

# IMPROVING QUALITY IN NURSING AND MIDWIFERY PRACTICE THROUGH RESEARCH: LESSONS LEARNT

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The North-West University hosted a conference on research on 26 September 2017 at the Joon van Rooy Building F1, Senate Hall, Potchefstroom Campus, North-West University, South Africa. The aim of the conference was to share current research knowledge on nursing and midwifery within the North-West University to advance the quality of nursing.

The delegates who attended the conference include the North-West University staff members and students from both the Potchefstroom and Mafikeng campuses, Excelsius Nursing College staff members and students, and staff members of the Department of

Health. The programme director of the conference was Mrs Khumo Shopo who is a staff member at the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University. The opening and welcome at the conference was done by Prof. Fika van Rensburg who is the Deputy Vice Chancellor of the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University. In his opening speech he read Matthew 6: 22–23. Prof. Van Rensburg indicated that as human beings “we need to use what we have to better the lives of others”. Prof Karin Minnie who is the Director of INSINQ (Quality in Nursing and Midwifery), a research focus area within the Faculty of Health Sciences of the North-West University, introduced INSINQ and discussed the future of the expansion of the research entity among the two campuses (Potchefstroom and Mafikeng) as a result of the restructuring processes of the North-West University. The entity comprises three research programmes, namely Wellness and Health Care Access in Rural African Setting (WHARAS), South African Nurse, Organisation, Patient, and System outcomes (SYNOPSIS), and Project Based Amalgamated Research (Probar).

Prof. Minnie introduced the keynote speaker Prof. Yvonne Botma from the University of the Free State. Prof. Botma was inducted to Fundisa’s Hall of Fame for Research Excellence in Nursing and was rated as a C2 established researcher by the National Research Foundation (NRF). Prof. Botma has also served on numerous national and international committees and is among the chairpersons of the International Academic Nursing Alliance of Sigma Theta Tau. Prof. Botma’s keynote address focused on “improving quality in nursing and midwifery practice through research”. She indicated that there are people who have challenges of knowledge translation hence there is a need to conduct research that is applicable and to disseminate the results accordingly to the relevant audiences. She also mentioned that it takes time to mature as a researcher and that a PhD does not make one an expert. She also indicated that a PhD topic is a career choice and a baseline for something bigger to come. In conclusion, she mentioned that researchers should build networks and become leaders, and emphasised the transfer of knowledge to others.

The first presenter after the keynote address was Prof. Emmerentia du Plessis who is an associate professor at the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University and who is also involved in the research at INSINQ. Prof. du Plessis gave a presentation about “presence in nursing: a journey of discovery”. The presentation outlined the journey in discovering the concept of “presence” and how it relates to nursing. She also reported on the first phase of the data collection for their research at INSINQ entitled: “Promoting caring presence in nursing: discovery phase of an appreciative enquiry.”

The second presenter was Dr Leepile Alfred Sehularo who is a senior lecturer at the Mafikeng Campus of the North-West University. His presentation focused on the “development of the conceptual framework for illegal substance use prevention programme for adolescent learners” which was done based on the results of a systematic review and focus group discussion.

The third presenter was Prof. Christa van der Walt who is a former staff member of the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University. The topic of her presentation

was “Knowledge translation 101: A toolbox for researchers”. Her presentation focused on the practical aspect of how to translate the message to have meaning for a diverse audience, and to enhance the implementation in practice. She also discussed the importance of implementation science.

The fourth presenter was Ms Petronellah Lunda who is a Magister Curationis (MCur) candidate at the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University. Her topic was on “women’s experiences of continuous support during childbirth: a meta-synthesis” with the aim to systematically obtain available research evidence on women’s views and experiences of continuous support during childbirth. Ms Lunda revealed that the role, attributes and challenging aspects regarding continuous support during childbirth were the main experiences. Furthermore, continuous support during childbirth was influenced by culture, traditions and values, relationships with specific support persons, institutional practices, forms of supportive care received, and the attributes of the support persons.

The fifth presenter was Ms Sesepo Maria Lethale who is a lecturer at the Mafikeng campus of the North-West University. Her presentation was on “factors influencing preceptorship in clinical learning for an undergraduate nursing programme in the North West province”. Factors reported to influence preceptorship such as course expectations, preceptors and unit managers who possessed adequate knowledge and good clinical learning environments, were discussed.

The sixth presenter was Ms Petro Benade. Ms Benade gave a presentation about “exploring resilience in nurses caring for older persons”. In conclusion of her presentation she mentioned that nurses could further enhance their resilience and the care provided to older persons by using their personal, professional, contextual and spiritual strength.

The seventh presenter was Mr Steven Nthekang who is a professional nurse at the Witrand Hospital in the North West. Mr Nthekang gave a presentation about “resilience of auxiliary nurses caring for intellectually disabled patients”. He revealed that auxiliary nurses make use of different forms of interactions and they apply strategies that help them to remain resilient such as a trust in God which influences their resilience when caring for patients with intellectual disabilities.

The eighth presenter was Dr Lufuno Makhado who is a senior lecturer at the Mafikeng campus of the North-West University. The focus of his presentation was on “TB/HIV exposure among nursing students in the clinical practice environment”. Dr Makhado found that the higher the level of the study, the greater the exposure to HIV/TB. He also indicated that the level or lack of clinical support from nursing staff as well as preceptors had equally contributed to the exposure of nursing students to both HIV and TB, therefore more clinical support must be provided to nursing students.

The ninth presenter was Mrs Rorisang Machailo who is a clinical laboratory manager at the Mafikeng campus of the North-West University. The title of Mrs Machailo’s presentation was “Lived experiences of psychiatric nurses working with children diagnosed with mental illness”. Mrs Machailo indicated that the findings of her masters’ study revealed two main themes. The first theme was the psychiatric nurses’ experience of challenges associated with tensions inherent in the contextual demands. The second

theme was the experience of psychiatric nurses of the contextual demands that require a process of continuous adjustment.

The tenth presenter was Ms Neo Nare who is a staff member at the Mafikeng campus of the North-West University. The title of her presentation was “Conceptualization of African Primal Health Care”. In her presentation she emphasised that primal healthcare is a healthcare system that existed in Africa before the introduction of the current Western healthcare system. Ms Nare also mentioned that African Primal Health Care uses a holistic approach of healing whereby the family and community at large are involved in the healing process but also that healing does not only focus on a specific part of the body but it embraces the person as a whole, which is the mind, the body and the cosmos.

Mr Lesley Mashego was the eleventh presenter at the conference. The title of Mr Mashego’s presentation was “documentation of indigenous knowledge on medicinal plants’ use for a rural Khoi-San community”. Mr Mashego revealed that there are 35 plants species that are commonly used in the treatment of respiratory disorders, and bladder and renal illnesses.

There were many posters with interesting topics at the research venue. For example, Ms N. V. Zulwayo’s poster focused on “psychological management guidelines to lessen PTSDs among rape survivors: A systematic review”, Ms S. H. Mboweni’s poster focused on the “impact of NIMART training on HIV management in the Ngaka Modiri Molema district, North West province”, and Ms O. F. Meno’s poster focused on the “factors inhibiting implementation of Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) in primary healthcare (PHC) facilities in the Mafikeng sub-district”.

It was revealed that research cannot be conducted in silos as this research day provided an insight into and promoted multidisciplinary and inter-professional research in different contexts. A lot of evidence was shared and discussed and needs to be translated into practice and disseminated hence the importance of dissemination research and implementation science. Diversity in context, culture and research approaches was marked throughout the day, however, the main goal was to improve the quality of healthcare through nursing and midwifery in the North West.

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