecting learning in undergraduate nursing students. It is said that various clinical supervisors and teachers demonstrate the same clinical procedures quite differently.Various teacher-related factors influence the way the learner learns, for example Poor presentation of learning materials, Insufficient facilitation skill on the part of the teachers, lack of incentives which lead to lack of motivation and job dissatisfaction, personnel shortage and excess workload for the teachers (Lateef and Mhlongo 2019). Naiz et al (2019) also noted unwillingness to change teaching methods and engagement of the students in clinical practices by teachers while Baraz, Memarian and Vanaki (2015) observed that lack of competency among nursing instructors was one of the major factors influencing nursing education. It is against this background that the researchers conducted this studyto investigate the teacher-related challenges confronting undergraduate nursing education as perceived by the nursing students in the universities within south-east Nigeria.

Aim of the Study:-
To determine the teacher-related challenges in the classroom, laboratory and clinical setting confronting undergraduate nursing education as perceived by students in the universities in southeast Nigeria.

Research Question:
What are the teacher-related challenges in the classroom, laboratory and clinical setting confronting undergraduate nursing education as perceived by the nursing students in the universities in south east Nigeria?

Hypotheses:
1. There is no significant difference in the teacher-related challenges across the classroom, laboratory and clinical settings as perceived bynursing students in the universitiesin South-East Nigeria
2. There is no significant influence of demographic variables of the nursing students on their perception of teacher-related challengesconfronting nursing education in the universitiesin South-East Nigeria

Materials and Method:-
Research Design
Descriptive cross sectional study was used for this study because it involved a systematic collection and presentation of data to give a clear picture of a particular situation as well as the relationship between cause and effect (Ihudiebube-Splendor and Chikeme, 2020). This study design was used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomenon and find out "what exist" with respect to variables under consideration. Naiz et al.(2019) used descriptive cross-sectional research design to carry out a study on nursing students experience of challenges in their educational and clinical environments at Allama Iqbal Medical College in Lahore.

Population of the Study
For this study, the target population was all the nursing students that were in second year, third year, fourth year and fifth (Final) year in the Universities in South-East Nigeria as they had been exposed to classroom, laboratory and clinical settings.

The total population of the students from 2019 to 2023 was summarized as follows:
- Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU) Awka (Nnewi Campus, Anambra State, Nigeria) = 567
- Alex Ekwueme Federal UniversityNdukwu Alike Ikwo (AE-FUNAI) Ebonyi State = 647
- University of Nigeria Nsukka, (UNN) Enugu State Nigeria = 799
  - Total Population = 2013 (Source = University Records

Sampling Technique
For this study,multistage sampling was used.
Stage one: In the first stage stratified sampling was used.. A sample was drawn from each stratum in a quantity proportional to its population relative to the community. Hence, 103 students were selected from NAU, 118 from AE-FUNAI and 146 from UNN. Total sample size = 367

Stage two: Simple random sampling (sampling with replacement) was used to select respondents (the students) across the 200 level, 300 level, and 400 level and 500level students from each level of the three universities respectively. Reason was to give all the eligible students equal chance of being selected for the study. Total number of students selected for the study = 367

Instrument for Data Collection
The instrument that was used for data collection was a self-developed questionnaire titled Teacher-related challenges confronting undergraduate nursing education. The questionnaire consists of close-ended items with two sections A and B. Section A contain items that deal with the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents such as age, sex, religion, year of study and residency. Section B contains items that elicited information on the teacher related challenges confronting the education of undergraduate nursing students,eg. lack of incentives which could lead to lack of motivation and job dissatisfaction, personnel shortage, workload excess, and lack of commitment to work, etc. Section B was measured using 4-point scale. The variables were weighted as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point.

Validity of instrument:
The questionnaire was sent to two experts in nursing education, statistician, as well as those in measurement and evaluation, to vet the items on the basis of relevance, clarity, appropriateness, coverage of the variables, organization, rating scale and readability. The experts made inputs in the instrument, the researcherseffected the corrections.

Ethical Consideration:
Ethical approval for this studywas obtained.. Research ethics were maintained in the course of carrying out this research. Good rapport was created with the respondents, the objectives of the research were explained to the respondents, and the rights and beliefs of the respondents were respected. Research ethics was maintained through the following approaches:

The researchers followed the ethical criteria outlined by Fadana and Vember (2021) throughout the research process: autonomy, beneficence and non-beneficence, fairness, respect for the persons involved, and secrecy to safeguard the respondents. All therespondents were informed that they had the option to withdraw from the study at any time. Informed consent was obtained from the respondents before data collection commenced. The researchers informed the respondents not to write their names or matriculation number to maintain confidentiality in the study. The invitation letter outlined the study's objectives and, emphasized that participation was voluntary.

