

## Creating Healthy Work Environments 2019

### Nurse Educators' Perspectives on Challenges and Strategies of Nursing Education and Practice, Guyana and India

**Tabitha Mallampati, MNEd**

*Department of Public Health, University of Guyana, Georgetown, Guyana*

**Background:** Nursing is a dynamic profession that continues to evolve. Professional nurses of today are required to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet the dynamic needs of patients, families and changing health care modalities. Some of the factors that are significantly influencing nursing profession today are globalization, technology explosion, changing economy, shortage of nurses, advancements in health care services, growing population of the elderly, increased burden of chronic diseases.

**Objectives:** To investigate the perceptions of nurse educators' regarding the trends, challenges and strategies of Nursing education and nursing practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in Guyana and in India.

**Methods:** The study used a qualitative approach. A convenient and purposive sample of 15 Nurse educators including 8 from Guyana and 7 from India were recruited. Prior to the study all the human subjects-related documents and procedures were approved by the appropriate IRB in Guyana and India. Participants were given the information about the purpose and methodology of the study. Each Interview lasted between 30 and 45 minutes and was audiotaped. Audiotapes were subsequently transcribed verbatim. Interview data was analyzed using a computer software program known as, R Computer Qualitative Data Analysis (RQDA). The data was analysed using grounded theory analysis by doing inductive thematic content analysis.

The study used inductive method in developing a set of codes as well as a deductive approach in organizing framework for the codes. The inductive method provided opportunity for comprehensive code structure which promoted the quality of subsequent analysis.

**Results:** The data successfully developed themes and identified unique challenges limiting quality Nursing education and practice in Guyana and India.

**Guyana:** The main themes developed under the challenges in Guyana were need for human and material resources, professional developmental opportunities and curricular issues.

Specific challenges that data successfully identified were lack of qualified and adequate nursing faculty, large classes, lack of access to online learning resources and current textbooks, lack of equipment in the Skills lab and Hospital settings. Further issues identified were inadequate number of advanced prepared nurses to review curricula in the nursing programmes. Nurses are not being prepared for the Regional Examination for Nurses Registration. There is critical need for Diploma nursing programmes to be upgraded to Bachelor's degree programme. Consistent opportunities for the faculty development at Master's and PhD level is critical.

Themes identified to address these challenges were, adequate supply of human and material resources, ongoing curricular reviews, student welfare services, collaboration with the regional and international training institutions, professional development opportunities.

**India:** Themes that were developed regarding the challenges of Nursing education and practice in India were lack of professional image, unemployment and poor salaries, lack of scope, lack of autonomy and advocacy, limited opportunities for leadership roles at the policy making level, inadequate clinical experiences, need for in service education and maintaining professional standards.

The data has identified themes to address these challenges were improving the professional standards and the image of nursing profession, fostering in service education, providing adequate clinical experiences, teamwork and collaboration among health care professionals, improved salaries.

The researcher further made recommendations that the governments of Guyana and India to immediately set realistic budgets and strategic five-year plans to achieve these goals. The Government of Guyana must without delay reduce the “push” factors in nursing emigration, especially salaries. The Government of Guyana should embark of a strategic plan to have all nursing education accredited on a par with the rest of the Caribbean by the year 2020. Ministry of Public Health, University of Guyana and the Ministry of Education and NGO’s should collaborate to foster standards in nursing education and practice in Guyana. Regional and international Nursing organizations should actively support the sharing of nurse educators with less developed countries, including sponsoring sabbaticals in Guyana and offering online accredited and degree programmes.

**Conclusion:** The findings supported that quality education is the key prerequisite for quality nursing workforce. There is an urgent need for investing on human and material resources and fostering professional standards. Consistent, sustainable, innovative and collaborative approaches should be adapted to meet the challenges of Nursing of education and practice in Guyana and India.

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**Title:**

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**Abstract Summary:**

Quality Nursing Education is the key prerequisite for Quality Nursing Workforce. There is an urgent need for investing on Human and Material resources and maintaining the Professional Standards in Guyana and India. Sustainable, innovative and collaborative approaches should be adapted to meet the challenges of Nursing Education and Practice.

**Content Outline:**

Nursing is a dynamic profession that continues to evolve. Profound changes in the health care systems have made significant impacts on nursing education and practice today. Professional nurses should be consistently equipped with cutting edge knowledge, skills and fluid to changes occurring in health care systems. Studies have proven that the application of knowledge in clinical settings calls for skillfulness, sensitivity and creativity in nurses. Nursing is a practice and learning discipline. Nurses spend direct and longest hours in providing care to patients and their families. Consequently, nursing professionals need to achieve a higher level of knowledge and training to meet the dynamic needs of patient care and health care systems. According to research studies, factors such as globalization, technology explosion, changing economies, advancements in health care services, migration of nurses, growing population of the elderly and an increased burden of chronic diseases are significantly influencing nursing profession in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Benner, 2010).

A convenient and purposive sample of 15 participants, including 8 participants from Guyana and 7 participants from India participated in the interviews. The participants were either present or past Principal tutors of a Professional or BSc nursing program.

Nurses supported the findings in the literature that they were working in an environment which was challenging and not motivating due to inadequate resources and on changing global trends. The major concern expressed by the participants were lack of adequate and qualified faculty, lack of teaching and learning resources, lack of equipment needed for using technology, lack of conducive environment and periodic curricular reviews. This study supported that the government policies, regulatory frameworks and funding models that foster collaboration were essential in meeting the growing demands of nursing profession in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

First Primary Presenting Author

***Primary Presenting Author***

Tabitha Mallampati, MNEd

University of Guyana  
Department of Public Health  
Lecturer  
Turkeyen, East Coast of Demerara, Georgetown, Guyana  
Georgetown  
Guyana

**Professional Experience:** 2009 to present: Lecturer, Department of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Guyana. Taught several nursing courses, facilitated research projects of nursing students of masters and bachelor's degree. Functioned as Nursing Coordinator for the BSc Nursing

Programme. for three years during which I coordinated a Curriculum Committee and played a key role in upgrading the BSc (Post-RN) Nursing Curriculum to the Regional BSc (Post-RN) Nursing Curriculum. Presented research papers on Diabetes and Nursing Education at the Regional and International Nursing Research Conferences. 2003 to 2009: Functioned as Nurse Educator and the Director of School of Nursing, at the Saint Joseph Mercy Hospital, Guyana. Responsibilities included teaching and administration of the School of Nursing. 1996 to 2002: Functioned as a Nurse Educator in Nursing Schools as well as a Nurse Manager, Maternity Hospital, India. Taught nursing courses and supervised nursing students in wide range of Clinical Settings.

**Author Summary:** Her journey as a Nurse Educator began in 1996 in India, as a graduate of Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing. In 2003, She came to Guyana to offer her professional services. She was a graduate of Master's degree in Nursing Education from the University of Joseph College, Connecticut, USA, in 2010. She is an active Nurse Researcher, Nurse Educator and Nurse Administrator.