



## Persevering Despite Physical and Mental Exhausting: A Novice nurse's Experience as a Volunteer Nurse Caring for Patients in the Covid-19 ICU Room

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### ABSTRACT

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Novice nurse  
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### ABSTRAK

Most volunteer nurses in the covid-19 ICU are novice nurses. They have no experience working in the ICU or ICU training. They met the limitations of receiving training. The workload and challenges in the covid-19 ICU room are heavier than in the common ICU. This study aimed to explore the experience of novice nurses as volunteer nurses caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room. This study used a qualitative method with an interpretive phenomenological approach. Ten participants are covid-19 ICU volunteer nurses from the two largest covid-19 referral hospitals in Malang and Batu City who were selected using the purposive sampling method. Data collected used In-depth interviews. Data analysis used the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis method. There are eight themes found: (1) Feeling insecure working in the covid-19 ICU room; (2) Facing rapid adaptation when initially assigned; (3) I need ICU training; (4) Persevering faced all conditions in the Covid-19 ICU room; (5) Frustrated and Distraught Facing Patients; (6) Trying to be strong in dealing with the

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## INTRODUCTION

The need for covid-19 ICU rooms and nursing professionals in covid-19 ICU rooms is increasing in line with the number of critical covid-19 patients. As many as 5% of 15% of pneumonia cases in severe covid-19 disease will develop into critical conditions, requiring treatment in the ICU room (Yang et al., 2020). Other data reported that as many as 25% of hospitalized covid-19 patients require treatment in the ICU (Phua et al., 2020; Zangrillo et al., 2020). However, most COVID-19 referral hospitals worldwide, including Indonesia, cannot meet the demands of the high number of nursing staff. This situation causes the utilization of human resources, including nurses, to exceed the limits (Carter & Notter, 2020). It has an impact on the physical and psychological well-being of covid-19 ICU nurses such as burnout, stress, depression, anxiety, fear, irritability, increased SSD (Somatic Symptom Disorder), and increased PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) (Silva & Barbosa, 2021; Caillet et al., 2020; Yifan et al., 2020; Sevinc et al., 2021; Heesakkers et al., 2021).

One of the Indonesian Government's efforts to overcome the problem of the shortage of nurses that occurred nationally during the pandemic was to recruit volunteer nurses. Several demands must be met in carrying out the recruitment process for volunteer nurses. Hospitals must find staff with basic critical care skills and quickly conduct orientation or mentoring for volunteer nurses (Carter & Notter, 2020). However, many covid-19 referral hospitals in Indonesia are forced to recruit volunteer nurses with novice nurses or level I clinical nurses (NOVICE NURSE) without basic ICU training and experience working in the ICU room (Dilaluri, 2022; Effendi et al., 2022). In addition, there is little training and sending of volunteer nurses for training, so they rely on orientation and guidance from seniors (Dilaluri, 2022).

Working in the covid-19 ICU room has more challenges and workloads than working in a common ICU. There was a 33% increase in the workload of nurses caring for critical patients infected with covid-19 compared to caring for ordinary critical patients (Lucchini et al., 2020). Most covid-19 ICU nurses felt a dramatically increased workload during the pandemic (Bergman et al., 2020). Another study in one of the largest covid-19 referral hospitals in Singapore found that expert nurses from wards assigned to covid-19 ICU rooms without previous ICU experience felt stress, anxiety, the need for training, and psychosocial support (Tang et al., 2020). This condition will be felt more severely by novice nurses due to differences in clinical experience.

One problem adding workload in the covid-19 ICU room for novice nurses as a volunteer is delayed in sending covid-19 ICU volunteer nurses to ICU training. Critical care training can support them in this transition period. This training can increase novice nurseability, such as patient care capacity,

confidence, competence, job satisfaction, and retention range (Haggerty et al., 2013; McKillop et al., 2014 at Cunnington & Calleja, 2018). For volunteer nurses who do not have ICU training or previous experience working in the ICU, the adaptation process in the transition period is difficult. Indirectly, this will also affect the quality of services provided to patients.

Cunnington & Calleja (2018) said that the first year of working in the ICU for novice nurses is a stressful adaptation period. This period is a time full of adjustments and determines whether a novice nurse will remain employed and committed to the organization where he works (Serafin et al., 2021). Supady et al. (2021) said that new nurses who do not get this guidance are at risk of making fatal mistakes in action. Volunteer nurses with low skills will increase the workload of senior nurses (Adams LM, 2020). In addition, cases of severe complications and mortality rates increase when new nurses work in the ICU (Al Mutair et al., 2020).