Method of Data Collection :-

The letter of introduction was given to the Heads of Nursing Department in NAU, AE-FUNAI and UNN. The questionnaire for data collection was administered to the respondentsafter the researchers had introduced themselvesand tworesearch assistants to the respondents in each of the universities. The administration and collection of questionnaire lasted for 7 days in each university, hence a total of 21 days was spent in the data collection. Total copies of the questionnaire administered to the respondents = 367. The number returned successfully = 367

Method of Data Analysis:
The collected data werecoded and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequencies, percentages, and mean were used in analyzing demographic information and answering the research question. Mann-Whitney U,and Chi-square testswere used in testing the hypothesesat 0.05level of significance. The criterion mean for this study was 2.5. The researchersdeemed these statistical methods to be very appropriate for this study.

Results:-

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n=367)

ITEMS	OPTIONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Age	Below 18 years	22	6
	18-27 years	234	63.6
	28-37 years	92	25
	38-47 years	15	4
	48 years and above	4	1.4
	Total	367	100
Gender	Male	68	19
	Female	299	81
	Total	367	100
Religion	Christianity	342	93.2
	Islam	19	5.2
	Traditionalist	6	1.6
	Total	367	100
Residence	On Campus	67	18.26
	Off-Campus	300	81.74
	Total	367	100
Year of study	Second year	87	23.9
	Third year	91	24.7
	Fourth year	93	25
	Fifth year	96	26.1
	Total	367	100

Table 1 shows that 22(6%) of the respondents were below 18 years, 234(63.6%) respondents were between 18-27 years, 92(25%) respondents were between 28-37 years and 4(1.4%) were 48 years and above. Most of the respondents 299(81%) were females while 68 (19%) were males. 342(93.2%) were Christians, 19(5.2%) were Moslems and 6(1.6%) were traditionalists. 67(18.26%) of the respondents lived on-campus while 300(81.74%) lived off-campus. 87(23.9%) of the respondents were in Seconds Year, 91(24.7%) were in third year, 96(26.1%) were in their fifth year of Study.

Research Question: What are the teacher-related challenges in the classroom, laboratory and clinical setting confronting the education of undergraduate nursing students in the universities in south east Nigeria?

Table2: Teacher-related challenges in the classroom, laboratory and clinical setting confronting education of undergraduate nursing students (n=367)

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total Points	Mean	Remark
Nurse educators have mastery of subject matter	99	234	34	0	1164	3.18	Agreed
Adequate teaching style of nurse educators	5	42	221	99	687	1.87	Disagreed
The number of nurse educators are sufficient for all the nursing student	21	72	176	98	750	2.04	Disagreed
Nurse educators are highly motivated to teach.	11	50	221	85	721	1.96	Disagreed
There is a adequate workload for nurse educators	34	87	190	56	833	2.27	Disagreed
Nurse educators change teaching methods to meet the needs of the learners	10	43	209	105	692	1.89	Disagreed
Nursing instructors are competent in clinical setting	83	240	34	10	995	3.08	Agreed
Nursing instructors are updated with present trends relevant to nursing in clinical setting	145	195	21	6	1213	3.31	Agreed
Adequacy of the nursing instructors/preceptors presence	18	50	194	105	715	1.95	Disagreed
There is commitment to work on the part of the nurse	15	34	216	102	696	1.90	Disagreed

educators							
Presence of highly qualified nurse educators in the clinical setting	7	16	202	I42	622	1.69	Disagreed
There is a lot of cooperation between nurses and nursing students	16	77	179	95	748	2.04	Disagreed
Grand mean						2.27	Disagreed

Criterion mean: 2.5

Table 2 shows a grand mean of 2.27 which was below the criterion mean of 2.5 which was below the criterion mean of 2.5. Specifically, the mean response of some items were not up to criterion mean of 2.5, eg adequate teaching styles of nurse educators, sufficient number of nurse educators, high motivation to teach among nurse educator, adequate workload for nurse educators, nurse educators changing teaching methods, adequacy of nurse instructors/preceptors presense commitment to work on the part of nurse educators, presense of highly qualified nurse educators in the clinical settings and co-operation between nurses and nursing students (1.87, 2.04, 1.96, 2.27, 1.89, 1.95, 1.90, 1.69, and 2.04) respectively.

However, responses on nurse educators mastery of subject matter, nursing instructors, competency in clinical setting and nurse instructors with current trends in clinical setting had scores above the criterion mean of 2.5(3.18, 3.08 and 3.31) respectively

Hypothesis 1

Null hypothesis (H$_0$): There is no significant difference in the perceived teacher-related challenges among undergraduate nursing students in the universities in South-East Nigeriaacross classroom, laboratories and clinical settings

Table 3: Comparison of nursing students perceived Teacher-related challenges across the classroom, laboratory and clinicalsetting.

