



OBSTACLES AND WAYS-FORWARD TO UPGRADING NIGERIA BASIC NURSING SCHOOLS: A SURVEY OF PERCEPTION OF TEACHING HOSPITALS' NURSE TRAINERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

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Abstract: In Nigeria, a nursing workforce with disparate credentials and positions has undermined the nursing profession's growth. This issue may be resolved if nurses' training were standardised, with a university degree serving as the sole admission qualification into the nursing profession. Upgrading current basic and post-basic nursing schools in Nigeria to degree-awarding institutions is one method to address all of these issues. Nigeria's teaching hospitals are well-positioned for this endeavour due to their already existing support structure and workforce. What the nurse trainers and the stakeholders of the teaching hospitals may hold for or against upgrading their nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions is a determining factor for the upgrading project. However, their opinion is unclear and has not been investigated in Nigeria; hence, this study specifically elicited what the respondents may view as obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria and ascertained their suggestions on the possible ways of overcoming the obstacles. The study employed a cross-sectional descriptive design and a purposive sampling approach to select 78 available persons from a total population of 87. The generated data from the subjects were analysed using frequencies, percentages and mean for the research questions and Pearson's chi-square for the hypotheses, with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 20.0. The result showed that lack of extant policy, funds, and disunity among policymakers of the nursing profession are the main obstacles to the upgrading. However, the results indicated that respondents' fears of losing their income source, admitting and creating low-quality nurses, and similar concerns are not considered impediments to the upgrading. Institution of the upgrading policy by Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria, funding, awareness creation for the upgrading, and unison among policymakers of the nursing profession, are the significant possible ways to overcome the obstacles. The respondents' perceptions difference between the two hospitals was statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$). We recommend that the policymakers and stakeholders of nursing in Nigeria unite and liaise with the Federal Ministries of Health and Education for modalities and the actualisation of upgrading nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.

Keywords: Obstacles, ways-forward, upgrading basic nursing schools, perception of nurse trainers, perception of nurse stakeholders



INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Unhealthy intra-professional wrangling/rivalry, unmotivated workforce, series of unkept agreements between the government and the nurses, inferiority complexes, poor productivity, rigidity and poor sense of initiative in practice are all consequences of varying levels of educational preparation for practising nurses in Nigeria. This trend resulted in the formation and current availability of a nursing workforce in Nigeria with disparate credentials and statuses (Oforji, 2016; Marks, 1994), who are viewed similarly. These setbacks can be eliminated if nurses' training is unified by making a university degree the only entry qualification into the nursing profession (Obayendo, 2013; Agbedia, 2012). Upgrading the existing basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria is a way to solve all these problems. Like every other profession, the art or practice of looking after the sick or injured (nursing) started merely through rendering voluntary help to people in need. Nursing occupation entailed rendering help to the sick and the wounded. This need to help the sick and the injured originated in times of conflict, with wounded soldiers and in times of epidemics outbreaks around 1860 (Mind Spark Interactive Network, 2016). The priests and the nuns were mostly the people rendering the care then. Incrementally, there came a clear societal need for experts in the field, and that was how attention started evolving towards making nursing an essential occupation in any society today.

Up until the late 17th century and mid 18th century, those who practised nursing mainly learned on-the-job skills without any known form of formal training. Even though the functions of midwives were documented in ancient Egypt, millennia before Christ, in the Holy Bible's Old Testament, there is no evidence of any official training for practitioners. However, nursing has graced a fundamental change, and nursing education attained a formal status by the 1860s with Florence Nightingale. She performed outstanding nursing roles of caring for the wounded

soldiers during the Crimean war and equally set up the universally acknowledged first nursing school at St. Thomas Hospital, London, in 1860 (Mind Spark Interactive Network, 2016). Here was created the groundwork for hospital-based basic nursing education. At this point, official training in a school for individuals interested in becoming nurses (nursing education) began. This trend continued universally until the 19th century. Equally, higher or post-basic nursing education for specialisation in different nursing speciality courses was placed at the same hospital-based diploma-awarding nursing schools. In Nigeria, these speciality courses are being run in post-basic nursing schools in teaching hospitals. Nurses who have acquired higher education qualifications or have undergone the Nurse Tutor's Programme and registered with Nursing & Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN) as Nurse Educators or Nurse Tutors (Nurse Trainers) teach the student nurses in those schools. The management staff of the teaching hospitals (stakeholders) and these nurse trainers determine the establishment and day-to-day operations of the basic and post-basic nursing schools in Nigeria once the set standard of the regulatory body, NMCN, is met. The precedence laid in these schools has led to continued acquisition of diploma-equivalent certificates after basic nursing education and acquisition of the same diploma-equivalent certificate after post-basic nursing education in Nigerian teaching hospitals.

Since post-basic nursing schools offer specialised and higher nursing education, the graduates ought to be certified with a higher qualification than a diploma, but this is not the case. In other words, educational advancement does not seem to lead to the acquisition of higher qualifications.

In the United States of America (USA), however, from 1900 to 1960, nursing education developed in ways that preserved practical nursing schools, upgraded Nightingale schools to diploma schools, upgraded diploma schools to provide a bachelor's degree in nursing and an associate



degree in nursing, and established master's and doctoral degrees in nursing specialities (Scheckel, 2008).

With the merging of southern and northern Nigeria's protectorates into one country in 1914, Nigeria became a colony of Britain and nursing, like all other professions, developed and witnessed rapid changes to meet the changing needs of the society. The first and the second world wars equally impacted the growth and development of the nursing profession in Nigeria. This series of changes brought into existence schools of midwifery before the sister schools of nursing. Nursing schools are hospital-based institutions that give their students general basic nursing training that qualifies them for initial registration and licensing after meeting all the requirements. On the other hand, midwifery schools are hospital-based institutions that give their students speciality post-basic midwifery training that qualifies them for subsequent registration and licensing as midwives after meeting all the requirements. These two schools existed under the regulation of two different bodies that merged into one big effective body by the enabling decree 89 of 1979, known as Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN). NMCN became the only legal and administrative, corporate and statutory body charged with specific functions to perform, on behalf of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the duties of ensuring the safe and effective provision of nursing and midwifery service to the Nigerian public (NMCN, 2014).

