

Nurses' Engagement in Continuing Professional Development: A Quantitative Study on Competency Application and Lifelong Learning

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ABSTRACT

The dynamic nature of healthcare demands that nurses continually update their knowledge, skills, and attitudes through Continuing Professional Development (CPD). This quantitative study investigated nurses' engagement in CPD activities, competency application, and lifelong learning orientation. Specifically, it examined participation frequency, learning modalities, motivation, and organizational support, as well as their relationships to clinical practice integration, evidence-based practice adoption, interprofessional collaboration, and quality-of-care outcomes. Guided by Knowles' Adult Learning Theory, Benner's Novice to Expert Model, and Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, the study employed a structured survey and statistical analysis to determine relational and predictive links between CPD engagement and professional growth. Findings revealed that intrinsic motivation and organizational support significantly enhance CPD participation, while blended and experiential learning modalities foster stronger competency application. Results further confirmed that CPD engagement is both relational—positively associated with competency application and lifelong learning orientation—and predictive, reliably forecasting nurses' adaptability and clinical integration. The study underscores CPD as a cornerstone of nursing excellence, offering valuable insights for educators, healthcare institutions, and policymakers in designing responsive and sustainable CPD frameworks.

Keywords: Continuing Professional Development, competency application, lifelong learning, nursing education, organizational support

INTRODUCTION

The nursing profession is continuously shaped by rapid advancements in healthcare, evolving patient needs, and the demand for evidence-based practice. **“In this dynamic environment, continuing professional development (CPD) has become a cornerstone for sustaining nursing competence, ensuring quality care, and fostering a culture of lifelong learning.”** CPD activities—ranging from seminars, workshops, and online learning to interprofessional collaboration—equip nurses with updated knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to adapt to changing clinical contexts and organizational expectations.

Despite regulatory mandates and the recognized value of CPD, nurses face persistent barriers such as limited time, competing clinical responsibilities, insufficient managerial support, and constrained access to resources; these barriers reduce meaningful engagement and limit the transfer of learning into routine practice. This study therefore investigates four interrelated aims: (1) to describe nurses' engagement in CPD across frequency, modalities, motivation, and organizational support; (2) to assess how CPD knowledge is applied in clinical

practice across integration, evidence-based adoption, interprofessional collaboration, and quality outcomes; (3) to examine nurses' lifelong learning orientation in terms of motivation, self-directed learning, adaptability, and future educational pursuits; and (4) to test whether CPD engagement predicts competency application and lifelong learning orientation while accounting for key demographic and workplace covariates.

Statement of the Problem

This study sought to examine nurses' engagement in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and its influence on the application of professional competencies in clinical practice as well as their orientation toward lifelong learning. Specifically, it aims to determine the extent of nurses' participation in CPD activities, assess how acquired knowledge is translated into practice, evaluate their mindset toward continuous learning, and explore the relationships and predictive effects of CPD engagement on competency application and lifelong learning orientation.

Scope and Delimitations

This study focused on nurses' engagement in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and its relationship with competency application and lifelong learning. Specifically, it examines nurses' participation in CPD activities, learning modalities, motivation, organizational support, and perceived relevance of CPD. It also assesses how nurses apply acquired competencies in clinical practice and their orientation toward lifelong learning.

Review of Related Literature

This chapter presents relevant local and international literature and studies on Continuing Professional Development (CPD), competency application, and lifelong learning among nurses. It highlights key concepts, current findings, and research gaps that support the present study. The reviewed literature provides a strong foundation for understanding how CPD influences nurses' professional competence and commitment to lifelong learning.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on three theories. **Knowles' Adult Learning Theory** explains nurses' engagement in CPD, **Benner's Novice to Expert Model** explains the development of clinical competence, and **Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory** explains lifelong learning through experience. Together, these theories support that participation in CPD enhances nurses' competencies and promotes continuous professional growth.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study, "Nurses' Engagement in Continuing Professional Development (CPD): A Quantitative Study on Competency Application and Lifelong Learning Orientation," integrates three foundational theories—Knowles' Adult Learning Theory, Benner's Novice to Expert Model, and Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory—to explain the dynamic relationships among CPD engagement, competency application, and lifelong learning orientation.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology employed in the study “Nurses’ Engagement in Continuing Professional Development (CPD): A Quantitative Study on Competency Application and Lifelong Learning Orientation.” It outlines the research design, population and sampling, research instrument, data gathering procedure, and statistical treatment of data.

