

# Problem-Based Learning Strategy Used In Obstetric And Gynecological Nursing Course From Nursing Students' Perspectives

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**Abstract:** *Problem- Based Learning strategy (PBL) is one of the innovative teaching strategies that are used in undergraduate nursing education to help students learn how to apply knowledge effectively in a variety of clinical situations. PBL is considered as a convenient teaching and learning method for obstetric and gynecological nursing students. It also relates to its clinical practice to deal with and solve women's problems. Purpose: This study aimed to explore nursing students' perspectives about problem-based learning strategy used in Obstetric and Gynecological Nursing course. Design: descriptive exploratory research design was used in this study. Setting: This study was conducted at two scientific nursing departments at the Faculty of Nursing, Alexandria University namely, Obstetric and Gynecological Nursing Department and Pediatric Nursing Department. Subjects: The total number of students was 495 students. Tools: One tool was used for data collection: Nursing Students' Problem-Based Learning Strategy Perspective Questionnaire. Results: this study revealed that nearly more than three quarters of the students have a positive perspective toward PBL strategy. Conclusion: problem-based learning strategy is a valuable teaching method helped in achieving students' satisfaction regarding improving their learning skills. Recommendation: Problem-based learning strategy should be considered as a significant teaching method to be applied in different courses at the Faculty of Nursing. Moreover, Training workshops should be conducted to all nursing educators to enhance their abilities and competencies in the use of PBL strategy.*

**Keywords:** *Problem-based learning, Obstetric and Gynecological Nursing, students' perspective, nursing education.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Problem-based learning (PBL) is an active learning teaching method in which, complicated real-life problems are used as a vehicle to build up students' acquisition of concepts and principles. This is opposed to the passive, spoon-feeding learning based on teacher-designed instructional lectures common of the traditional curriculum. Originally, PBL was arranged in an attempt to develop a teaching-learning method for use in medical education. Then, PBL has spread to be used in many disciplines such as; nursing, medical, dental, pharmacy, pediatric, physical diagnostics, and even engineering. Also PBL has been applied at different levels of education, undergraduate and graduate education, (Liu, Du, Zhang & Zhou, 2019).

PBL is an approach of education in which learning is centered on issues or problems as contradicted to distinct, subject-related courses. In little groups, learners are displayed with patient scenarios or issues, produce learning issues related to what they ought to learn to understand the issue, lock-in free self-study, and return back to their groups for applying the new knowledge to the patient's issue, (Bradshaw, Lowenstein, 2014). PBL enhances the skills of active participation, problem-solving, and critical thinking. It inspires students to figure out their prior knowledge and skills and apply them to new situations or to utilize them to achieve specific goals by integrating prior knowledge or principles which makes PBL different from other student-centered approaches, such as inquiry-based, project-based, and case-based learning, (Yaqinuddin, 2013).

PBL activities exhibit real activities and give authentic-world, case-based learning context. These activities demand learners to apply modern information to recognize and resolve an issue. Through the process of wondering, learners can develop skills of critical thinking. PBL gives nursing students the chance to reflect upon and broaden their learning. Problem-based exercises not only assist in building a sense of connection among learners in nursing education, they also foster student involvement in real-life learning activities, (Callahan, 2018).

PBL can be used to enhance professional learning, get students ready for the practice of the real work-field, and encourage contextualizing touchable scenarios that represent reality and deeply related to practice. Overall, PBL has many advantages. It can help students to build competency in many aspects of practice such as professionalism in working, collaborative and teamwork, and interpersonal skills. This develops through the dynamics of group work, which is considered one of the fundamentals of the PBL strategy. Other crucial areas that are promoted by PBL are the enhancement of deeper-level of problem solving, critical thinking and decision making skills, (Mannix & McIntosh, 2018).

Defenders of problem-based learning have described its feature as follows: The use of original and relevant ill-structured problems as a starting point of the learning process, discussion within small groups who work collaboratively, learning centered on students, the facilitation role of the teacher who guides the students to search information and gain understanding instead of providing the information, and students' reflection on their learning during and at the end of the classes, (Barrows, 1996), (Hmelo-Silver, 2004), (Savery, 2006).