Since then, NMCN has introduced other educational reforms into the nursing profession, ranging from midwifery and nursing schools, post-basic nursing schools to university-based baccalaureate nursing education. Today, the universities' nursing education has advanced to the level of offering up to PhD programmes in different specialities of nursing while the basic and post-basic nursing schools are still producing diploma-equivalent certificate nurses. This trend has created multiple educational doors for entry into nursing in Nigeria, leading to a situation where the university degree holders and

diploma holders are all classified as professional nurses. The trend continued even when it is common knowledge that long periods of preparation through the rigorous acquisition of specialised theoretical and practical knowledge by aspiring members are the key features of a profession worldwide (Kizlik, 2014; Rutledge, 2011).

While regulatory bodies for lawyers, medical doctors, and some newly emerging healthcare professions such as medical rehabilitation and medical radiography have long used this lengthy, rigorous method of preparing their aspiring members to become degree-certified professionals in Nigeria (Balogun, 2020; Adindu & Asuquo, 2013), the regulatory body for nurses has yet to implement a unified baccalaureate system of educational preparation for all aspiring members of the nursing profession. What is obtainable, instead, is a system of preparatory education where the universities have taken the lead towards achieving this desired long period of specialised preparation for the aspiring members of the nursing profession through a 5-year generic degree programme, 1-year compulsory internship programme after graduation; and masters and PhD openings in specialist programmes. Basic and post-basic nursing schools are still preparing aspiring members of the nursing profession through basic (general) nursing and specialised nursing programmes, respectively, where the obtainable qualification from varying levels of the programmes is a diploma-equivalent certificate. The continuous existence of this type of education may keep breeding some nurses that would lack the competence to face present-day challenges and be in a continuous quest to update their education while in practice.

Therefore, the possible solution is a university bachelor's degree (baccalaureate) education for all the aspiring members of the nursing profession and postgraduate degrees for speciality programmes in nursing. While a Bachelor of Science in Nursing education does not cover all of the competencies expected of nurses in the future, it does expose students to a broader range of competencies in



areas such as health framework and health care funding, group and general populace health, decision-making, quality enhancement, and design thinking (Institute of Medicine, 2011). Similarly, a growing body of evidence shows that graduated baccalaureate nurses bring unique skills to their work as nursing clinicians and play an essential role in delivering safe patient care (Rosseter, 2014). Undoubtedly, better educational preparation for nurses will ultimately lead to better nursing services (Agbedia, 2012). Similarly, Ayandiran, Irinoye, Faronbi and Mtshali (2013) opined that knowledge in the twenty-first-century world is driven by information and communications technology. It is difficult for any country to hold on to obsolete knowledge and ways of doing things and become progressive. Ayandiran *et al.* (2013) further insisted that traditional ways of doing things become obsolete so quickly these days. Therefore, the educational system and professions must rapidly respond to new knowledge and methods in today's dynamic globalised world. They noted, among others, that better understanding of human nature and diseases, discoveries in drug therapies, changing trends in disease patterns, changing nature of consumers of healthcare and similar changes are all posing challenges that require educational reforms in nursing and other healthcare professions.

Upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions and making a university degree the only entry qualification into the nursing profession will undoubtedly be the surest way to achieve this needed reform in nursing education within and outside Nigeria. If achieved, the upgrade could enable every upcoming nurse to possess a uniform qualification (a university degree) and, in turn, eliminate intra-professional rivalry and disunity existing between the diploma nurses and their baccalaureate counterparts (Oforji, 2016; Akpabio, 2011). It will equally lead to improved nurses' self-esteem, interpersonal communication, respect and regard from other healthcare professionals and the general public, and enable nursing to attain full-fledged professional status in

Nigeria. The hitherto disparity in the emolument of nurses, compared to other healthcare professionals, will cease to exist due to the upgrading, equally.

As of October 1984 and 2008, the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN) had made a resolute statement concerning upgrading nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. Some other stakeholders of the nursing profession in Nigeria had in different fora, made such statement, but till today, nothing has been heard about enforcement of this "wish". Instead, more schools of nursing have been created. The cause for maintaining the status quo despite expert advice must thus be investigated. The researcher intends to determine if the lack of support for upgrading and levelling nursing certificates is due to the perceived fear of losing of superiority feeling or comfort zone by some stakeholders and trainers of basic and post-basic nursing schools in Nigeria. The researcher also intends to determine whether the factor could result from a lack of support for the upgrading by the National Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives (NANNM). NANNM has a greater number of her members and officials as non-nursing bachelor degree-holding nurses who may want to keep the status quo. The likelihood of the Nigerian government's lack of devotion to this cause is another element to consider. Also, inconsistency in policy formulation and implementation by various leadership of NMCN for the upgrading may count, just as disunity among nurses and possible clandestine opposition from other healthcare professionals who are antagonistic to the progress of the nursing profession in Nigeria might be contributing to the holdback. Lack of an adequate workforce and the necessary fund for full implementation of the upgrading policy can also be constituting impediments to the upgrading goal. Finally, the fact that nursing education has historically been administered by the ministry of health rather than the ministry of education may be a source of resistance.

Despite the above perceived possible obstacles to the successful upgrading of nursing schools to degree-



awarding institutions in Nigeria, it is believed that starting the upgrading in teaching hospitals in Nigeria will make achieving this noble cause much more effortless. The assertion is because; every teaching hospital is an extension of a university, where clinical students of the university do practical aspects of what they learn theoretically. University teaching hospitals equally have a good template for establishing new faculty or department of nursing sciences. In some instances, there are departments of nursing sciences already in existence in the teaching hospitals' universities. With such in place, assimilation/affiliation of nursing schools in the teaching hospitals into the department of nursing sciences in the corresponding universities should no longer be a herculean task.