Based on some problems faced by novice nurses as volunteer nurses in the covid-19 ICU room above, efforts are needed to overcome them. In-depth exploration through this study of novice nurses' experience as a nurse while providing direct care to patients in the covid-19 ICU room. The novelty of this study is to reveal the experience of novice nurses as ICU covid-19 volunteer nurses who do not have experience working and ICU training in global disaster situations. Therefore, this research can be a form of preparation to face various possibilities of unpredictable health emergencies someday. That preparation made the entire healthcare system better prepared and more adaptive to face various conditions of uncertainty like today.

## METHOD

This research used a qualitative research design with a phenomenological study approach. Researchers conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews by asking open-ended questions to ten participants. Data collection is for two months. Participants were selected using the purposive sampling method. Participants were novice nurses as volunteer nurses who had worked in the covid-19 ICU room from the two largest covid-19 referral regional hospitals in Malang and Batu City. Inclusion criteria include: (1) Participants are novice nurses as volunteer nurses who have experience caring for covid-19 patients in the covid-19 ICU room from covid-19 referral regional hospitals ; (2) Participants had never received critical patient care training before; (3) Participants have never worked in the ICU room before; and (4) Participants are willing to participate in the study. The interview is between 60-90 minutes. Interviews were conducted face-to-face at the participant's residence or other mutually agreed places such as cafes or public open

spaces. In addition, interviews were also conducted online through the zoom application. The interview schedule was based on mutual agreement between researchers and participants. The interviews were recorded using a handphone (HP) and video recording in the zoom application.

Data validity tests, including: (1) Researchers confirmed information from participants to ensure the trustworthiness of the results obtained; (2) Researchers involved an independent auditor who is a research supervisor to conduct an audit of all research conducted by researchers; (3) Researchers conducted an internal audit by re-reading transcripts and listening to interview recordings again; reducing data to retrieve data to be analyzed; and (4) Researchers interpreted the data and then reported the results of the research with a complete, systematic, researchable description, and with language that many people easily understand. Data analysis of this research using the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) method. This study uses a guide to explore novice nurse experience as a volunteer nurse while caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room. An interview guide with several open-ended questions, including:

1. How did you feel when first assigned to treat patients in the covid-19 ICU room?
2. Tell your experience of early phase care for patients in the covid-19 ICU room.
3. Tell your difficulties and conveniences during The initial phase of caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room.
4. How did you overcome the difficulties or challenges experienced during The initial phase of caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room?
5. How do you respond to your experience in The initial phase of caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room?
6. What experiences did you get during your duty to care for patients in the covid-19 ICU room?
7. How do you feel while caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room?
8. Tell us about the difficulties and conveniences while caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room.
9. How do you overcome the difficulties or challenges experienced while on duty caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room?
10. How your opinion about your experiences while caring for the patients in the covid-19 ICU room?
11. What are your expectations as a volunteer nurse in the covid-19 ICU room?

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The total number of participants was ten, consisting of 4 female and six male participants. All participants are young age category, according to WHO. They consisted of 2 participants aged 23 years, 2 participants aged 25 years, 2 participants aged 26 years, 1 participant aged 27 years, 2 participants aged 28 years, and 1 participant aged 30 years. Eight participants had the last diploma, and two had the last bachelor of nursing education. The ten participants from 2 different covid-19 referral hospitals have completed their duty period as volunteer nurses in the covid-19 ICU room for one year from 2020 to 2021. There are eight themes found: (1) Feeling insecure working in the covid-19 ICU room; (2) Facing rapid adaptation when initially assigned; (3) I need ICU training; (4) Persevering faced all conditions in the Covid-19 ICU room; (5) Frustrated and Distracted Facing

Patients; (6) Trying to be strong in dealing with the patient's family; (7) Grateful to have the opportunity to become a covid-19 ICU volunteer nurse; and (8) Expecting career and life improvements in the future after completing a period of duty as a covid-19 ICU volunteer nurse

### Theme 1: Feeling insecure working in the covid-19 ICU room

In this theme, six supporting sub-themes explain in more detail about theme 1. Various participant responses are expressed in the following excerpts:

