

# Future Direction of Nursing Education in Pakistani Context

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**Abstract:** Nursing is the back bone of the health care system. There are only nurses who stay 24 hours with patient to improve patients healing process. Therefore, better patient outcome mostly depends on quality of nursing care provided to the patients. In Pakistan nursing profession is gaining attraction because it deals with the increasing demands of health problems. Chronic diseases, prolongation of old ages (geriatric care) and increasing demands of nursing service become integral part of quality health care system in Pakistan. In Pakistan advancement in medical field transformation is taking place in nursing education, nursing is operant part of health, growing very rapidly, acquiring more advance nursing education, and conducting researches in the field of nursing is a priority of the day. The specialized field in nursing is focused by developed countries to deal with current and future demands of health care system. Pakistan is developing country and still is in transition period; at the time of independent there were only three nursing schools to train nurses with the absent of uniform curricula but the nursing education transformed from six months nursing training PHD to full fill the current need of nursing care but there is a need to more focus on nursing profession to empower this profession to become a part of our health care system. Research papers were evaluated to discuss the strategies and future direction of nursing education in Pakistan. Published articles were obtained systematically from google scholar, Midline, Pub med, porringer and science hub. Total 19 articles were included for review. Permission was taken from University concern institution. Articles which were published in English and not more than 10 years old with full version were included in this study and those articles which were not written in English and were published before 10 years. Curriculum reforms, distance education, clinical simulation, capacity building, virtual education program, cultural exchange program, PHD followership and nurse educators training programs were predicted strong antecedents of future direction of nursing education. Educational transformation is moving from diploma nursing to baccalaureate program followed by MSN program to overcome future challenges of nursing education which has direct relation with patient care.

**Keywords:** Trend, Nurses, Transformation, Future Direction, Challenges

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## 1. Introduction

Considering complex societal needs nursing education in Pakistan is moving from six months' diploma in license practical Nurses (LPN) to three years' diploma program which is now transforming into degree program. [1] Pakistan nursing council which is autonomous body work for the welfare for the nurses and struggle to bring quality in nursing education. In developed countries political influences has been observe to support baccalaureate degree as entry to service and national wise curriculum review become an essential part to fulfil the challenges in nursing profession. [2]

In our country, most of the public and private sector

nursing schools and colleges are not full fill the quality of nursing education. Majority of the nursing schools and colleges are having incompetent faculty members, poor infrastructure, lack of adequate resources, lack of clinical exposure which need to be focused by stake holders.

It is expecting that diploma in nursing will be replaced by degree program by the end of 2021, and educational institutions of nursing will be changed from school to colleges and universities to handle the future demand of nursing care. In current decade Baccalaureate education become necessity to entrance in nursing but in Pakistan diploma in nursing still exists; currently nursing profession is not completely autonomous, and nursing deployment is unreliable. In other hand nursing education is in evolutionary

period to come over the future requirement of health care need. In Pakistan few universities started higher education in nursing to fulfill the future need of nursing in health care system [3]. Some private colleges offer nursing education with low quality as they only interest of income generation. The political involvement, nepotism and self interest groups provide chance for business minded people to just easily registered a college and start nursing degree program. [4] These kind of approaches in nursing education can produce more baccalaureate nurses with poor quality. Moreover, in recent decade nursing profession is being valued and more male candidates are entering into the profession. Some awareness also developed among nurses to acquire graduate and post graduate courses to meet the educational, managerial, societal and clinical needs of nursing field in future.

## 2. Future Direction of Nursing Education in Pakistan

The trend of nursing education has been change in the previous few decades but in developing countries like Pakistan, nursing education is unable to differentiate higher education to meet the future needs of health care system [5]. According to World health organization, education transformational themes as curriculum reforms, profession regulation, transformative teaching strategies, collaboration and partnership, capacity building, infrastructure and resources, are need to be focus for future nursing education [6].

### 2.1. Curriculum Reforms

Curriculum is the core of nursing education. The first nursing curriculum was developed in 1973 which was revised two time with little amendment. Transformation of the current curricula by implementing the recent developments in the relevant fields of knowledge is future need for nursing education. Curriculum transformation is necessary to ensure that nursing education produces graduates relevant to the needs of the population [7]. According to [8], future curricula should focus theoretical and evidence base practice, patient safety, cultural competence, cultural exchange gerontology focus, use of technology, new pedagogical approach, problem base learning, simulation, critical thinking are some elements and future trends for transformation of nursing curriculum [7]. PNC and higher education commission collaboratively introduced a well-structured curriculum for four year degree program for nursing in 2006, and PNC work for the development of a uniform master in nursing education curriculum and for the revision of Post RN curriculum. Curriculum for MS is still under process which need to be developed in advance level to fulfill the current and future need of nurses who get advance education in nursing must play as change agent in bringing quality of nursing care. [9]

### 2.2. Cultural Exchange Program in Nursing

During studying in higher education in nursing, getting

opportunity to expose other country educational and practical environment is one innovative strategy, which help to boost up student skills as exposing in other nursing institution abroad will bring unique skills and learn other culture [10]. In our country it is not under focused to plan for culture exchange programs. Such programs help to learn different languages and people than to live in entire different country. At the very least, students who get exposure to other country have the opportunity to learn about and appreciate the diversity of the world and the educational prospects in it [11].