Teaching hospitals in Enugu State stand out among other states in Nigeria concerning schools of nursing that can be upgraded to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. This assertion is because there are two teaching hospitals in the state, University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH), Ituku/Ozalla and Enugu State University of Science & Technology Teaching Hospital (ESUTTH) Parklane, which have some favourable peculiarities. The University of Nigeria has a great department of nursing sciences situated in the Enugu Campus. The UNTH has age-long basic and post-basic schools of nursing with highly educated and competent trainers. Similarly, ESUTTH has a basic nursing school and a post-basic midwifery school with many experienced trainers. Stakeholders of the two teaching hospitals are presumably versed in the university system of education equally. As Nigeria's first autonomous teaching hospital, with stakeholders and nurse educators from across the country represented and located in Enugu, the former capital of the old Eastern Region of Nigeria, upgrading UNTH's basic and post-basic schools of nursing to degree-awarding institutions will not only be feasible but will set another pioneering pace in the country. Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT) will also receive massive patronage from a teeming population

of admission seekers searching for university nursing education once the teaching hospital's nursing schools are upgraded to degree-awarding institutions.

However, much support and efforts of the management staff members (stakeholders) and academic nursing staff members (nurse trainers) of the two teaching hospitals are needed for a seamless upgrading of their schools of nursing to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. Their fears need to be allayed and sustenance of their job guaranteed. Assessing the perception of nurse trainers and stakeholders of those nursing schools on the obstacles to upgrading these schools will go a long way in laying a foundation for the successful upgrading of nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. Therefore, knowing the perception of nurse trainers and stakeholders regarding the obstacles to successfully upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria is a desideratum to marching forward in this hope.

Statement of problem

Baccalaureate nursing education prepares nurses for various advanced responsibilities by building their self-esteem, communication skills, and a general sense of initiative, among other attributes. Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN) and many stakeholders in the nursing profession in Nigeria are aware of the importance of baccalaureate nursing education. They have advocated upgrading schools of nursing to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria (Obayendo, 2013).

Additionally, students in search of university nursing education are too populous, and they immensely outnumber the carrying strength of the available departments of nursing sciences in Nigerian universities. For the practising nurses, there exists an unhealthy intra-professional rivalry between degree holders of nursing and the diploma-equivalent certificate holders in the nursing profession (Thupayagale-Tshweneagae & Dithole, 2007). Consequently, the emoluments of nurses are lower than that of other prominent healthcare professionals and certain rights due to the nurses are denied them. Industrial



Arbitration Panel (IAP), as far back as 1981, ruled that nurses be placed at par with pharmacists (Adeniji, 2018), and this is still denied because of certificate grading and disparities. Therefore, not having all the nurses as degree holders in nursing is a significant factor in these problems. Despite all these, there is the continued establishment of basic and post-basic nursing schools and a reluctance to upgrade the nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria, even in teaching hospitals where the existing structure and human resources could make the upgrading much easier. Therefore, the researchers deemed it necessary to establish the reasons for this resistance to help the nation and nursing education, in particular, lay a foundation for modernisation in society, help professional nurses, and motivate the younger generation to choose this profession. These quests have led the researcher to choose a study of perceived obstacles militating against the successful upgrading of basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

This study aimed to learn more about teaching hospital nurse trainers' and stakeholders' perceptions of the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- (1) determine what nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals perceive as obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria; and
- (2) ascertain the suggestions of nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals on the possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.

The study's significance

This work is significant from a theoretical and practical standpoint. The theoretical significance is to affirm or reject some theoretical positions in nurse training and social equality in society.

Practically, the outcome of this work will be helpful to the Nursing & Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN), stakeholders in the nursing profession in Nigeria, lecturers, students and other researchers in the field of nursing education.

The NMCN and stakeholders in the nursing profession in Nigeria will benefit from the findings of the work because it will enable them to know how they could collaborate effortlessly with the management of teaching hospitals to achieve smooth upgrading of basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. Findings from the study will equally help NMCN and stakeholders of the nursing profession in Nigeria with useful information on how to identify and overcome the existing obstacles to successful upgrading of schools of nursing to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.

To the lecturers and students, the revelation of how such successful upgrading could come will, in turn, lead to absorption of the teeming population of admission seekers in search of university education and a degree in nursing, and lay a foundation for making all nurses degree holders of nursing in Nigeria. The rivalry hitherto existing between nursing degree holders and diploma-equivalent certificate holders in the nursing profession in Nigeria will equally stop because of using the result of the work to create a unified system of education for nurses in Nigeria.

Finally, researchers in nursing will benefit from the study because it will add to the existing knowledge and become the maiden empirical literature related to upgrading nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. These would finally stimulate further research in the subject area.

Scope of the study

The study has geographical and content scope. Geographically, the scope was limited to Enugu State and the two teaching hospitals in the state (UNTH and ESUTH). Content-wise, the scope covered obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-



awarding institutions in Nigeria and the potential approaches to overcome the obstacles.

Research questions

1. What do nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals perceive as obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria?
2. What are the suggestions of nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals on possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria?

Hypotheses

1. There is no discernible variation between the mean responses of nurse trainers in the two teaching hospitals in Enugu State, UNTH and ESUTTH, regarding the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.
2. There is no difference between the mean responses of stakeholders of the two teaching hospitals in Enugu State, UNTH and ESUTTH, regarding possible ways to overcome the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.

METHODS

Research design

This study employed a cross-sectional descriptive design. This framework is suitable for this investigation as it forces the researcher to watch, describe, and document numerous elements of the phenomena as they naturally occur (Sousa, Driessnack & Mendes, 2007; Chinweuba, Iheanacho & Agbapuonwu, 2014).

