

Factors Contributing to Nursing Students' Lack of Interest in Clinical Placement: A Case of Jamshoro (Pakistan)

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Abstract

Clinical placements serve as a vital educational experience, allowing undergraduate and postgraduate nursing students to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical application in real-world settings. Clinical placement has a significant impact on the attitude, knowledge, skills, and problem-solving abilities of students. This study aimed to determine the factors related to the nursing students' lack of interest in clinical placement. A quantitative cross-sectional study was utilized to determine the factors contributing to nursing students' lack of interest in clinical placements was conducted at Peoples Nursing School, Jamshoro. Stratified random sample of (n=125) and Rao software was utilized to determine the sample size, employing a 95% confidence interval and a 5% margin of error. The survey instrument was adapted and modified with expert, the collected information was subsequently analyzed utilizing IBM SPSS software, version 25. The major findings of this study were revealed that two third 72% of participants were female and 88.8% were unmarried, indicating a predominantly young and single student population, also more than 71% nursing students were belonging to rural areas. Meanwhile more than two third participants agreed with inadequate resources, more than fifty percent strongly agreed with being stipend not given. Overall, the data suggest that the majority of the nursing students expressed lack of interest while on clinical placement due to various factors were determined. We recommend that improving clinical teaching, early identifying factors, and reduce shortage of clinical facilitates can develop interest among learners.

Keywords: Clinical Placement, Nursing Students Interest, Clinical Education.

Introduction

Nursing discipline comprehends independent and collaborative care of all ages group clients, including families, individuals, communities, ill or well, and in all clinical settings (Moxham et al., 2024). Professional nurses are constantly confronted with difficult situations in their clinical practice as a result of the increasing complexity of the healthcare system, nursing shortages, high turnover, and the complicated requirements of patients and families, all of which can have an emotional impact. This emotional impact is especially strong among nursing students (Goni-Fuste et al., 2024). Therefore clinical placements allow nursing students to gain practical skills and academic knowledge while also strengthening their professionalism in real-

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world clinical settings (Lee et al., 2018). In addition clinical placement is an interesting experience for nursing students to illustrate their educational experience with hospital environment for developing clinical interest (Perng et al., 2020). Nursing students acquire competencies and abilities via practical experiences with their surroundings and patients (Abdullahi et al., 2022). Hands-on experience in clinical settings is a crucial component of nursing education. Through practical training, nursing students gain the ability to make critical decisions, implement theoretical knowledge, establish priorities, develop time management skills and their clinical abilities in real-world situations (Beiranvand et al., 2021). Moreover, clinical training in the clinical placements is enables nursing students to put their theoretical knowledge into practice, clinical training enhances their nursing abilities, improve clinical decision-making and emulate professional conduct (Sharghi et al., 2015). Although nursing training is a combination of theoretical and practical learning experiences that allow nursing students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to provide nursing care (Zhang et al., 2022). The factors impacting clinical practice are divided into four categories: student factors, hospital-based considerations, societal economic factors, and nursing instructor belvederes (Chandio et al., 2024). However, many tough aspects that lack of interest in learning in the clinical learningA environment including inappropriate clinical evaluation, improper programming of clinical education, and organizational limitations, unsupportive environment, insufficient clinical supervision, and problems in moving theoretical understanding into clinical practice are considered factors in clinical settings (Arkan et al., 2018). Therefor clinical settings must be carefully selected in benefits of students and prearranged to transform nursing students into capable experts, value effectiveness, and relationship with particular health facilities (Cant et al., 2021). Moreover, a shortage of nurse tutors / clinical instructors for supervising too many nursing students can negatively affect the overall performance of students in clinical performance (Aktaş & Karabulut, 2016). Hence nursing students develop lack of knowledge and skills that can produced anxiety, students suffered from an inferiority complex (Haraldseid et al., 2015). However, the significance of clinical experience, posting, or placement in the development of nursing skills, various studies have highlighted issues in nursing students' attitudes regarding clinical work placement (McKenna et al., 2010), therefore nursing students' attitudes toward clinical work have been identified as a research topic because whatever attitude students have toward clinical work, whether positive or negative, can either enhance or detract from the acquisition of essential clinical skills (Wu et al., 2021). Addressing issues and obstacles encountered in the clinical learning setting can assist stakeholders in resolving these difficulties and contribute to their professional development (Sadeghi et al., 2024). Failure to identify the challenges and problems the students are faced with in the clinical learning environment prevents them from effective learning and growth. As a result, the growth and development of their skills will be influenced. Therefore, this is essential to determine the factors related to the nursing students' lack of interest in clinical placement. Thus, study's findings will be shared with the nursing organization to provide a positive, supportive, and helpful clinical environment for students seeking to develop their clinical skills and self-efficacy.