- a. Sub-theme 1 is "Knowing the hospital's decision that he must work in the Covid-19 ICU room is a hard reality."  
*"Ya...speechless sih." (P6)*
- b. Sub-theme 2 is "Doubts in Taking Action before Getting In-House Training (IHT)".  
*"Hmm..ya...apa ya. Kayak nggak berdasar teori, Cuma berdasarkan omongan senior." (P6)*
- c. Sub-theme 3 is "Taking Action in the Covid-19 ICU Room in The initial Phase of Duty is a Burden".  
*"Akhirnya, perasaan yang pertama itu ya bingung terutama..."(P5)*
- d. Sub Theme 4 is "Realizing the Skills and Abilities that have not been qualified during The initial phase of caring for patients in the Covid-19 ICU room".  
*"Banyak kesusahan mba, misal obat-obatan. Misal ngoplos obat." (P3)*
- e. Sub-theme 5 is "They are worried about their own abilities can affect external at The initial phase of caring for patient in the Covid-19 ICU room".  
*"takutnya nanti malah merugikan ke pasien. Terus takut kalau ada apa-apa." (P2)*
- f. Sub Theme 6 is "Realizing Their lack of ability can Affect Caring for Patients in the Covid-19 ICU Room".  
*"Ya itu wes mba...hal tersulit itu ya adaptasi sama orang mba...karena aku kan memang susah mba. (P2)*

Cunnington & Calleja (2018) said that the first year of working in the ICU for novice nurses is stressful. Every new nurse who first works in the ICU has a transition period. This transition period is a time full of adjustments. It determines whether novice nurses will remain employed and committed to the organization where they work (Serafin et al., 2021). Novice nurses with no previous experience working in the ICU will face many challenges. One of the challenges he must face is a need for more confidence (Serafin et al., 2021). This statement is in line with the result of this study which revealed that one of the participants' experiences while undergoing a transition period in the covid-19 ICU room was feeling insecure about working in the room.

Novice nurses who first worked in the covid-19 ICU had a more significant burden than novice nurses who worked in the common ICU. This situation is because there was a dramatic increase in workload during the pandemic in the covid-19 ICU room (Bergman et al., 2020). The challenges in the covid-19 ICU room are more significant than in the common ICU. Novice nurses must be met with demands on skills and understanding; restriction of family visits; challenges in delivering bad news to families; dealing with protests and anger from patients' families; fulfilling protocols for using PPE; conditions of rapid disease progression, and high mortality cases; infrastructure limitations; ethical dilemmas; rapid shift changes; heavy psychological burden while on duty; and high risk of contracting diseases (Yuan et al., 2020; Silva & Barbosa, 2021; Carter & Notter, 2020). Therefore, the confidence

demands of novice nurses in the covid-19 ICU room are also increasing. This statement aligns with Almeida's (2019) statement that self-confidence is essential in health services, especially critical care services.

All participants in this study were novice nurses who worked in the covid-19 ICU room without having experience working in the ICU room or previous ICU training. Their background is one of the factors that cause a lack of confidence while on duty in the covid-19 ICU room. This study's theme results align with the literature, which states that one factor that influences a person's self-confidence is repeated experiences that strengthen beliefs about success and failure (Huffman C, 2014 at Suandika, 2021).

Confidence is a factor that contributes to the development of a nurse's skills and is considered an essential factor in nursing training because someone with high confidence can intervene successfully and more safely (National Council of State Boards of Nursing, 2009 in Almeida, 2019). In addition, the support of a supportive work atmosphere, positive socialization experiences, good knowledge and skills, and structured orientation are positive factors that support the increase in confidence, competence, and adaptation to the transition period of a novice nurse who practices in the ICU (Cunnington & Calleja, 2018). Therefore, there is a need for strategies to increase the confidence of volunteer nurses in this transition period.

## Theme 2: Facing Rapid Adaptation when Initially Assigned

This theme is explained in more detail in the four sub-themes.

a. Sub-theme 1 is "*Facing Challenges during Adaptation in The initial Phase of Work*".

"Ya kalau dibilang susah, ya susah juga. Soalnya kayak budaya kerjanya beda banget. Malah di RS ini kayak yang ini tu bukan wewenangku, kita malah... (tersenyum)" (P1)

b. Sub-theme 2 is "*Burdened by the Limited Implementation of In -House Training (IHT), but Still Useful*".

"Jadi aku sama temen-temen...kayak memaksakan banyaknya pelajaran itu di otak kita. Wong yang ngasi materi aja bilang kala dia ngasi materi ventilator aja 6 jam lah ini cuma 2 jam aja. Kok bilang 6 jam...2 jam aja sudah mumet. Rasane kayak umup mba pas pelajaran itu." (P2)

"Jadi Pedo. Yang awalnya takut, nggak pede-an. Awal-awal kan sering-sering kroscek 'Bener gak mas?bener gak mba?'. Ya setelah pelatihan ya rasa percaya diri aja." (P9)

c. Sub-theme 3 is "*Improving Knowledge and Skills as a Way to Be Able to Adapt*".

"Terus ikut zoominar-zoominar itu. Kan buanyak kan mba update terkait covid, keefektifan obat-obat yang dipakai." (P1)

d. Sub-theme 4 is "Adapting to Peers".