Area of study

The University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH) and the Enugu State University of Science and Technology Teaching Hospital (ESUTTH) were used as the study sites. UNTH is a tertiary health institution that provides general and specialised practical training in medical and health subjects. The hospital has one basic nursing school and six post-basic nursing schools, which provide both basic and

specialised nursing education. The new/permanent site of UNTH is located 21 kilometres from Enugu capital city, along the Enugu-Port Harcourt expressway. It is partly situated in Ituku, the Western boundary town of Awgu Local Government Area (LGA) and partly in Ozalla, the eastern boundary town of Nkanu West LGA. These two towns, Ituku in Awgu LGA and Ozalla in Nkanu West LGA, are the host communities of UNTH's new site, hence the title: "UNTH Ituku/Ozalla". The former/old location of UNTH, which houses the basic and post-basic nursing schools, is located in the core section of Enugu North Local Government Area. The old site of UNTH is bounded in the East and the South by the famous coal camp zone of the Enugu metropolis. It is bounded in the West by King's Way Road, Enugu and bounded in the North by Akwata Road through the southern axis of Ogbete Main Market, all in Enugu North LGA. The new and the old sites of UNTH are all in Enugu, Enugu State, Nigeria.

ESUTTH is situated behind the famous Polopark Mall (Shoprite). The hospital is in Parklane, Government Reserved Area (GRA) in the Northern axis of Enugu North LGA of Enugu State. Enugu State University of Science and Technology Teaching Hospital is a state-owned teaching hospital and a tertiary health institution that renders general and specialised training/educational services in various medical and health disciplines. In ESUTTH are one basic school of nursing and one post-basic school of midwifery, where basic and post-basic nursing education/training are respectively being carried out.

The population of the study

The study population comprised all the 87 coordinators/principals and tutors of the basic and post-basic nursing schools in UNTH and ESUTTH, including the Chief Medical Directors, Chairmen Medical Advisory Committee, Directors of Administration, and Heads of Nursing Services of the two teaching hospitals.

Sample and sampling procedure



All the 79 tutors (including co-ordinators) of the basic and post-basic nursing schools in UNTH and ESUTTH, their corresponding Chief Medical Directors, Chairmen Medical Advisory Committee, Directors of Administration and Heads of Nursing Services, totalling 8 in number, were purposively selected for the study. The total sample, therefore, is equal to the population of 87 respondents.

The instrument for data collection

This study's data collection was through the use of a questionnaire designed by the researchers. The questionnaire contains 29 items, presented in 2 sections, A and B. Section A comprises four items that elicited information on place of employment and designations of the respondents, while section B consists of 25 items. 14 out of the 25 items elicited information from the subjects on obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. In contrast, the remaining 11 items elicited information from them on the possible ways of overcoming the obstacles. Out of the 25 items in section B, 23 are close-ended suggestions that elicit data on the impediments and potential approaches to overcome them. The 23 items were scaled in ascending order of agreement, where Strongly Disagree (SD) =1, Disagree =2, Agree =3, and Strongly Agree = 4. The remaining two items out of the 25 in section B are open-ended questions that elicited the respondents' suggestions on the obstacles and the possible ways of overcoming them. The questionnaire's content was formulated in response to the research questions of this study and from the reviewed literature.

Validity of instrument

The questionnaire was face-validated by the researcher's supervisor. Two specialists in nursing education from the Department of Nursing Sciences, University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus and one PhD specialist in measurement and evaluation from the Department of Nursing Sciences, University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, did the content validity. Their inputs were utilised to make required

adjustments prior to the instrument being deployed in a pilot test.

Reliability of instrument

The instrument's reliability was determined by its pilot-test on ten randomly selected respondents from the Post-basic School of Burns and Plastic Nursing, National Orthopaedic Hospital, Enugu, who were not part of the study population, using the test-retest method. The data obtained from the respondents were subjected to a reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha technique to ascertain the instrument's internal consistency. A reliability coefficient result of 0.87 was obtained, which indicated that the instrument was reliable for the study. All other observed errors in the instrument during the pilot test were noted and adequately corrected prior to using it on the study's respondents.

Method of data collection

With the introductory letter from Postgraduate Co-ordinator of Faculty of Education, ESUT and approval by the Ethical Committee of UNTH and ESUT teaching hospitals, permission and informed consent were obtained from the chief medical directors, chairmen medical advisory committee, directors of administration, heads of nursing services and nurse trainers of basic and post-basic nursing schools of the teaching hospitals for the study. Three research assistants, one from School of Nursing ESUT, one from School of Nursing UNTH, and the other from Post-basic School of Cardiothoracic Nursing UNTH, assisted the researcher in administering and collecting the questionnaires. Except for 11 respondents who got the questionnaire through a proxy, the others received it directly from the researchers or one of their assistants. Some of the respondents filled the questionnaire instantly, while others gave a specific date/time when the researcher or his assistants returned for the collection. Only the subjects admitted to taking part in the study after seeking their consent participated. The data collection lasted for three consecutive days.

Method of data analysis

Academic Journal of Nursing and Health Education

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Double Blind Peer and Editorial Review International Referred Journal; Globally index

Available www.cirdjournal.com/index.php/ajnhe/; E-mail: journals@cird.online



Occurrences, percentages, and averages were used to analyse the research questions, and Pearson's chi-square

was used for the hypotheses. Tables and pie charts were used to illustrate the analysed data.

RESULTS

Table 1: Respondents' demographic variables N=78.

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Place of employment:		
UNNTH	51	65
ESUTH	27	35
Designation:		
Nurse educator/tutor	65	83
Administrator/manager	13	17

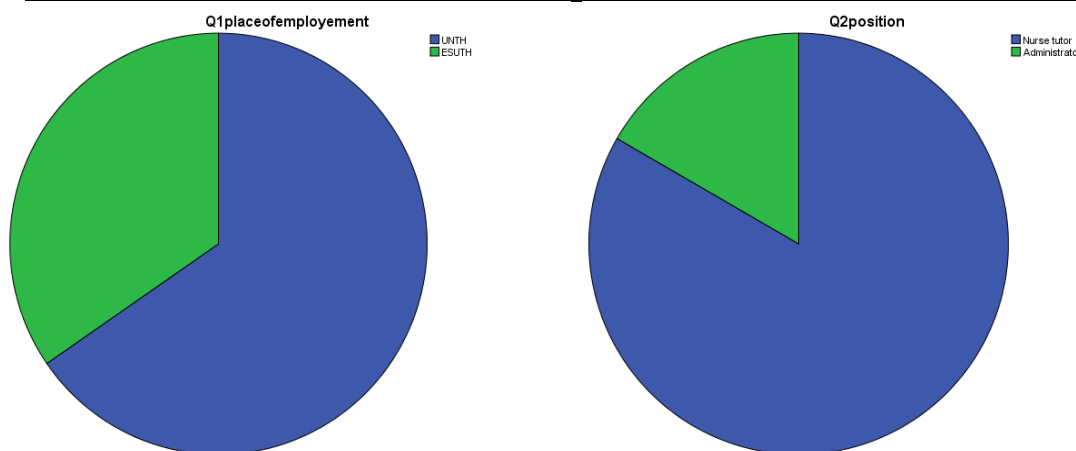


Fig. one: Showing proportion of the subjects' place of employment and their designations.