Obstetric and Gynecological nursing is a healthcare specialty that concentrates on taking care of the woman and newborn. For that reason, Obstetric and Gynecological nurses should be highly knowledgeable and well trained for the overall safety and well-being of women from the moment of menarche to menopause. It is known that Obstetric and Gynecological nurses have a lot of roles to fill and they are the major contributors to the health care system. So that, using an innovative teaching strategy as problem-based learning should be considered by Obstetric and Gynecological Nursing Department. This can aid in preparing graduate competent nurses who are able to address the unique needs of the woman, (Belal, Gaheen, & Mohamed, 2016).

Therefore, studying the students' perspective about PBL is of crucial importance, because it directly influences their learning and thus the quality of learning. Students' perspectives of a learning environment as well as their preferable manner of learning direct their study behavior and how effective the learning environment will be. So that, students' perspective should have a more salient position in the educational design processes than it currently has, (Konings, 2007).

Beyond the education in nursing specialty that is ensured through its programs, students need more recognition for their point of view of their knowledge and self-awareness, their personal, social, cultural-axiological and even spiritual development. This can aid in gaining a high level of students' satisfaction that their opinions are not being

ignored as well as adapting their learning environment in order to fit the different needs of students, (Moraru, 2014).

### *1.1 Aim of the study*

This study aimed to explore nursing students' perspectives about problem-based learning strategy used in Obstetric and Gynecological Nursing course.

### *1.2 Research question*

What are the perspectives of nursing students about problem-based learning strategy used in Obstetric and Gynecological Nursing Course?

## **2. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

### *2.1 Research design:*

Descriptive exploratory research design was used in this study.

### *2.2 Setting & subjects*

This study was conducted at two scientific nursing departments at the Faculty of Nursing, Alexandria University namely, Obstetric and Gynecological Nursing Department and Pediatric Nursing Department. These two departments were selected in order to cover all students enrolled in obstetric and gynecological nursing course during the academic year 2018-2019. The total number of students was 495 students after excluding 45 students for the pilot study remaining 450 students, 224 students from pediatric nursing department and 226 students from obstetric and gynecological nursing department.

### *2.3 Study tool*

One tool was used for data collection

**Nursing Students' Problem-Based Learning Strategy Perspective Questionnaire:** It is a self-administered structured questionnaire which was adapted and modified by Othman and Shalaby (2014) based on instruments used by Al-Naggar & Bobryshev, (2012), Usmani, Sultan, Ali, Fatima, & Babar, (2011), Hagi & Al-Shawwa, (2011), Saalu, Abraham, & Aina, (2010), Yuan, (2007), and was modified by the researcher after thorough review of related literature to explore nursing students' perspectives regarding the use of PBL strategy, Cerezo, (2000), Hollingshed, (2005), & Shehata, (2014).

**2.3.1 Part I:** Nursing students' personal and academic data: This part includes 4 items about nursing students' personal and academic data which are: age, gender, academic semester, and last GPA.

**2.3.2 Part II:** Nursing students' perspectives about PBL experience: This part includes 4 questions related to PBL experience which are; did you receive adequate training for using PBL strategy, did you receive constructive feedback about student's own performance, was PBL an enjoyable strategy, and did you satisfied with your performance?

**2.3.3 Part III:** Nursing students' perspectives about their benefits of using PBL strategy: This part includes 32 items which divided into 5 categories/domains to explore nursing students' perspectives about the benefits they have achieved after using PBL strategy. These domains include: construction of professional knowledge (4) items, development of problem-solving skills (5) items, development of self-directed learning (11) items, enhancement of motivation (4) items, and promotion of effective group collaboration (8) items.

**2.3.4 Part IV:** Students' perspective about PBL sessions: This part includes (15) items related to exploring nursing students' perspective regarding running of PBL. It was measured on 4-point-Likert scale and the degree of agreement ranged from: never (1), sometimes (3), mostly (2), and always (4).

2.3.5 *Part V: Barriers of using problem-based learning strategy:* This part includes (12) items related to exploring nursing students' perspective regarding barriers of using problem-based learning strategy. The barriers were measured on 4-point-Likert scale and the degree of agreement ranged from: never (1), sometimes (3), mostly (2), and always (4). This part includes a question related to whether or not they faced any other barriers and if there, the student will mention them. Another open ended question related to their suggestions to overcome these barriers.

#### 2.4 *Ethical considerations:*

Written approval from ethical committee of the Faculty of Nursing, Alexandria University, Egypt, was taken. Written informed consents, as documents of nursing student's voluntary participation before filling the study tools, were prepared and given to the nursing students. The informed consents involved the purpose of the study and all participants' rights. It entailed instructions to participants or withdraw at any time with no penalties in their evaluation grading. With their signed consent, they filled the study instrument in the attendance of the researchers to explain any vague items in the study tool. Anonymity was established by instructing the students to avoid writing their names on the study tool.

