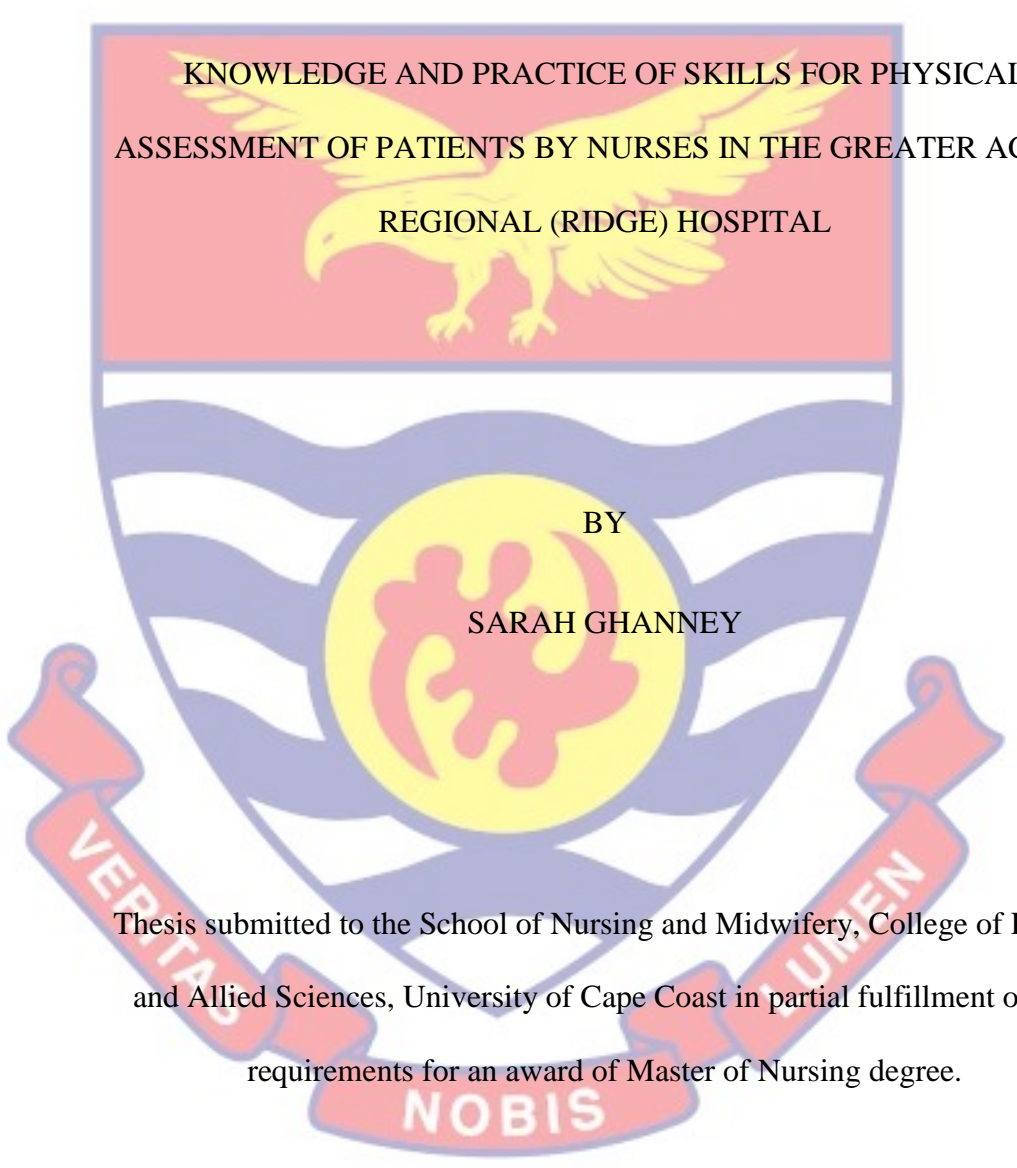


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF SKILLS FOR PHYSICAL
ASSESSMENT OF PATIENTS BY NURSES IN THE GREATER ACCRA
REGIONAL (RIDGE) HOSPITAL

BY

SARAH GHANNEY

Thesis submitted to the School of Nursing and Midwifery, College of Health
and Allied Sciences, University of Cape Coast in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for an award of Master of Nursing degree.