The above table and the figure show that 51(65%) of the respondents are employees of the University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH), whereas 27(35%) of them are employees of Enugu State University of Science and Technology Teaching Hospital (ESUTTH). 65(83%) of the

respondents are Nurse Educators/Tutors, whereas 13(17%) of the respondents are Administrators/Managers (stakeholders) of the two teaching hospitals.

Table 2: Respondents' response to obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria N=78.

OBSTACLES	SD f(%)	D f(%)	A f(%)	SA f(%)	Mean(SD)
Lack of infrastructural space required for upgrading	15(19)	23(20)	23(20)	17(21)	2.54(1.04)
Fear of admitting & producing poor quality nurses	26(33)	33(42)	14(18)	5(7)	1.97(0.88)



Lack of consistent policy by NMCN	10(13)	10(13)	28(36)	30(38)	3.00(1.02)
Fear of losing a funding source through the nursing schools	16(20)	10(13)	14(18)	38(48)	2.95(1.20)
Lack of funds for facility expansion	4(5)	26(33)	24(31)	24(31)	2.87(0.92)
Fear of losing social status advantage by key stakeholders	7(9)	27(35)	21(27)	23(29)	2.77(0.98)
Lack of the required manpower in the nursing schools	13(17)	38(48)	13(17)	14(18)	2.36(0.97)
Insisting on the conventional ways of nursing education and practice	10(13)	21(27)	23(29)	24(31)	2.78(1.03)
Lack of effort by NANNM leadership due to usage of the majority of nurses without a nursing degree to hold to power	5(6)	23(30)	15(19)	35(45)	3.03(1.01)
Not wanting to lose student nurses as teaching hospitals' workforce	3(4)	44(56)	11(14)	20(26)	2.62(0.91)
Not wanting to lose ownership of the nursing schools to the ministry of education	2(2)	28(36)	27(35)	21(27)	2.86(0.85)
NUC's policy of assimilation by the university as against affiliation	2(2)	25(32)	31(40)	20(26)	2.89(0.65)
As a person, I agree that nursing schools should be upgraded to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria	2(2)	2(3)	14(18)	60(77)	3.70(0.65)

NMCN – Nursing & Midwifery Council of Nigeria; NANNM – National Association of Nigeria Nurses & Midwives; NUC – National Universities Commission. Note that some figures were approximated to their nearest whole number.

The result showed that virtually all the nurse trainers and the management staff (stakeholders) of UNTH and ESUTTH (95%) are not obstacles to upgrading nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. They, rather, agreed that the schools should be upgraded. Except for "fear of admitting and producing poor quality nurses"; "lack of the required manpower in the nursing schools"; and "not wanting to lose student nurses as teaching hospitals' workforce", where 59(75%), 51(65%), and 47(60%) of the respondents respectively refused to see them as obstacles, all other items in the above table were

accepted by the majority as obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.

The respondents, however, identified dichotomy among nurses (lack of unity); personal/selfish interest; fear of taking positive steps to change; women dominance in the nursing profession; and lack of vision as other obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.

Table 3: Subjects' response to possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria N=78.



OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLES	SD f(%)	D f(%)	A f(%)	SA f(%)	MEAN(SD)
Provision of the infrastructural space	3(4)	3(4)	36(46)	36(46)	3.35(0.74)
Providing a policy for the upgrading by NMCN	0(0)	1(1)	20(26)	57(73)	3.72(0.48)
Sponsored initial mass training of educators/tutors of the nursing schools	2(2)	10(13)	27(35)	39(50)	3.32(0.81)
Provision of emergency/special fund	0(0)	8(10)	36(46)	34(44)	3.33(0.66)
Gradual but timed transition to university nursing education	0(0)	9(12)	36(46)	33(42)	3.31(0.67)
Creating awareness for the upgrading	0(0)	5(6)	36(46)	37(48)	3.41(0.61)
Carrying key stakeholders along in the upgrading plan	2(2)	7(9)	38(49)	31(40)	3.26(0.73)
Converting post-basic nursing programmes to professional master's degree programmes	7(9)	9(11)	28(36)	34(44)	3.14(0.95)
Mediating for the upgrading by the College of Medicine of the teaching hospitals' universities	5(6)	11(14)	45(58)	17(22)	2.95(0.79)
Sensitising and seeking the support of NANNM leadership	12(15)	12(16)	25(32)	29(37)	2.91(1.07)

NMCN – Nursing & Midwifery Council of Nigeria; NANNM – National Association of Nigeria Nurses & Midwives.

Note that some figures were approximated to their nearest whole number.

The result in the above table showed that most of the respondents agreed that “providing a policy for the upgrading by NMCN” (99%), “creating awareness for the upgrading” (94%), and “provision of emergency/special fund for the upgrading” (90%), among others, are possible ways of overcoming the obstacles. However, "sensitising and seeking the support of NANNM leadership" and "mediating for the upgrading by College of Medicine of the teaching hospitals' universities" respectively received the disagreement of 24(31%) and 19(20%) of the respondents, ranking them the lowest in their choice.