"Dengan cara mengetahui karakter senior. ... Ya ambil hati aja. Biar bisa adaptasi, biar kita bisa ambil ilmunya dikit." (P9)

As described in the previous discussion, the adaptation period of a novice nurse in the ICU room is the first year. During this adaptation period, Serafin et al. (2020) mentioned five main competencies needed to work in the ICU room, namely (1) Communication; (2) Teamwork; (3) Self-confidence; (4) Knowledge; and (5) Practice skills. This statement aligns with this sub-theme. Participants revealed several things that require rapid adaptation, such as knowledge and skills, communication with peers, and

collaboration with interprofessional. Facing challenges during the initial phase of duty, increasing knowledge and skills to adapt, and adapting with peers support the findings with previous relevant literature. Novice nurses are required to be able to adapt to many things simultaneously. In the covid-19 ICU setting, these adaptation demands are more severe than in the common ICU room. One of the things that can support novice nurses to get through the transition period well is good communication patterns in interpersonal relationships with colleagues. Positive feedback from senior nurses can increase their confidence and develop their professionalism (Chao et al, 2021). Therefore, positive support from peers or seniors is necessary

Another unique finding in this theme is the second sub-theme, 'burdened with In-House Training (IHT) which is limited in implementation, but feels useful'. In this sub-theme, participants expressed what they felt about implementing IHT. IHT is a training program at the beginning of the adaptation phase of working in the covid-19 ICU room held by the institution, where they provide brief material on critical care. Participants felt less with a short training time but were happy to get training and become more confident. This experience is aligned with the literature, which states that nursing leaders must implement transition programs to increase job satisfaction; critical thinking skills; reduce stress and anxiety; increase self-confidence and competence (WHO, 2015 in Serafin et al., 2021).

## Theme 3: I need ICU training

This theme was supported by two sub-themes.

a. Sub-theme 1 is "*Burdened by the Limited Implementation of IHT, but Still Useful*".

"Jadi aku sama temen-temen...kayak memaksakan banyaknya pelajaran itu di otak kita. Wong yang ngasi materi aja bilang kala dia ngasi materi ventilator aja 6 jam lah ini cuma 2 jam aja. Kok bilang 6 jam...2 jam aja sudah mumet. Rasane kayak umup mba pas pelajaran itu." (P2)

"Ya dapet pelatihan itu seneng." (P9)

b. Sub-theme 2 is "Expectations of Training".

"Jadi, bener-bener berharap ada pelatihan yang real gitu. Yang satu pemikiran. Maksudnya, kadang pemikiran tiap orang kan beda ya mba. Kadang satu A, satu B. Baiknya itu disatukan kayak gitu dengan adanya pelatihan. Jadi, satu mindset, satu tujuan, satu pikiran. Pertama harapannya sih itu." (P6)

Participants in this study experienced limited delivery for ICU training and training implementation, so they relied on orientation from seniors. Some participants who received training at the beginning of the duty phase revealed that they felt the training they received could have been more optimal. They need ICU training to increase their confidence in performing nursing actions. Participants revealed that they were more confident in performing actions after they received training. This situation is in line with the literature, which states that repeated experiences strengthen beliefs about success and failure (Huffman C, 2014 in Suandika, 2021). Therefore, this training is needed by all ICU covid-19 volunteer nurses.

## Tema 4: Persevering faced all conditions in the Covid-19 ICU room

In this theme, there are 14 supporting sub-themes.

a. Sub Theme 1 is "*Willing to be Placed on Duty in the Covid-19 ICU Room*".

"Ya nggak ada mba. Namanya relawan kok, harus siap ditempatkan dimana saja." (P1)

b. Sub-theme 2 is "Staying in the Covid-19 ICU Room in the Initial Phase of Duty".

"Lingkungan sih mba, lingkungannya enak. Senior-senior mau ngajari. Support sih mba mereka itu." (P1)

c. Sub-theme 3 is "Getting Support or Rejection from Others while Being a Covid-19 ICU Volunteer Nurse".

"Lebaran yang waktu rame-ramenya gak mudik, keluarga saya kan ngumpul. Saya gak boleh datang." (P2)

d. Sub-theme 4 is "Getting Less Time to Off Duty Impacts on Volunteer Nurse Performance".

"Kalau disamakan ya itu tadi yang terjadi, kelelahan terus akhirnya bisa tidak fokus, terus secara perawatannya juga tidak maksimal. Akhirnya berdampaknya juga ke pasien." (P8)

e. Sub-theme 5 is "Experiencing Limitations of Actions by Using Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), but still trying to enjoy the conditions".