JULY, 2016

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Name:

Signature: Date:

Supervisors' Declaration

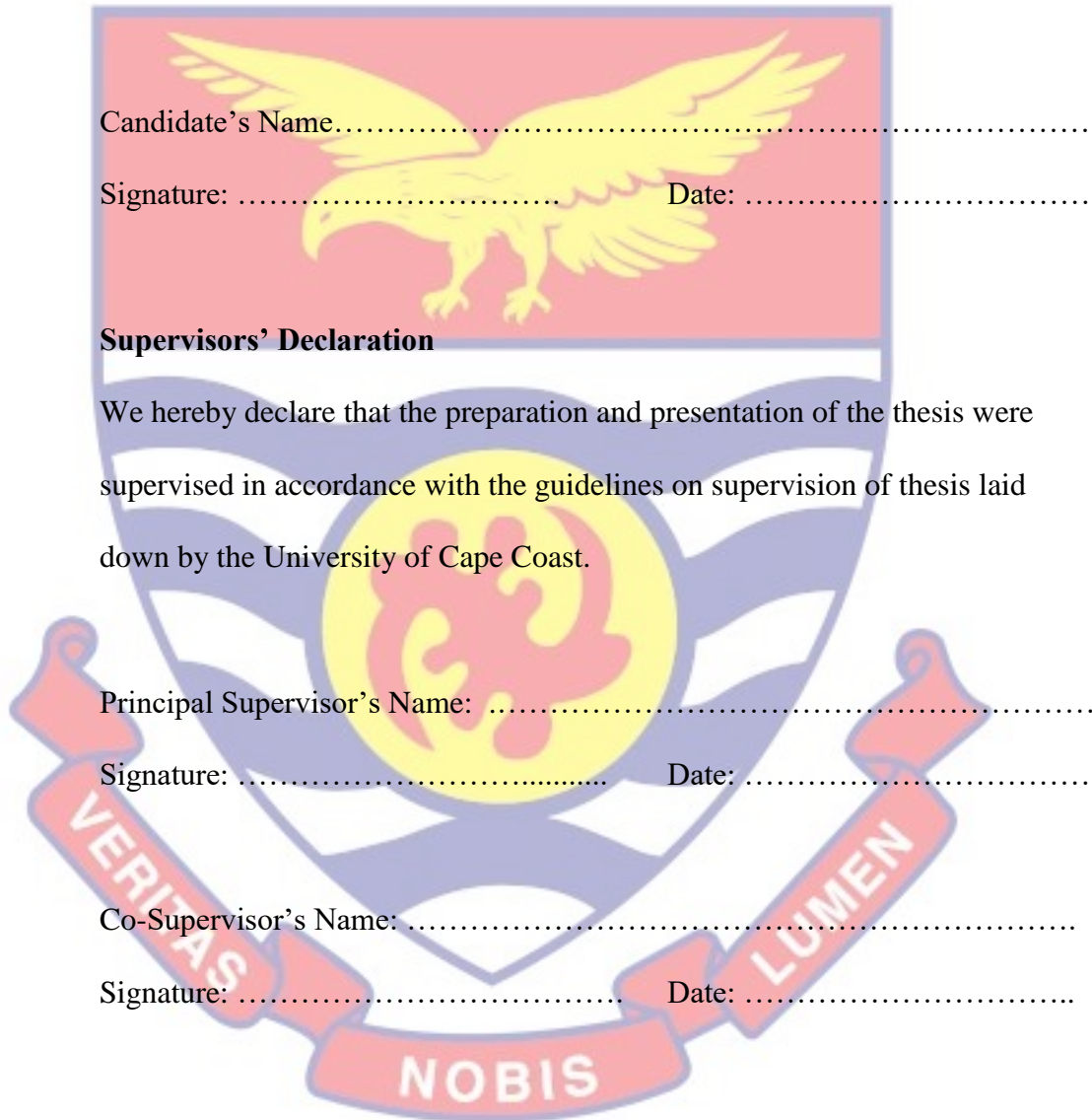
We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Name:

