

# Students' Learning Experience of Using the Partograph in Labour Ward in Uganda: An Interview Study

Fortunate Atwine

Mbarara University of science & Technology, Uganda

## Abstract

**Background:** The use of partograph is a well-known best practice for care of labour. This strategy has demonstrated reduction of maternal, foetal morbidity and mortality in low-resourced settings. Unfortunately, students' learning experience on partograph use to manage labour is unnoticed.

**Aim:** To explore students learning experience on partograph use to manage labour on maternity ward during clinical placement in Uganda.

**Methods:** A phenomenographic study was conducted in 2019 using semi-structured individual interviews with a purposeful sample of nursing and medical students. Data were audio recorded transcribed verbatim and analysed using the principle of phenomenography and the descriptive categories and how they are related (outcome space) provided an understanding of the students, learning experience.

**Results:** 10 medical and nursing students participated in the study. It was discovered that before a student becomes expert, five stages must be experienced. These include being novice, to advanced beginner, competent, and proficient. Three descriptive categories illustrating the learning experience were explored as: Patterns of learning to generate competencies being supported by students wanting to work with senior members, wishing to be shown how to do it, yearning to have continuous medical/nursing education and longing to have guidelines on the ward. Self-determination was discovered to be reciprocal to positive attitudes towards learning and learning hinges on self-driven foundation. However, learning is negatively affected by work over load of senior staff on the ward and lack of teaching material.

**Conclusions:** Support supervision of students by the post graduate students in Obstetrics and Gynaecology on maternity ward was highly appreciated by all the students. Students felt somehow dissatisfied as work load of staff on the ward and inadequate equipment undermined clinical teaching. Trained clinical preceptors are highly recommended to provide necessary support for students during placement.

**Key words:** Competence, Knowledge, Learning experience, Partograph, skills