### 2.3. Distance Education

Paramount growth in technological field converted the world in one village. Information and educational learning is much easy and not limited to any specific area thus education spread in every country. Computing technology has further advanced in recent years, and the availability and popularity of social media and smart phones has led to new sources for learning and gather data [2] thus no any professional learning is static in a sense of development. Such advancement in technological field paves the way for distance education. Majority of in services nurses join the graduate and post graduate programs [12]. Various degree programs can be expected in near future in the form of distance education so it will help to those nurses who work with different organizations will continue their study in the form of distance learning.

### 2.4. Establishment of Nursing Homes

Nursing homes are a fundamental component of the long term care system serving older adults in the United States [13]. In Pakistan the average life expectancy has increased from 59 years by 1990 to 67 years by 2015 (6). The rapidly changing needs of older adults demand, that nursing educators need to focus to seek creative solutions for better preparing future nurses to meet the challenges of caring for clinically complex older adults [11], which consequently demands preparation of nurses to care them. Motivate students for careers in nursing home settings are future need to provide palliative care. [14]

### 2.5. Official Recognition of Nursing Education

In developed countries there are some accreditations bodies work for official recognition of nursing education. Which are National league for nursing accrediting commission and collegiate nursing education [5]. Pakistan Nursing Council would make coordination and link with those bodies for future accreditation of nursing education. Accreditation body, continuing professional development, and scope for practice influence the quality of care provided by the nursing workforce [15, 16].

### 2.6. Educational Need of Nurse Educators

Nursing teachers and instructors need to be well qualified to teach student about ongoing demands of patient and their safety in the clinical field. Ongoing assessment of nursing

educators and identifying deficiencies among nurse educators is future demand of nursing education.

### **2.7. Transformative and Innovative Clinical Teaching**

The trend of clinical practice in nursing is been observed that student in clinical site make congestions which demand of new strategies and innovative ways to train students. Nurse educators need to be aware with innovative solutions [10]. Technology facilitates students' exposure to clinical scenarios that they would normally not encounter in their normal clinical setting [14].

### **2.8. Capacity Building**

Nursing education operates within a complex environment which has to constantly be put under vigorous evaluation in order to encourage innovation [17]. According to World health organization, education transformational themes as curriculum reforms, profession regulation, transformative teaching strategies, collaboration and partnership, capacity building, infrastructure and resources, are need to be focus for future nursing education in Pakistan and it can be possible when there will be capacity building in nursing education.

#### **2.8.1. Developing Nursing Doctoral Education**

Doctoral program was initiated at teacher college Columbia in 1924 and matured by the end of 20 centuries. The requirement of a doctoral (PhD preferred) degree for academic nurse educators is future requirement. Pakistani nurses move abroad to get PhD in nursing, although there are few universities started MS program in nursing including Khyber Medical University. There is only one university which offers PHD in nursing and Khyber medical University in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa going to initiate PHD program in 2020.

#### **2.8.2. Post Doctorate Fellowship**

This is a very new trend in nursing which observe in developed countries as advance nurse practitioners and nurse consultants become an active part of various associations. Pakistan is already with burden of preventable diseases and nurses are only performing their duties as subordinates of doctors even after getting advance education. Curriculum for MS program is still detached from this aspect of nursing care which need to be revised accordingly. In future if policy makers give priority to nurses for independent practice.

#### **2.8.3. Nursing Research Centers**

There is greater need for research on nursing education. As health care reform progresses, nursing education is also in transition position and nursing practices need to be redefine and modify. Yet virtually no evidence exists to support the needs of changing role of nurses in Pakistan. In graduate level nurses can assume roles in advance practice, leadership, participation in policy making, teaching and research. [11]. Nursing research centers where PhD nurses will help and guide nursing students to conduct research, yet we have very

few nurses who have doctoral degree.

#### **2.8.4. Inter Professional Collaborative Learning**

Inter professional collaboration is sharing professional roles and responsibilities, effective communication, conflict resolution, and are exposed to working with other health professional,, they may be more likely to engage in collaboration in future work settings [18]. Further need to collaborative commission between nurses' association and medical association to implement collaboration for effective learning and better patient care. Students of all disciplines shared learning environments such education is based on the premise that students' greater familiarity with each other's roles, competencies and scopes of practice will result in more collaborative graduates [19].

## **3. Conclusion**

Pakistan is getting opportunity to transform its health care system to provide quality care, accessible to ever one with evidence base health outcome. Achieving this, transformation will require remodeling many aspects of the health care system, especially for the nursing profession which is the largest segment of the health care workforce. It must be ensuring that nurses can practice to the full extent of their education and provide opportunities for nurses to assume leadership positions and to serve as full partners in health care redesign and improvement efforts and policy making process. Attracting and producing well educated and well prepared nurses in different care setting include primary, ambulatory, palliative and community health care nurses in future.

## **4. Recommendations**

As per PNC declaration BSN will be compulsory for bed side practice. Therefore, producing BSN with quality of education is need of the time.

There should be a nurse parliamentarian so he or she will communicate regarding the importance of nursing education in future.

In national health task force nurse members must show their leadership skills to influence while developing policies for future.

More researches and publication in nursing journals will provide evidence to manage upcoming challenges in nursing profession.

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