"Hmm...yang pertama, saya itu terbatas ruang lingkungannya. Apalagi menggunakan hazmat lebih dari 2 jam. ... Jadi, apa ya...kerjanya juga tambah berat dan otomatis tindakan kita ke pasien juga terbatas." (P5)

f. Sub-theme 6 was "Dealing with PPE Use Protocol Updates".

"Ya. Enggak apa-apa...berarti bagus. Jadi kalau dari saya pribadi sih selagi itu bagus dan mengutamakan keselamatan kita nggak apa-apa." (P6)

g. Sub-theme 7 is "Increasing Endurance When in Charge of Caring for Patients".

"Hmm. Kalau kesehatan mental lebih ke cerita sih mba. Ngomong sama temen, bertukar pikiran sama temen. Ya hiburannya ya gadget, ngobrol sama temen berbagi pengalaman. Lebih enteng kalau dibagi." (P1)

"Ya dari kitanya sendiri ya tidak berpergian yang mengurus fisik selain bekerja, istirahat cukup, jalan atau jogging." (P9)

h. Sub-theme 8 is "Performing the most difficult nursing actions when caring for patients".

"Yang paling menantang itu ketika harus prone. Waktu itu proses yang paling menantang itu pas nge-prone-nya. Saya waktu kuliah itu nggak pernah tau posisi prone." (P7)

i. Sub-theme 9 is "Keep working even though it is uncomfortable with limited infrastructure and facilities".

"Tapi kalau dipakek itu kayak nggak nyaman banget (masker re-use). Kayak, ya emang bener-bener nggak nyaman. Pikirku ini nggak safety." (P6)

j. Sub-theme 10 is "the condition of many infected colleagues affecting the performance of volunteer nurses, but the task must still be completed".

"Sampe yang temen-temen sakit itu...banyak temen-temen yang positif itu mba. Jadi tim-timnya banyak yang kekurangan gitu mba." (P2)

k. Sub-theme 11 is "Keep trying to complete tasks even though rapid shift changes limit performance". Participants faced the shift change when caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room. This shift change occurs because there is a time limit for using PPE when they perform actions on patients. This regulation is for the safety of nurses. In this sub-theme, participants revealed their experiences trying to complete tasks with the conditions of fast shift changes.

"Ya, gantinya emang cepet mba. Kita berusaha selesin gitu mba." (P2)

l. Sub-theme 12 is "Facing differences in interpersonal relationships with peers with different responses".

"Aku menyadari tiap manusia kan beda-beda. Itu aja wes. ... Gitulah. Dunia kerja kan, orangnya beda-beda." (P6)

m. Sub-theme 13 was "Facing the Surge in the Number of Patients and Death Cases in the Covid-19 ICU Room".

"Waktu itu pas Delta. Pasien banyak sekali dan kayak satu shift itu ada yang meninggal juga (pasien). Mereka datang itu kondisi bagus terus tiba-tiba terjadi perburukan cepet sekali. Terjadi kelelahan (kita) terus kita bsa survive. Dalam satu shift kadang bisa gak tidur sama sekali, dengan kondisi hipoksi." (P8)

n. Sub Theme 14 is "Facing progressive worsening conditions".

"Cuman aku nggak mau ngabarin ibuk pas aku capek, down. Nggak mau khawatir mba, soalnya kan jauh mba.." (P2)

Working in a common ICU room differs from the covid-19 ICU. Some of the challenges of being a covid-19 ICU nurse can be summarized as follows, including (1) Nurses are required to have good skills and understanding of intensive care and covid-19 disease; (2) There is an effect of family visit restrictions that require nurses to be able to take all independent actions; (3) Challenges in delivering bad news to families such as the condition of the patient dying in a covid-19 exposed condition and restrictions on family involvement in the corpse care process; (4) The challenge of dealing with family protests and anger due to visiting restrictions and other things; (5) Nurses are required to be proficient in donning-doffing PPE (Protective Personal Equipment) or the process of wearing and removing PPE properly and correctly, many nurses are still mistaken in applying the protocol for wearing and removing PPE in the covid-19 ICU room or the PPE donning-doffing protocol (Protective Personal Equipment); (6) Unpredictable patient conditions and high disease progressivity and high mortality cases in the ICU room require nurses to be able to take quick action with qualified skills; (7) Infrastructure limitations such as beds, oxygen, and mechanical ventilators expose nurses to ethical dilemmas that require nurses to have wisdom in the decision-making process when treating patients, (8) Limited adequate PPE at the beginning of the pandemic; (9) Limitations on nursing actions due to the use of PPE and limited action time or fast shift changes; (10) The challenge of managing the psychological burden faced by nurses because the stress level of nurses working in the covid-19 ICU room is high; (11) Nurses must be prepared with a high risk of transmission due to aerosol action in the covid-19 ICU room (Yuan et al., 2016)., 2020; Silva & Barbosa, 2021; Carter & Notter, 2020). This finding is retrieved with this sub-theme. All participant experience those challenges.