	Teacher-Related Challenges across the classroom, laboratory and clinical setting
Mann-Whitney U Test	9520.000
Z-Score	-0.861
P-Value	0.389

*Significant at 0.05 Level

Table 3shows that for teacher-related challenges using Mann-Whitney U test the Z test was -0.861 and the p-value is 0.389 which was higher than 0.05 significant level, hence the null hypothesis was accepted showing that there was no significant difference in the perceived teacher-related challenges among the nursing students in the universities in South-East Nigeria

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant Influence of demographic variables of the nursing students on their perception of teacher-related challenges confronting nursing education in the universities in the south-east Nigeria

Table 4: Influence of Demographic Variables on Teacher-Related Challenges among Undergraduate Nursing Students in Universities in South-East Nigeria

Variables	Age	Gender	Religion	Residence	Year of Study
Teacher-related challenges	X = 1.871 P = 0.759	Z score = - 0.191 P = 0.849	X = 2.123 P = 0.346	Z score = - 0.861 P = 0.389	X = 0.644 P = 0.886

*Significant at 0.05 level

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Table 4 shows that the influence of demographic variables on teacher-related challenges using Mann-Whitney U and Chi-square tests respectively for age, gender religion, residence, and level of study were X=1.871, P=0.759; Z=-0.191, P=0.849; X= 2.123, P=0.346; Z=-0.861, P=0.389; X=0.644, P=0.886 respectively. The P-values were all higher than 0.05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis was accepted showing that there was no significant influence of demographic variables on the perceived teacher-related challenges among undergraduate nursing students in the universities in south-east Nigeria

Discussion of findings:-

Teacher-related challenges in classroom, laboratory and clinical setting confronting the education of undergraduate nursing students in South East Nigeria
Result of the study showed that all the items on teacherrelated challenges were rejected as their opinion except nurse educator's mastery of subject matter, competency in clinical setting and updated with present trends in nursing (table 2). In line with the observation of Lateef and Mhlongo (2019) nurse educators' mastery of subject matter led to the widespread use of teacher-centred strategies that make students become observers and passive learners thus, negatively impacting their education.

In contrast with Baraz et al. (2019) study,competent nursing instructors led tosufficient academic and practical preparation, adequate clinical supervision, proper approach to applying instructional methodologies, and appropriate evaluation. Contrary to the findings of Moghaddam et al. (2019) nurse educators were in tune with current trends in nursing which boosted nursing education.

Alordiah(2018) noted that poor teaching styles limits the teachers' use of a variety of teaching methods to enhance students understanding which affects learning. In consonance with Lateef and Mhlongo (2019),lack of staff is a barrier to effective teaching approaches in nursing education, as the current ratio of nursing academic staff to nursing student population is out of balance. Low motivation to teach among nurse educators is in agreement with Lateef and Mhlongo (2019) observation that lack of incentives decreases morale and teachers' ardour for teaching and learning, as well as causing lack of job satisfaction, all of which impact negatively on undergraduate nursing students' education. Excess workload according to Lateef and Mhlongo (2019),negatively affects learning as large class sizes have a significant impact on the teaching and learning tactics used by teachers.

Similarly, in concurrence with Naiz et al. (2019) nursing students engage in subpar clinical practises as a result of traditional instructional (teacher-centred) methods which do not encourage growth mindset for clinical training advancement thus posing an obstacle to undergraduate nursing education. Inadequate nurse instructors'/preceptors' presence in this current study is in unison with Baraz et al. (2015) result in the loss of learning chances and the feeling of abandonment in clinical settings which drastically affected learning in clinical areas. Lack of commitment to work on the part of nurse educators in the findings ofMoghaddam, et al. (2019)caused lack of dedication to their patients, interfered with students' ability to learn in clinical settings, and prevented suchstudents from enhancing their knowledge. Absence of highly qualified nurse educators in the clinical setting is in agreement with Naiz et al. (2019) study which according to them resulted in difficulty in connecting theory to practice in the clinical setting. Lack of cooperation between nurses and nursing students is in line with Fadana and Vember study (2021) who observed that lack of cooperation affected the education of the students.

Hypotheses:
Hypothesis 1
Null hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference in the perceived teacher-related challenges among undergraduate nursing students in the universities in South-East Nigeria across the classroom, laboratory and clinical settings.

Table 3 showed that for teacher-related challenges using Mann-Whitney U test, the Z test was -0.861and the p-value was 0.389 which was higher than 0.05 significant level. Findings from the study revealedthat nursing students in universities in South East Nigeria face similar teacher-related challenges such as inadequate teaching styles of nurse educators, insufficient number of nurse educators for nursing students, low motivation to teach among nurse educators, excess workload for nurse educators, unwillingness of nursing educators to change teaching methods to meet the needs of learners, inadequate nurse instructors'/preceptors' presence, lack of commitment to work on the part of nurse educators, absence of highly qualified nurse educators in the clinical setting and lack of cooperation between nurses and nursing students

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This result is in agreement with Baraz et al (2019), Lateef and Mhlongo (2019), Naiz et al (2019) and Moghaddam et al (2019) findings that there were so many teacher-related challenges confronting the education of undergraduate nursing students even though they carried out their studies on different populations. This implies that nursing students face similar teacher-related challenges.