Meanwhile, most of the respondents endorsed the entire items in the table as possible ways of overcoming the

obstacles to the upgrading. They equally suggested honesty; unison among nurses; liaison between NMCN and NUC for the upgrading; setting a joint committee of Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) and Federal Ministry of Education (FMoE) for the upgrading modalities; proper placement of university graduate nurses in Nigeria civil service; sensitising all nurses on the upgrading, and uniting for the upgrading by NMCN, NANNM and University Graduates of Nursing Science Association (UGONSA), as other possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to the upgrading project.

Table 4: Result of tested hypothesis one, there will be no significant difference between the mean responses of nurse trainers of the two teaching hospitals, UNTH and ESUTTH, regarding the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.

OBSTACLES	MS Ts.	UNTH f(%)	ESUTTH f(%)	X ² (P-Value)	DECISION
Lack of infrastructural space required for upgrading	SD	13(29)	2(10)		



	D	14(31)	7(33)		
	A	10(23)	7(33)		
	SA	7(16)	5(24)	3.57(0.31)	Reject
Fear of admitting & producing poor quality nurses	SD	16(36)	7(33)		
	D	20(46)	8(38)		
	A	5(11)	5(24)		
	SA	3(7)	1(5)	1.75(0.63)	Reject
Lack of consistent policy by NMCN	SD	4(9)	4(19)		
	D	7(16)	2(10)		
	A	14(32)	7(33)		
	SA	19(43)	8(38)	1.66(0.65)	Reject
Fear of losing a funding source through the nursing schools	SD	4(9)	6(29)		
	D	5(11)	3(14)		
	A	10(23)	4(19)		
	SA	25(57)	8(38)	4.68(0.20)	Reject
Lack of funds for facility expansion	SD	3(7)	0(0)		
	D	16(36)	9(42)		
	A	16(36)	6(29)		
	SA	9(21)	6(29)	2.25(0.52)	Reject
Fear of losing social status advantage by key stakeholders	SD	2(5)	2(9)		
	D	13(29)	8(38)		
	A	15(34)	5(24)		
	SA	14(32)	6(29)	1.43(0.71)	Reject
Lack of the required manpower in the nursing schools	SD	6(14)	6(29)		
	D	25(57)	9(43)		
	A	8(18)	2(9)		
	SA	5(11)	4(19)	3.55(0.32)	Reject
Insisting on the conventional ways of nursing education and practice	SD	7(16)	3(14)		
	D	13(30)	5(24)		
	A	13(29)	6(29)		
	SA	11(25)	7(33)	0.55(0.30)	Reject
Lack of effort by NANNM leadership due to usage of the majority of nurses without a nursing degree to hold to power	SD	1(2)	2(10)		
	D	16(36)	1(5)		
	A	9(21)	4(19)		
	SA	18(41)	14(67)	8.98(0.30)	Reject
Not wanting to lose student nurses as teaching hospitals' workforce	SD	3(7)	0(0)		
	D	21(48)	14(67)		



	A	5(11)	3(14)		
	SA	15(34)	4(19)	3.58(0.31)	Reject
Not wanting to lose ownership of the nursing schools to the ministry of education	SD	1(2)	1(5)		
	D	11(25)	9(43)		
	A	19(43)	5(24)		
	SA	13(30)	6(28)	3.21(0.36)	Reject
NUC's policy of assimilation by the university as against affiliation	SD	2(5)	0(0)		
	D	12(27)	7(33)		
	A	23(52)	5(24)		
	SA	7(16)	9(43)	8.00(0.05)	Accept
As a person, I agree that nursing schools should be upgraded to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.	SD	1(2)	0(0)		
	D	2(4)	0(0)		
	A	6(14)	6(29)		
	SA	35(80)	15(71)	3.27(0.35)	Reject

MSTs – Measurements; NMCN – Nursing & Midwifery Council of Nigeria; NANNM – National Association of Nigeria Nurses & Midwives; NUC – National Universities Commission. Note that some figures were approximated to their nearest whole number.

From the result of the above-tested hypothesis, only one of the obstacles, "NUC's policy of assimilation by the university as against affiliation", has a p-value of = 0.05 and was accepted as hypothesised. The result revealed rejection of the hypothesis on all other listed obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria since their p-values are > 0.05. It implies a significant difference in the mean

responses of nurse trainers of the two teaching hospitals, UNTH and ESUTTH, regarding the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. The nurse trainers of the teaching hospitals only showed no difference of opinion on "NUC's policy of assimilation by the university as against affiliation".

Table 5: Result of tested hypothesis two, there will be no significant difference between the mean responses of stakeholders of the two teaching hospitals, UNTH and ESUTTH, regarding possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.

OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLES	MS Ts.	UNTH f(%)	ESUTTH f(%)	X ² (P-Value)	DECISION
Provision of more infrastructural space	SD	0(0)	0(0)		
	D	2(29)	0(0)		
	A	1(14)	3(50)		
	SA	4(57)	3(50)	3.08(0.21)	Reject
Providing a policy for the upgrading by NMCN	SD	0(0)	0(0)		
	D	0(0)	0(0)		
	A	0(0)	3(50)		



	SA	7(100)	3(50)	4.55(0.03)	Accept
Sponsored initial mass training of educators/tutors of the nursing schools	SD	0(0)	0(0)	6.30(0.04)	Accept
	D	1(14)	0(0)		
	A	1(14)	5(83)		
	SA	5(72)	1(17)		
Provision of emergency/special fund	SD	0(0)	0(0)	0.26(0.88)	Reject
	D	1(14)	1(17)		
	A	5(57)	4(66)		
	SA	2(29)	1(17)		
Gradual but timed transition to university nursing education	SD	0(0)	0(0)	1.38(0.50)	Accept
	D	1(14)	0(0)		
	A	5(72)	4(67)		
	SA	1(14)	2(33)		
Creating awareness for the upgrading	SD	0(0)	0(0)	0.93(0.63)	Reject
	D	1(14)	0(0)		
	A	3(43)	3(50)		
	SA	3(43)	3(50)		
Carrying key stakeholders along in the upgrading plan	SD	0(0)	2(33)	4.95(0.18)	Reject
	D	1(14)	0(0)		
	A	2(29)	3(50)		
	SA	4(57)	1(17)		
Converting post-basic nursing programmes to professional master's degree programmes	SD	0(0)	2(33)	6.76(0.08)	Reject
	D	2(29)	0(0)		
	A	1(14)	3(50)		
	SA	4(57)	1(17)		
Mediating for the upgrading by College of Medicine of the teaching hospitals' universities	SD	2(29)	0(0)	2.81(0.25)	Reject
	D	0(0)	0(0)		
	A	2(29)	4(67)		
	SA	3(42)	2(33)		
Sensitising and seeking the support of NANNM leadership	SD	2(29)	0(0)	9.78(0.02)	Accept
	D	0(0)	2(33)		
	A	4(57)	0(0)		
	SA	1(14)	4(67)		