There has been a dramatic increase in workload during the pandemic in the covid-19 ICU (Bergman et al., 2020). Participants in this study also felt this. Qualitative research conducted by Bergman et al. (2020) found that most nurses in the covid-19 ICU rooms of several hospitals in Sweden could deal with dramatic situations due to good teamwork or colleague support when facing these situations. This research is also in line with the results of this study. Participants endured all the conditions they experienced while on duty in the covid-19 ICU room, one of which was due to peer support.

### Theme 5: Frustrated and Distraught Facing Patients

This theme describes some experiences of the participants who expressed their feelings while caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room. Ten sub-themes support this theme.

- a. Sub-theme 1 is "Feeling Worried".  
"Iya sih mba... kayak was-was gitu." (P2)
- b. Sub Theme 2 is "Fear".  
"Ngeri aja sih, emang bener-bener cepet. Sehari itu kadang bisa sampe meninggal 2" (P6)
- c. Sub Theme 3 is "Stress". In this sub-theme, participants expressed their sense of stress when dealing with high patient mortality in the covid-19 ICU room.  
"Stresnya ya ada, apalagi pas delta. Aku stress banget itu mba pas delta kan bakap ibukku kan kenak covid juga." (P3)
- d. Sub Theme 4 is "Losing Empathy".  
".. Mungkin dari itu juga kali ya saya jadi kehilangan empati. ... Entah kenapa saya mikir 'kenapa setiap ada pasien meninggal di ICU itu empati saya kayak hilang. Mungkin karena sudah biasa gitu'. Terus saya bilang ke temen-temen. 'Jangan-jangan aku ini kayak bukan manusia'. Jadi saya itu yang agak tertekannya itu disitu. Kok nggak ada perasaan kehilangan sama sekali." (P7)
- e. Sub Theme 5 is "Burdened".  
"Sebenarnya kita semua itu terbebani mba ditaruh di ruang ICU." (P7)
- f. Sub-theme 6 is "Dissatisfied".  
"Ada rasa ketidakpuasan (rasa tidak puas dengan apa yang telah dilakukan ketika pasien yang dirawat mengalami perburukan kondisi)." (P9)
- g. Sub-theme 7 is "Compassion".  
"Jadi inget orang tua gitu." (P2)
- h. Sub Theme 8 is "Sad".  
"nangis mba, beneran mba aku nangis. Waktu itu aku dipindah kan bareng mb U. Aku nangis-nangis karena ICU RS X kan kompleks disbanding ICU RS lain." (P3)
- i. Sub-theme 9 was "Guilt".  
"... kadang merasa bersalah juga, tapi kan kita sudah maksimal melakukan segala macam perawatan." (P9)
- j. Sub-theme 10 is "Shocked".  
"Ya kaget sih. Apalagi waktu pertama kali tau. Pernah juga waktu itu. Pas di dalem, lagi suction. Nggak memperhatikan monitor. Nah itu, saturasi pasien tu turun..turun..turun. Diingetkan sama senior 'Hei, ojol kesuwen bukak e, ndang ditutup'. Astaghfirullah mba. Langsung panik." (P6)

Participants experienced a situation of increasing cases of patient deaths and progressive worsening of patient conditions in the covid-19 ICU room. The increase in mortality in the ICU room occurs because critical degree covid-19 patients who experience Covid-19 ARDS (CARDS) have a high mortality rate. Retrospective research in China in 2020 on 52 critical patients with covid-19 showed a mortality rate of 61.5% on day 28.71% required mechanical ventilation. As many as 67% of patients experienced Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS), with a mortality rate of 50 - 94% (Yang et al., 2020).

Malang City is one of the areas in East Java Province, Indonesia, with the fourth highest death rate due to covid-19 (East Java Provincial Government, 2021). The two hospitals where the participants served are the largest Covid-19 referral hospitals in Malang and Batu City, with a high mortality rate due to Covid-19 in the ICU room. The mortality rate of Covid-19 ARDS (Acute Respiratory Disease Syndrome) cases or abbreviated as CARDS in these two

covid-19 referral hospitals until November 2020 reached 47% - 87% (82-190 patients) (Fatoni & Rakhmatullah, 2021).