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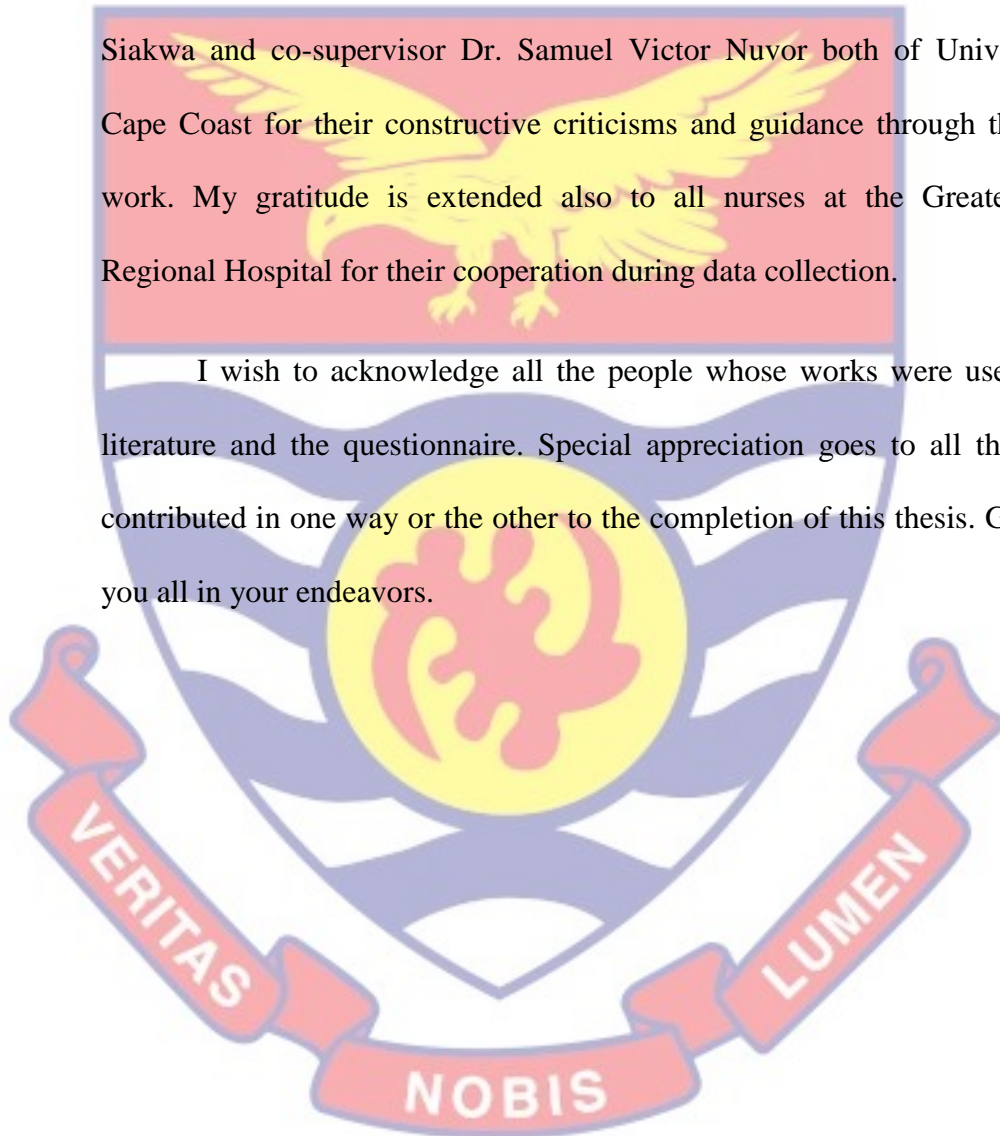
ABSTRACT

Physical assessment is fundamental to the nursing process which forms an integral part of nursing practice and a standard of professional practice. This research aimed at determining level of knowledge and practice of physical assessment skills among nurses at the Greater Accra Regional (Ridge) Hospital. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was employed. A sample size of 262 nurses/midwives was used for the study. The study employed census as the sampling method. A self-administered structured questionnaire was used for data collection on level of knowledge, practice and barriers of physical assessment. Data was analysed using SPSS version 22. The findings revealed that nurses at Ridge Hospital have good knowledge on physical assessment, however their knowledge does not translate into practice. Physical assessment skills was good for observation, satisfactory for palpation and percussion but poor for auscultation. Lack of confidence, inadequate time and interruptions, specialty area, lack of resources, and lack of ward culture were perceived as barriers while reliance on others/technology, and lack of nursing role model were not perceived as barriers. There was an association between educational qualification and level of knowledge, $p < 0.001$. However, there was no significant difference between ranks and practices, $[F = 1.655, P > .05]$. Despite having high knowledge on physical assessment, practice was poor among the nurses. It was recommended that the Ministry of Health and the training institutions should emphasize on physical assessment in the curriculum. Ghana Health Service and health service institutions should organize in-service training for their staff to enhance their physical assessment practices for quality care.