Hypothesis 2
Null hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant influence of demographic variables of the nursing students on their perception of teacher-related challenges confronting nursing education in the universities in south-east Nigeria
Table 4 shows that the influence of demographic variables on teacher-related challenges for age, gender religion, residence, and level of study were X=1.871, P=0.759; Z=-0.191, P=0.849; X= 2.123, P=0.346; Z=-0.861, P=0.389; X=0.644, P=0.886 respectively. The P-values were all higher than 0.05 significant level, hence the null hypothesis is accepted showing that there is no significant influence of demographic variables on the perceived teacher-related challenges among undergraduate nursing students in the universities in south-east Nigeria.

Harris and Sass, (2015) said that age of students can impact teacher-related challenges which was contrary to the findings of the study. According toHarris and Sass, (2015), younger students tend to require more support and guidance from teachers, which can be challenging for teachers to provide, especially in large classes.
The gender of students can also impact teacher-related challenges, which is in line with result of the study byJones and Dindia(2017)that female students tend to prefer female teachers, while male students tend to prefer male teachers.

Findings from this study were in disagreement with that of Waghid(2019) who showed that religion can impact teacher-related challenges in education, particularly in terms of teacher-student relationships and classroom management. Kirk (2018) found that teachers' religious beliefs and practices can influence their teaching styles and interactions with students. Waghid (2019) found that students' religious backgrounds can impact their perceptions of teachers and their teaching methods.

Also, contrary to the findings from this study, the residence of students can also impact teacher-related challenges in education, particularly in terms of access to qualified teachers and educational resources. Sife(2017)found that students from rural areas often face challenges in terms of accessing qualified teachers and educational resources, which can impact their academic achievement. Another study found that students from urban areas often face challenges in terms of overcrowding and lack of access to educational facilities, which can impact teacher-student relationships (Mwoma, 2015).

Year of study can also impact teacher-related challenges in education in contrast to the findings of this study. Kumar(2020) found that first-year students often face challenges in terms of adjusting to the educational environment and accessing teacher support and guidance.Ogunniyi(2016) opined that final-year students often face challenges in terms of accessing teacher feedback and guidance, which can impact their academic achievement.

Conclusion:-
The teacher-related challenges in the classroom, laboratory and clinical setting confronting education of undergraduate nursing students in the universities in South East Nigeria were inadequate teaching styles of nurse educators insufficient number of nurse educators for nursing students, low motivation to teach among nurse educators, excess workload for nurse educators, unwillingness of nursing educators to change teaching methods to meet the needs of learners, inadequate nurse instructors'/preceptors' presence, lack of commitment to work on the part of nurse educators, absence of highly qualified nurse educators in the clinical setting and lack of cooperation between nurses and nursing students.

There was no significant difference in the teacher-related challenges, experienced as the students faced similar challenges

There was no significant influence of demographic variables of the nursing students on the teacher-related challenges, experienced as the students faced similar challenges

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Recommendations:-
1. Government and other stakeholders in nursing education should take active steps to reduce heavy workload on nurse educators by employing more educators to balance the nurse educator to student ratio.
2. Nurse educators should be motivated through government and private sector collaborationto put in their best through incentives and adequate pay package/ remuneration.
3. Nurse educators should use more learner-centred teaching method and be willing to change teaching methods at all times to meet the learners' needs.

Limitations of the Study:-
Despite the careful planning and execution of this research, certain limitations were encountered in the course of the study. These limitations did not invalidate the findings but should be considered when interpreting the results.
Financial Constraint:

Limited financial resources posed a challenge to the researcher. Costs related to transportation, printing of questionnaires, data collection materials, and other logistical requirements were borne solely by the researcher. This financial limitation restricted the scope of the study, especially in terms of expanding the study area or increasing the number of respondents.

Academic Schedule of Respondents:
The study was carried out among students who were actively engaged in academic activities. At several instances, data collection was challenged by ongoing lectures, examinations, and other scheduled academic engagements. Some students were unavailable during the researcher's visits due to extended lecture periods, while others were involved in institutional programmes and school-related events. This resulted in repeated visits by the researcher and delayed completion of data collection.

Potential Confounding Factors
The researchers were aware of other factors that could affect the students perception of teacher-related challenges confronting undergraduate nursing education in south east Nigeria such as institutional differences and students academic performance. These factors were excluded from the study.

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