

## **Personal Lived Experience of Mechanically Ventilated Patients during the Recovery Period after Open-Heart Surgery at El Manial University Hospital**

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### **Abstract**

Patients on mechanical ventilators are subjected to extreme physical and emotional stress in the Intensive Care Unit. Less attention has been paid to patients' subjective experience of mechanical ventilation; even though psychological factors have been proposed as important determinants of outcomes in some patients. Thus Critical care nurses need to be cognizant of the importance of maintaining a close and supportive environment for the patient. Therefore the aim of this study was to explore the personal lived experience of Mechanically Ventilated patients during Recovery Period after Open-Heart Surgery. The following research question was stated; what are the personal lived experiences of patients connected to mechanical ventilator during recovery period after openheart surgeries? A qualitative phenomenological design was used using purposeful sample. The data saturation occurred with fourteenth participants. In-depth Semi-structured interview was used to collect data using a preprepared interview question guide which was written in the lay Arabic language. All interviews were audio tape recorded. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using Giorgi's methods for phenomenological analysis. Two major themes were identified through analysis: physical experiences and emotional experiences contain four and nine subthemes respectively. Physical experiences contains: breathlessness, mouth dryness, pain and physical discomfort. And emotional experiences contain; shock, bothering, near death, inability to endure, powerlessness, knowledge deficit, sense of safe/unsafe, body image, and spirituality. Participants responses centered on spiritual aspect. Ethical principles were maintained throughout the study. The participants' identified experiences formed the basis for formulation of recommendation guidelines to improve nursing management of mechanically ventilated patient during recovery period after open heart surgery.

**Keywords:** Lived Experience, Mechanically Ventilated Patients, Recovery Period, and Open-Heart Surger