#### 2.5 *Methods:*

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the ethical committee, dean of the Faculty of Nursing, Alexandria University, the head of Pediatric Nursing department, the head of Obstetric and Gynecological Nursing department. The standardized tool was modified by the researcher after extensive review of the related literature. The tool was tested for its content validity by 7 experts in the related fields of nursing education and obstetric and gynecological nursing then, the necessary modifications were done. The tool was tested for reliability by using Cronbach's Alpha test. The tool was reliable and coefficient values for the tool parts (PBL Experience, PBL Benefits, sessions, and barriers) were (0.700, 0.949, 0.909, 0.926) respectively. A pilot study was carried out on forty five nursing students to test the clarity and applicability of the tool and they were excluded from the sample. Accordingly, some words in the tool were translated into Arabic. The study tool was copied and distributed among the students in their clinical placement. The data collection was done from February to May 2019.

#### 2.6 *Statistical analysis:*

Data were fed to the computer and analyzed using IBM SPSS software package version 20.0. (Armonk, NY: IBM Corp). Qualitative data were described using number and percent. Quantitative data were described using range (minimum and maximum), mean, and standard deviation. Significance of the obtained results was judged at the 5% level. The used test was *Chi-square test* for categorical variables.

### 3. RESULTS

Table (1) shows distribution of nursing students according to their personal and academic characteristics. It was found that the mean age of nursing students was  $(21.52 \pm 1.22)$ . Regarding the sex, it can be observed that more than two thirds of nursing students were females (70.9%), while, the male nursing students represented only less than on third of them (29.1%). As regards the academic semester, it can be found that nearly less than half of the nursing students were in fifth semester (pediatric), while nearly more than half were in sixth semester (obstetric). In relation to last GPA, it can be noticed that nearly more than half (52.4%) of nursing students were (very good), while one quarter (24.9%) of them were (good) as last GPA.

Table (1): Distribution of the nursing students according to personal and academic characteristics:

Students' characteristics	Total N=450	
	No	%
<b>Age (years)</b>		
• 20-	267	59.3
• 22-	142	31.6
• 24+	41	9.1
Min – Max	20.0 – 27.0	Mean ± SD
		21.52±1.22
<b>Sex</b>		
• Male	131	29.1
• Female	319	70.9
<b>Academic semester</b>		
• 5 <sup>th</sup> (pediatric)	224	49.8
• 6 <sup>th</sup> (obstetric)	226	44.4
<b>GPA in last semester</b>		
• Excellent (A, A-, B+)	84	18.9
• Very good (B, B-	236	52.4
• Good (C+, C)	112	24.9
• Acceptable/ fair (C-)	12	2.7
• Failed (D+, D, F)	6	1.3

Table (2) shows distribution of nursing students according to their perspectives about PBL experience. It can be found that more than two thirds (70.4%) of them received adequate explanation about PBL sessions at the beginning of it and nearly less than two thirds (65.6%) received feedback about their performance, while less than two thirds (62.4%) of them were satisfied with their performance and more than half (55.1%) of them enjoyed PBL as a learning strategy.

Table (2): Distribution of the nursing students according to perspectives about PBL experience:

Items	Total N=450	
	No	%
<b>Receive adequate explanation about PBL sessions at the beginning of it</b>		
• Yes	317	70.4
• No	133	29.6
<b>Receive feedback about performance in PBL</b>		
• Yes	295	65.6
• No	155	34.4
<b>Enjoy PBL as a learning strategy</b>		

• Yes	248	55.1
• No	202	44.9
<b>Satisfaction about performance in PBL</b>		
• Yes	281	62.4
• No	169	37.6

Table (3) shows distribution of the nursing students according to their total perspectives about benefits of using PBL strategy. It is obvious that more than three quarters (82%) of the students have a high perspective toward benefits of PBL strategy. In relation to development of problem solving skills, it is noticed that most (88.9%) of the students have a high perspective toward it while nearly three quarters (74.9%) of them have a high perspective toward enhancement of motivation.