This event makes participants physically and mentally tired while on duty caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room. This condition is also in line with research conducted by Tang et al. (2020) in one of the largest covid-19 referral hospitals in Singapore: 30 expert nurses from the ward who were assigned to the covid-19 ICU room without previous critical patient care experience and training found that most of these nurses experienced stress, anxiety, felt the need for training, and psychosocial support. According to research conducted in Brazil, the stress level of nurses working in the covid-19 ICU room is high (da Silva & Barbosa, 2021). In addition, the incidence of stress, anxiety, and burnout is also experienced by senior ICU nurses in Sweden (Bergman et al., 2020; Montgomery et al., 2021). Based on the psychological impact that novice nurses have to face, they need support. One form of support that can be provided by nursing management is motivational support. Based on research from Köse et al. (2021), motivational messages can increase optimism, reduce hopelessness, and increase comfort.

### Tema 6: Trying To Be Strong In Dealing With The Patient's Family

Within this sub-theme, five supporting sub-themes reveal the participants' experiences when dealing with the patient's family while caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room.

- a. Sub Theme 1 is "Tired of Facing Patient Families"..  
"Ya dalam hati aja ada perasaan seperti kesel, capek banget, ada emosional-emosional yang bergejolak." (P9)
- b. Sub-theme 2 is "Enduring the Pressure from the Patient's Family".  
"Jadi yang bagi saya harus struggle sih itu. Menghadapi keluarga yang seperti itu." (P9)
- c. Sub-theme 3 is "Accepting the Behavior that the Patient's Family Gives".  
"Ya, kalau kita sih memaklumi ya. Posisi pasien kan lagi berduka. Secara psikologis ya masih goyang." (P1)
- d. Sub-theme 4 is "Maintaining Professionalism as a Volunteer Nurse and Personal Safety when dealing with Patient Families".  
"Ya kalau ada masalah seperti itu ya edukasi dengan baik." (P9)
- e. Sub-theme 5 is "Trying to be Resilient in Delivering Bad News to the Patient's Family".  
"Yah...(menghela napas), nangis waktu itu (keluarga). Spontan saya juga ikut nangis. Kan kasian gitu loh." (P6)

Pandemic conditions have changed policies regarding visits and the role of the patient's family in accompanying patients, including in the covid-19 ICU room. Restrictions on family visits are a substantial barrier between families and covid-19 patients (Rose et al., 2021). Restricting family visits is one of the challenges nurses must face in the covid-19 ICU room. Therefore, the stressful situation is felt by nurses in the ICU room when caring for covid-19 patients and comes from the patient's family. Participants expressed experiences of getting protests, anger, threats, violence, or experiences delivering the news of death to the family. This family response is a consequence that a nurse must face when delivering bad news to patients or relationships. These conditions align with the research that some of the personal consequences that a nurse gets when delivering bad news to a patient or family are doubts about the practice he has provided for the patient, feeling guilty for not being able to

provide appropriate help when a bad situation occurs (Warnock et al., 2017).

The news of a patient's worsening condition or the death of a covid-19 patient in the covid-19 ICU room must be delivered professionally by a nurse. Several protocols can be used by nurses in the covid-19 ICU room to communicate with the patient's family or relatives in delivering bad news. Felix et al. (2020) explained that the SPIKES protocol he developed could guide nurses in delivering bad news to families or relationships in an intensive room setting.

In this theme, it was revealed that participants tried to maintain professionalism at work by prioritizing empathy over sympathy when delivering bad news to the patient's family. They must deliver bad news, such as news of worsening patient conditions, further action plans, or patient death. Positive feelings in the form of adaptive empathy (Adaptive Empathy) and a sense of compassion (compassionate) which results in job satisfaction (compassion satisfaction), are needed by a nurse to provide compassionate care (Hunt et al., 2017). Compassionate care will directly affect the quality of patient care (Dominguez Gomez & Rutledge, 2009; Mealer & Jones, 2013; Poghosyan et al., 2010 at Hunt et al., 2017).

#### **Theme 7: Grateful to have the opportunity to become a covid-19 ICU volunteer nurse**

In this theme, there are supporting sub-themes.