MSTs – Measurements; NMCN – Nursing & Midwifery Council of Nigeria; NANNM – National Association of Nigeria Nurses & Midwives; NUC – National Universities Commission. Note that some figures were approximated to their nearest whole number.



The result of the above-tested hypothesis accepted "providing a policy for the upgrading by NMCN"; "sponsored initial mass training of educators/tutors of the nursing schools"; "gradual but timed transition to university nursing education"; and "sensitising and seeking the support of NANNM leadership" as being statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$). However, other suggested ways of overcoming the obstacles to the upgrading were statistically insignificant ($p > 0.50$). The above hypothesis two result indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of stakeholders of the two teaching hospitals, UNTH and ESUTTH, on "providing a policy for the upgrading by NMCN"; "sponsored initial mass training of educators/tutors of the nursing schools"; "gradual but timed transition to university nursing education"; and "sensitising and seeking the support of NANNM leadership". There are, however, significant differences in the mean responses of stakeholders of the two teaching hospitals on all other listed possible ways of overcoming the obstacles, as shown in the above table.

Summary of findings

1. Most (65%) of the respondents are employees of UNTH, and 85% of them are Nurse Educators/Tutors.
2. The nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals in Enugu State agreed that basic and post-basic nursing schools should be upgraded to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. However, fear of admitting and producing poor quality nurses was not perceived as an obstacle to the upgrading.
3. Disunity among nurses, selfish interest, fear of taking positive steps to change, women dominance in the nursing profession, and lack of vision, among others, are possible obstacles to the upgrading.
4. Providing a policy for the upgrading, creating awareness for the upgrading, and provision of funds for the upgrading, among others, are possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to the upgrading. Equally, unison among nurses, liaison between Federal Ministry of Education through the Nigeria Universities Commission and Federal

Ministry of Health through the Nursing & Midwifery Council of Nigeria for the upgrading, among others, are other possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to the upgrading.

5. The difference in the subject's perception between the two hospitals was statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The presentations of the discussion were under the objectives of the study to enhance understanding.

Objective one: To determine what nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals see as obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. The result revealed that most (95%) of the nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals agree with upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria and cannot constitute obstacles to successful upgrading of the nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions. This finding is a milestone towards allaying the fear of the researchers and their likes that the respondents may not find it easy to agree to such a proposal due to the personal benefits they make from the nursing schools. The study equally revealed that: "fear of admitting and producing poor quality nurses"; "lack of the required manpower in the nursing schools"; and "not wanting to lose student nurses as teaching hospitals' workforce" were not seen as obstacles by the majority of nurse trainers and stakeholders of the two teaching hospitals. The above finding contradicts the position of Onyemenam (2013) that the shortage of academic nursing staff is one of the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions.

However, with the adoption of all other listed obstacles to the upgrading, as contained in table 2 above, by the majority of the respondents, the study confirms lack of funds and poor state of facilities identified by Onyemenam (2013) as obstacles to the upgrading project. Additionally, the study's findings indicate that 58 (74%) of respondents feel that the Nursing & Midwifery Council of Nigeria's



(NMCN) lack of clear policy about upgrading hinders the project. This particular finding would garner more support from nurses in Nigeria, considering that nurses had expected positive action from the council on this upgrading before now (Obayendo, 2013; Olusegun, 2012). It is also imperative to look into the other possible obstacles to the upgrading identified by the respondents. These include dichotomy among nurses (lack of unity); personal/selfish interest; fear of taking a positive step to change; women dominance in the nursing profession; and lack of vision. Despite how derogatory the above views of the respondents may appear, it is pertinent for nurses to take them seriously and work on changing the perceived trend for the good of generality of nursing and nurses in Nigeria and even beyond Nigeria.

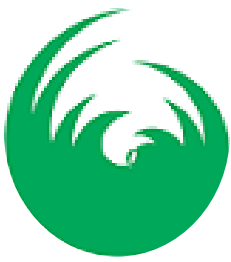
Objective two: To ascertain the suggestions of nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals on the possible ways to overcome the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. The result showed that provision of policy for the upgrading by NMCN, creating of awareness for the upgrading, and provision of funds for the upgrading were suggested by most (99%, 94% and 90% respectively) of the respondents as the possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to the upgrading. The above suggestion further underscores the need for NMCN to meet the people's expectations on this upgrading project. This expectation aligns with Ajibola (2015), who had earlier called on the NMCN and National Universities Commission (NUC) to develop an upgrade plan. Sensitising and seeking the support of NANNM leadership, and mediating for the upgrading by the College of Medicine of the teaching hospitals' universities, despite not seen by a significant proportion of the respondents as ways of overcoming the obstacles, are equally to be considered for successful upgrading of the nursing schools. The agreement to all the suggested possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to the upgrading as contained in table 3 above by the majority of

the respondents shows the importance of upholding those items for the success of the upgrading project.

To be given keener attention among the possible ways of overcoming the obstacles are those suggested by the respondents. They include honesty; unison among nurses; liaison between NMCN and NUC for the upgrading; setting a joint committee of Federal Ministry of Health and Federal Ministry of Education for the upgrading modalities; proper placement of university graduate nurses in Nigeria civil service; sensitising all nurses on the upgrading and uniting for the upgrading by NMCN, NANNM and University Graduates of Nursing Science Association (UGONSA). The above suggestions would address some of the raised obstacles to the upgrading through anecdotal reports and the researchers' observations as members of the nursing profession in Nigeria.