Table (3): Distribution of the nursing students according to their total of perspectives about benefits of using PBL strategy:

Items	Total perspectives about benefits of PBL			
	Negative		Positive	
	No	%	No	%
• Construction of professional knowledge	59	13.1	391	86.9
• Development of problems-solving skills	50	11.1	400	88.9
• Development of self-directed learning	93	20.7	357	79.3
• Enhancement of motivation	113	25.1	337	74.9
• Promotion of effective group collaboration	67	14.9	383	85.1
<b>Total perspectives of PBL benefits levels</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>82.0</b>

Table (4) reveals distribution of the nursing students according to their total and mean score of perspectives about preparation and conduction of PBL session. It is obvious that nearly more than half (52.9%) of the students have positive perspectives toward the preparation and conduction of PBL session and the mean score ranging from 15-60 with a mean of 37.38.

Table (4): Distribution of the nursing students according to their total and mean score of perspectives about preparation and conduction of PBL session:

Items	Total perspectives about preparation and conduction of PBL session			
	Negative		Positive	
	No	%	No	%
• <b>Total perspectives of preparation and conduction of PBL session</b>	212	47.1	238	52.9
	Mean scores			
	Min- Max		Mean $\pm$ SD	
• <b>Total perspectives of PBL session mean score</b>	15-60		37.38 $\pm$ 9.437	

Table (5) shows distribution of the nursing students according to their perspectives about barriers of PBL strategy. It is obvious that less than half of the students stated that sometimes there were lack of information about PBL, lack of commitment to their roles, difficulties in information search, difficulties to catch key points, conflict within students group, and difficulty in understanding the problem (48.4%, 43.3%, 43.8%, 40.7%, 43.1% & 48.7%) respectively. While, more than one third of the students reported that sometimes there were

lack of direction of team leader, heavy work load, lack of motivation strategies, lack of facilities, time consumption, and stressful presentation climate ( 39.1%, 32.95, 36.7%, 35.1%, 32.7% & 38.4%) respectively.

Table (5): Distribution of the studied nursing students according to their perspectives about barriers of PBL strategy (by statements):

Barriers of PBL strategy	(n = 450)							
	Never		Sometimes		Mostly		Always	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Lack of information about PBL and its technique.	100	22.2	218	48.4	83	18.4	49	10.9
Lack of commitment of students to their roles	93	20.7	195	43.3	111	24.7	51	11.3
Lack of direction of group team leader.	109	24.2	176	39.1	95	21.1	70	15.6
Difficulties in information search	71	15.8	197	43.8	103	22.9	79	17.6
Heavy work load	54	12.0	148	32.9	120	26.7	128	28.4
Lack of motivation strategies	79	17.6	165	36.7	118	26.2	88	19.6
Lack of facilities such as; computer labs, data shows, references.	87	19.3	158	35.1	114	25.3	101	22.2
Time consumption	75	16.7	147	32.7	119	26.4	109	24.2
Difficulties to catch the key points	80	17.8	183	40.7	117	26.0	70	15.6
Presentation climate was stressful	70	15.6	173	38.4	118	26.2	89	19.8
Conflict within student's group	75	16.7	194	43.1	106	23.6	75	16.7
Difficulty in understanding the problem	78	17.3	219	48.7	96	21.3	57	12.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>40.2</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>17.8</b>

Table (6) shows distribution of the nursing students according to their total and mean score of overall perspectives about PBL strategy. It can be observed that nearly more than three quarters (77.6%) of the students have a positive perspective toward PBL strategy and the overall perspectives of PBL mean score ranges from 86-226 with a mean of 159.92 and the percentage score is 67.76%.

Table (6): Distribution of the nursing students according to their total and mean score of overall perspectives about PBL strategy:

Items	Overall Perspectives of PBL			
	Negative		Positive	
	No	%	No	%
• Overall perspectives of PBL	101	22.4	349	77.6
	<b>Mean scores</b>			
	<b>Min- Max</b>		<b>Mean ± SD</b>	
	86-226		159.92 ± 20.155	
• Overall perspectives of PBL mean score	<b>Mean Percent Score</b>			
	36%- 96%		67.76%	

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Problem-based learning is the process of learning that results from working toward the understanding and resolution of an issue or a problem. The essence value of PBL is to use a contextualized problem to attract learners to actively explore relevant knowledge using all possible resources. PBL is intended to prepare students with hands-on experiences to assist in meeting their future accountabilities and maintain a lifelong knowledge-seeking practice which is self-directed learning, (Zhang, 2014).