- a. Sub Theme 1 is "Grateful for the Salary or facilities received as a Covid-19 Volunteer Nurse but There is Still a Gap".  
"Kalau soal gaji sih menurutku ya sesuai ae. Seberapa gajinya asalkan sesuai dengan yang ada di kontrak ya sesuai ae. Misal gak ada telat, gak dikurangi, aku enjoy, ya sesuai lah mba. Aku ndak pernah ngersulo." (P4)
- b. Sub-theme 2 is "Realizing the Unknown Advantages of the Nursing Profession".  
"Jadi ya kita perawat bisa ditempatkan dimana saja." (P1)
- c. Sub-theme 3 is "Being a Volunteer Nurse is a Valuable Experience".  
"Jadi, tiap hari itu buatku berharga... Jadi semua itu berhak untuk diingat dan semua itu bagiku moment " (P4)
- d. Sub-theme 4 is "Grateful for Gaining Many Advantages During Being a Covid-19 ICU Volunteer Nurse".  
"..Meski ketemu orang yang sama tapi ada cerita baru. ..." (P4)
- e. Sub-theme 5 was "Facing the Most Memorable Patient Case".  
"Ada dulu itu pasien sing aku ngikuti ngerawat mulai dari pakai ventilator sampai akhire bapak ini lepas ventilator sampai bisa pulang. Waktu itu bener-bener lepas ETT, venti, sampe sadar penuh. Semangatnya pasien ini untuk sembuh luar biasa. Itu berkesan banget sih. ... 'Alhamdulillah sek diparingi selamat. Matursuwun mas'. Tenan, seneng aku." (P1)
- f. Sub-theme 6 is "Making Mistakes or Negligence in Performing Actions in the Covid-19 ICU Room is Learning".  
"Waktu itu, bener-bener nggak tau ya. Oh yaudah, belajar dari kesalahan." (P6)

The experience of being a covid-19 volunteer nurse in the ICU room is a valuable experience for participants. Practical experience as a nurse is an essential factor for developing a nurse's nursing career. Galuska et al. (2018) revealed that improving the experience of healthcare providers, including

nurses, is one of the goals of healthcare transformation in addition to improving health, improving patient experience, and reducing costs. Kisoría & Langley (2019) also revealed that a nurse's experience in critical nursing practice is essential to improving the quality of critical nursing services in a country. Therefore, all participants' experiences of practising critical nursing in the covid-19 ICU room are beneficial for the participants and contribute to improving Indonesia's critical nursing services in the future. Participants who have completed their duty period caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room can become essential assets for the country, ready to face similar conditions in the future.

#### **Theme 8: Expecting Career And Life Improvements In The Future After Completing A Period Of Duty As A Covid-19 ICU Volunteer Nurse**

Four sub-themes support this theme.

- a. Sub Theme 1 is "Expecting Benefits in Life".  
"Aku berharapnya ilmunya bisa kepake selama aku di ICU kemarin." (P4)
- b. Sub-theme 2 is "Having Expectations Regarding Job Career and Salary".  
"Jadi waktu itu relawan minta surat keterangan kerja sebagai relawan di ICU covid-19 RS X ini. Cuman waktu itu sama RS X gak dikasi. Kita dikasihnya surat keterangan kerja sebagai relawan covid RS X aja. Saya punya harapan tinggi sih di situ." (P7)

During their duty as volunteer nurses in the covid-19 ICU room, participants revealed that they had hopes regarding their work, such as training at the beginning of the transition phase. Participants also expressed hopes regarding future careers and life after completing their duties in the covid-19 ICU room. Hope is necessary to motivate volunteer nurses to do their job well. In addition, having hopes related to career and future life can also motivate volunteer nurses to develop their future work careers better. This benefit of hope is the expectancy theory of Vroom (1964), Porter and Lawler (1968), which states that effort (motivation) depends on the possibility that an award will follow the effort and that the award is rewarding (Armstrong, 2020). The essence of this theory states that motivation must be related between effort and reward.

#### **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Novice nurse as a volunteer nurse experienced various physically and mentally exhausting events while caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room. Some of the experiences they had while caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room included: ((1) Feeling insecure working in the covid-19 ICU room; (2) Facing rapid adaptation when initially assigned; (3) I need ICU training; (4) Persevering faced all conditions in the Covid-19 ICU room; (5) Frustrated and Distraught Facing Patients; (6) Trying to be strong in dealing with the patient's family; (7) Grateful to have the opportunity to become a covid-19 ICU volunteer nurse; and (8) Expecting career and life improvements in the future after completing a period of duty as a covid-19 ICU volunteer nurse.

As volunteer nurses, novice nurses need physical and psychological support while caring for patients in the covid-19 ICU room. Psychological support is needed to increase novice nurse nurses' motivation, self-confidence, and enthusiasm in the covid-19 ICU room. ICU covid-19

volunteer nurses need stress management debriefing. Social support and positive teamwork from senior nurses to help novice nurses, as a volunteer, undergo an adaptation period during the transition period in the covid-19 ICU room are also needed. More in-depth studies are needed to determine the needs of novice nurses in the transition period to become the basis for developing support programs for novice nurses working in the covid-19 ICU room. The City and Provincial Governments are expected to fully support the policy of the covid-19 referral institution to develop a support program for novice nurses as volunteers in the covid-19 ICU room or novice nurses in common ICU rooms of funding support and other facilities needed.

#### Declaration of conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest

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