Research Design

This study employed a **quantitative, descriptive-correlational, cross-sectional research design** to determine nurses’ engagement in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and examine its relationship with competency application and lifelong learning. Data were collected at a single point in time using a structured survey questionnaire.

Research Steps

The researcher identified the research problem, reviewed related literature, developed and validated the research instrument, secured the necessary approvals, collected data from the respondents, analyzed the data using appropriate statistical tools, interpreted the findings, and formulated conclusions and recommendations.

Data Collection and Sample Selection

The data collection process began after obtaining the necessary approvals from the concerned authorities. A structured survey questionnaire was distributed to registered nurses who met the inclusion criteria and voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. The questionnaire was administered during the data collection period, and respondents were given sufficient time to complete it. All responses were treated with confidentiality and used solely for the purposes of this research.

Data Analysis Methods

The collected data were organized, coded, and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. Frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation were used to describe the respondents’ level of engagement in Continuing Professional Development (CPD), competency application, and lifelong learning. Pearson’s correlation coefficient was used to determine the significant relationship between CPD engagement, competency application, and lifelong learning.

Research Hypotheses and Validation

- **H₀:** There is no significant relationship between nurses’ engagement in CPD, competency application, and lifelong learning.
- **H₁:** There is a significant relationship between these variables

Study Limitations and Ethical Considerations

The study was limited to nurses from selected healthcare institutions and relied on a cross-sectional design with self-reported questionnaires, which may affect the generalizability and accuracy of the findings; however, ethical principles were strictly observed by obtaining

informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation, protecting participants' confidentiality and anonymity, and using all collected data solely for academic and research purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study revealed that nurses demonstrated a high level of engagement in Continuing Professional Development (CPD), as evidenced by positive ratings in participation frequency, learning modalities, motivation, and organizational support. The findings further showed that active engagement in CPD significantly enhances competency application and promotes lifelong learning. These results emphasize the importance of continuous professional development in improving nursing competence and the quality of patient care.

SUMMARY

This study examined nurses' engagement in Continuing Professional Development (CPD), competency application, and lifelong learning. The findings revealed that nurses demonstrated a high level of engagement in CPD, particularly in participation frequency, learning modalities, motivation, and organizational support. The study also found high levels of competency application and a positive lifelong learning orientation. Furthermore, significant positive relationships were identified between CPD engagement, competency application, and lifelong learning, indicating that greater participation in CPD enhances nurses' professional competence and commitment to continuous learning, ultimately contributing to improved quality of patient care.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that nurses' engagement in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) plays a vital role in enhancing competency application and fostering lifelong learning. The findings showed that nurses demonstrated a high level of CPD engagement, particularly in motivation, learning modalities, participation frequency, and organizational support. They also exhibited a high level of competency application in clinical practice and a positive mindset toward continuous learning. Statistical analysis revealed a **significant positive relationship ($r = 0.74$, $p = 0.000$)** between CPD engagement, competency application, and lifelong learning, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. These findings indicate that greater participation in CPD enables nurses to apply their knowledge more effectively, adapt to changes in healthcare, and continuously improve their professional competence, ultimately contributing to better patient care and higher quality healthcare services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Healthcare institutions should strengthen CPD programs by providing greater support, accessible training, and recognition for nurses' participation. Nurses are encouraged to actively engage in CPD to enhance their competencies and lifelong learning. Future researchers may conduct similar studies using larger samples and different healthcare settings to validate and expand the findings.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Almighty God, my thesis adviser, panel members, professors, family, friends, and all the nurses who participated in this study. Your guidance, encouragement, and support made the successful completion of this research possible. Thank you for your invaluable contributions to this achievement.

AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools improved the article's grammar and structure. No AI tools were used for data collection, analysis, or interpretation, and all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

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