In the current study, the students' perspective toward the PBL strategy was investigated. Overall students' perspective toward the problem based learning strategy was positive among more than three quarters of the study subjects. The reason for this was thought to be the students centered approach followed in PBL strategy and the students' feeling of independence and their active involvement in the learning process. This result was in congruence with the study of Wakode (2016) who founded that student's perception towards PBL was favorable and they were ready to adapt this method of learning. Additionally, Wyness & Dalton, (2018) reported that the feedback from the interviews and surveys revealed that most students had liked the module and could appreciate the value of the PBL process for getting them to learn independently.

Concerning the findings related to students' perspectives about PBL experience, the present study revealed that the students received adequate explanation about PBL sessions at the beginning of it. It is very necessary for the students to be prepared for PBL sessions with sufficient knowledge about its technique. This can give them the chance to feel familiar with this new strategy as well as to be confident in their performance. This result is congruent with the result of Wakode (2016) about perception on PBL sessions in which students agreed that before PBL session orientation is given by faculty. But, the study of Al-Drees, Khalil, & Irshad, (2015) on students' perception towards the PBL tutorial session disagreed with this result as the students reported lack of proper orientation and training before starting the PBL sessions.

Regarding feedback received about students' performance, it is crucial to realize that feedback should be provided continuously for the students about their performance. This can be considered a source of motivation that helps students to go on in the strategy with confidence. The study at hand has shown that the students received feedback about their performance. Recently, the result of Asad, Tadvi, Amir, Afzal, Irfan, & Hussain, (2019) supports this finding as they reported that effective feedback from peers and tutors during the session was facilitated.

In relation to students' enjoyment, students in the current study enjoyed PBL as a learning strategy. Of course, this is the first time for the students to engage in independent study and to take control over their own learning. This new experience gave them a source of enjoyment as the PBL method of learning is clearly more fun and fuller of engaging activities. This result is in harmony with Wakode (2016) who reported that the students enjoyed PBL sessions as compared to didactic lectures.

Regarding student's satisfaction about their performance, the current study revealed that the students in the present study were satisfied regarding their performance in PBL. This result is matching the result of Mejías, Prieto, Ruiz, Porcel, Moleón & Claret, (2015) who concluded that students' satisfaction and academic performance were significantly better in the PBL group than in the traditional-learning group.

Spotting light on the findings related to the perspective of nursing students toward the benefits of using problem based learning strategy; the study at hand has shown that the majority of nursing students have a high perspective toward construction of professional knowledge. It helps them to use previous relevant knowledge and experience and enhances



their understanding of obstetric and gynecological nursing knowledge. From the researcher perspective, this valuable benefit resulted from complexity which characterizes the PBL scenario. Students' are required to integrate previously learned concepts in order to solve the problem whether in the same course or other courses. This result is congruent with the study of Al-Naja, Khali, Baka, & Abdul Aziz, (2019) which showed significant scores in the construction of professional knowledge. These results are in conjunction with the study of Asad, et.al, (2019) on medical students' feedback towards PBL and interactive lectures which revealed the importance of PBL in integrating the basic medical sciences disciplines such as anatomy, physiology, pathology, and biochemistry.

Concerning the development of problem solving skills, students in PBL can learn many concepts and facts and discover the remaining facts in order to solve the problem. Learning the disease in a form of a problem can prepare nursing students for many situations that might face them in the real health care facility. The present study revealed that the majority of nursing students have a high perspective that PBL improved their problem-solving skills as it helped them to define problem clearly and correlate theoretical knowledge to obstetric and gynecological nursing practice.

Studies were conducted by Jackson, (2016), and the study of Al-Naja et.al, (2019) on nursing students showed a positive correlation between students taught with PBL and an increase in critical-thinking and problem-solving ability. Also, the students of Abdalla, (2016) in his study on the effect of problem-based learning on nursing students' decision making skills and styles have mentioned that PBL helped them to develop problem-solving skills. However, the result of Choi, Lindquist, & Song, (2014) study on Korean students showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the PBL and traditional groups in relation to problem-solving.

In the light of development of self-directed learning, the participants of the current study had a high feeling of self-directedness as the PBL strategy helped them to discover their abilities in making decisions, address and reflect their learning styles, plan their own work, and think independently. This is congruent with the study of Asad, et.al, (2019) who proved the significance of PBL over interactive lecture in facilitating self-directed learning. Another recent meta-analysis of by Liu, Du, Zhang, & Zhou, (2019) on the effect of problem-based learning in pharmacology education has shown that the PBL method is superior to the conventional teaching methods in improving the students' self-study.