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I wish to acknowledge all the people whose works were used in the literature and the questionnaire. Special appreciation goes to all those who contributed in one way or the other to the completion of this thesis. God bless you all in your endeavors.



DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my loving husband and children.

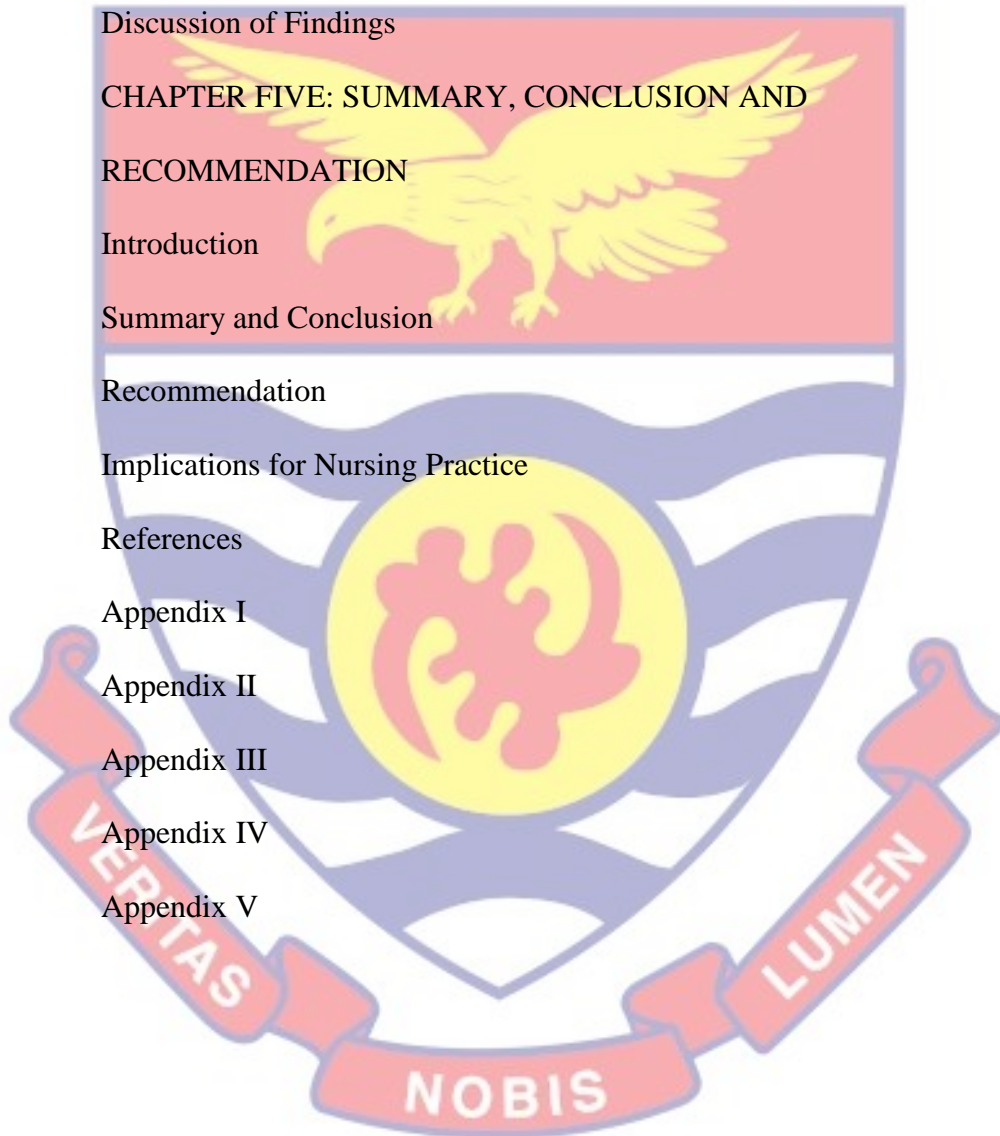


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