Summary

The nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals in Enugu State agreed that basic and post-basic nursing schools should be upgraded to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. However, they agreed, among other things, that lack of infrastructure, lack of policy, fear of losing a funding source, insistence on assimilation instead of affiliation of the nursing schools to universities by National Universities Commission (NUC), disunity, selfishness, lack of courage, and lack of vision are perceived obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. Despite having differing views on various perceived obstacles and their solutions, these nurse trainers and stakeholders similarly saw the provision of funds and a policy for the upgrading, more sensitisation and awareness creation, unison among nursing stakeholders, liaison among NMCN, NUC, FMoH and FMoE as possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to successful upgrading of nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. Therefore, stakeholders of the nursing profession in Nigeria should come together, filter the above suggestions,



and take the expected lead for successfully upgrading the nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. The agreement to the upgrading by nurse trainers and stakeholders of the teaching hospitals is a window that must be hijacked now for the success of this task.

Limitations to the study

The limitation to this study is the fewness of the population studied. Even though most people in the study's population were studied, better generalisation of the study on Nigeria would have been made if the population captured other nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals in other states in South-East Nigeria.

Carrying out this study in South-East Nigeria is equally a limitation of its kind. It is seen so because the other geopolitical zones, especially in Northern Nigeria, do not seem to have the same level of educational development as the South East.

Lack of access to the required literature on this topic is also a significant limitation to this study. This paucity of related empirical literature limited the study's inferences and references to anecdotal reports and researchers' observations.

Lastly, the inability of the researcher to get the response of nine subjects selected for this study is equally a significant limitation to the study's generalisability on the settings studied, let alone the whole of Nigeria.

Conclusion

This study, the perception of nurse trainers and stakeholders on the obstacles to upgrading nursing education in teaching hospitals in Enugu State, aimed to investigate the perception of nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals on the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria. The study specifically determined what nurse trainers and stakeholders of Enugu State teaching hospitals viewed as obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria and ascertained the suggestions of nurse trainers and stakeholders of Enugu State teaching

hospitals on the possible ways of overcoming the obstacles.

Literature was reviewed for the study's theoretical enhancement. The study respondents were purposively selected, and informed consent was obtained from them for the study. Questionnaires were administered to them and later collected. Out of the 87 respondents who got the questionnaire, completed copies were retrieved from only 78. The data analyses were done using frequencies, percentages and averages, and the following findings were made:

1. Nurse trainers and stakeholders of Enugu State teaching hospitals are not obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.
2. Lack of the required fund and infrastructure, lack of policy, fear of losing a funding source, insistence on assimilation instead of affiliation of the nursing schools to universities, lack of courage by policymakers of the nursing profession in Nigeria, and lack of vision, among other things, are obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.
3. Provision of a policy and fund; sensitisation and awareness creation; unity among nursing stakeholders for the project; and liaison between Nursing & Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN), Nigeria Universities Commission (NUC), Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) and Federal Ministry of Education (FMoE) for the upgrading modalities, among other things, are possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to the successful upgrading.
4. Nurse trainers of the two Enugu State teaching hospitals responded similarly in seeing NUC's insistence on assimilation instead of affiliation of the nursing schools to universities as an obstacle to upgrading the nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.
5. Stakeholders of the two Enugu State teaching hospitals responded similarly in seeing providing a policy for the



upgrading, sponsored initial mass training of educators/tutors of the nursing schools, gradual but timed transition to university nursing education, and sensitising and seeking the support of NANNM leadership as the possible ways of overcoming the obstacles to the upgrading.

From the above findings, it is clear that unison, policy and fund are the three major ingredients needed to actualise the upgrading of nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Due to the above revelations of this study, the following recommendations are made to achieve successful upgrading of the teaching hospitals' nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria:

- NMCN, NANNM and UGONSA, in collaboration with the nurse trainers and stakeholders of the teaching hospitals, should come together to map out strategies for smooth upgrading of the nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.
- NMCN, through the FMoH, should liaise with the FMoE for the upgrading modalities.
- Public-Private Partnership (PPP) approach should be used to get private bodies or individuals to finance the upgrading project, where the university lacks the necessary funds.

The implication of this study to the Nigeria nurses

Having listed the above recommendations emanated from this study, it becomes necessary to draw implications from the study that directly apply to nurses in Nigeria.

As the study revealed, the stakeholders and nursing schools' academic staff members of teaching hospitals in Enugu State are not against upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions; instead, they agree with the initiative. This revelation implies that stakeholders of the nursing profession should eliminate the likely fear of seeing these people as obstacles and collaborate with them for the upgrading.

Equally an important factor here is disunity and upholding of dissented views and approaches to matters that border on the progress of nurses and the nursing profession in Nigeria. Coming together to deliberate on such matters by all stakeholders of the nursing profession in Nigeria before coming up with a final stand is an excellent way to address such divided voices among nurses. By implication, all the stakeholders of the nursing profession in Nigeria need to know that sharing ideas, on a proposal, with every other stakeholder before launching the proposal will make the success of such an idea easier. It, therefore, implies that unity among nurses is one crucial asset that NMCN, NANNM and UGONSA need to achieve among them for the success of any national nursing project, upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions inclusive.

Finally, creative, imaginative and innovative thoughts are to be identified, promoted and utilised among nurses for finding better ways of making things, including nursing education, better in Nigeria. Such thoughts abound among nurses and should be harnessed by the leadership of NMCN, NANNM and UGONSA for the rapid growth of our dear profession.

Suggestion for further studies

This study is considered to be very small for a broader generalisation on entire Nigeria. Consequently, it is suggested that additional research be conducted on: perception of nurse trainers and stakeholders of teaching hospitals on the obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in other states in Nigeria, and perception of stakeholders of NMCN, NUC, NANNM and UGONSA on possible ways of overcoming obstacles to upgrading basic and post-basic nursing schools to degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria.

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