Regarding the enhancement of motivation, it is an integral part in PBL as the strategy places the responsibility for learning on the students giving them feeling of control over their own learning hence increasing their intrinsic motivation to learn and to search for knowledge. The findings of the present study demonstrated that the students had a high perspective toward enhancement of motivation as it increased their interest in learning and helped them to be active learners. This result is in agreement with the D'Sa, (2017) who studied the effect of PBL on motivation of on Indian nursing students who were motivated for learning with the application of PBL strategy in comparison with the traditionally taught group. Recently, the result of Al-Naja et.al, (2019) also showed significant scores in the motivation among the PBL group of students.

Concerning the promotion of effective group collaboration, the present study reported that the majority of nursing students have a high perspective toward it as it helped them to listen attentively to other students in group, open to and accept the ideas of others, and react positively to feedback from peers. In nursing specialty, it is important to consider that the health care team is important and emphasize patient care. Students need to learn how to act as a part of a team. Learning how to share ideas and bringing teams together for the best possible solution is how PBL works. This exact approach was encouraged among the participants of the present study which resulted in this positive outcome.

This result is in agreement with the study of Othman and Shalaby, (2014) which had shown that PBL developed students' group collaboration skills. Also, the students of Abdalla, (2016) mentioned that PBL helped them to develop spirit of teamwork. Recently, a meta-analysis of Liu et.al, (2019) has shown that the PBL methods are superior to the conventional teaching methods in improving the students' team spirit. The result of Al-Naja et.al, (2019) also showed significant scores regarding the promotion of effective group collaboration.

As regards to nursing students' perspectives about preparation and conduction of PBL sessions, the effectiveness of problem-based learning depends -to a great extent- on the quality and running of the sessions which considered the heart of the strategy, the present study revealed that more than half of the students had a positive perspective toward it as timely constructive feedback was provided, PBL groups were fairly designed, the students' participation was encouraged, subject knowledge was acquired, and clear criteria for students' evaluation was present. From the researcher perspective, it was apparent that the students of the current study were extremely excited and enthusiastic during the sessions. Also, the instructors were providing adequate support and directions for the students.

This is in harmony with Al-Drees, et.al, (2015) whom students reported that the PBL sessions promote and enhance their knowledge, enthusiasm and motivation. They also reported that the sessions contribute to the development of interpersonal, communication, and presentation skills. In the study of Wakode, (2016), students agreed that tasks among small groups were well distributed & discussions helped them to understand topic clearly. These findings are in a great agreement with Wahab (2017) who proved in his study on medical Malaysian students that PBL sessions were effective in achieving learning objectives.

Spotting light on the barriers of PBL strategy, PBL method is an encouraging & readily accepted strategy by nursing students. But, still in eastern countries like ours this method is not materialized. The apparent reasons for this is lack of full time teachers trained as experts, lack of specially prepared rooms, lack of well-fed libraries or due to lack of financial supports. In addition, it is the first time for the students to be engaged in an innovative strategy as PBL and being faced with additional learning effort rather than being taught by spoon feeding approaches can result in some difficulties and challenges. The study at hand revealed certain barriers such as; heavy work load, time consumption, and lack of commitment of students to their roles. These findings are in agreement with Wakode, (2016) whose students faced difficulty in problem identification, problem solving activity was time consuming as a result they had difficulty in completing the task on time.

From the currently mentioned barriers is the lack of facilities such as; computer labs, data shows. It is an important challenge to be taken into account especially in our educational setting in which these resources are limited. The participants of the present study also mentioned unfairness in grading as the emphasis on group work resulted in poor grade discrimination. This finding is matching with the result of Nasr & Wilby, (2017) who reported challenges related to assessment that were identified included the high number of assessments for students and focusing on group work.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Problem-based learning strategy is a valuable teaching method helped in achieving students' satisfaction regarding improving their skills such as the ability to: construct professional knowledge, solve problems, collaborate within a group, being self-directed learner, being intrinsically motivated to learn. The overall students' perspective toward the problem based learning strategy was positive. The results provide evidence to support the integration of PBL as an effective teaching strategy in undergraduate obstetric and gynecological nursing practice. Thus, it was recommended that training workshops should be conducted to all

nursing educators to enhance their abilities and competencies in the use of PBL strategy. Creating supportive, motivating, well prepared environment considered the most important preparations to PBL implementation. Studies to determine the effect of PBL strategy on other variables as; academic achievement, critical thinking, and self-esteem.

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