Methodology

This quantitative cross-sectional study was applied to determine the factors related to the nursing students' lack of interest in clinical placement at Peoples Nursing School, Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences Jamshoro. First year, second year, third year and fourth (final) year BS nursing students at the time of data collection were involved in this study. A stratified randomization sampling technique was used in this study. The minimal sample size necessary from the entire population ($N = 185$) was $n=125$. The sample size was determined using RAO software with a 5% margin of error and a confidence interval level of 95%. The

survey instrument (Gosse & Katic-Duffy, 2020) was adapted and modified with experts. This questionnaire comprised 10 items with five-point Likert scale responses and was structured in two sections: the first portion collected demographic information, while the second part contained research-related questions. All the questions were clear and easy to understand. Moreover, the questionnaire used in the study has been reviewed for content validity and pilot tested on 10% of the total sample size which were excluded in in this study. In terms of reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.81) was found to be significant, allowing for measurement of consistency. Before the data collection, participants enrolled in the study were ensured privacy and confidentiality throughout the research process, and permission was taken from the head of the institution. The data was analyzed using the SPSS version 25 program. Descriptive statistics used frequencies and percentages for categorical variables and mean and standard deviation for continuous data.

Results

The study's findings were divided into two parts: the first part presented the demographic profile of the participants, and the second part included the results of the research question.

Table 1: Gender distribution of the participants (n=125)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender		
Male	35	28
Female	90	72

The research participants included 125 nursing students enrolled full-time. **Table 1** illustrates the gender breakdown, with females accounting for 72% of the sample and males making up 28%. This distribution indicates a higher proportion of female participants compared to male respondents.

Table 2: Age distribution (n=125)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
Age		
18-20 Years	50	40
21-23 Years	49	39.2
Above 24 years	26	20.8

The age breakdown of the study participants is presented in table 2. Among the 125 participants, 40% (50 individuals) fall within the 18-20 year age bracket. The 21-23 year age group comprises 39.2% of the sample, consisting of 49 nursing students. The remaining 20.8% (26 participants) are aged 24 and above. The overall age distribution has a mean of 1.80 and a standard deviation of 0.75. (*Mean ± SD 1.80 ± 0.75*).

Table 3: Demographic analysis of the participants (n=125)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Marital Status		
Single	111	88.8
Married	14	11.02
Type of Residence		
Urban	36	28.8
Rural	89	71.2

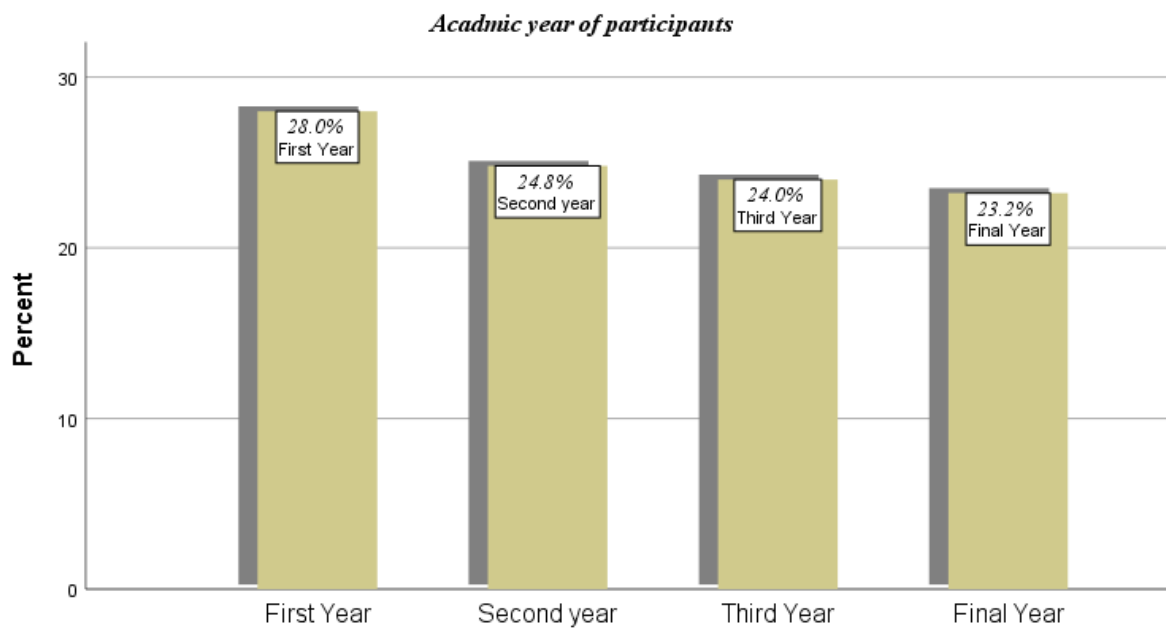


Figure 1: Total studied students' academic year of the participants (n=125)

According to table 3, the majority of respondents (88.8%) were married, while 11.2% were single. In terms of residency, 71.2% of participants (89 individuals) resided in rural regions, and 28.8% (36 individuals) lived in urban areas.

Finally, regarding the distribution of participants across academic years, 35 students (28%) were enrolled in their first year, while 31 (24.8%) were second-year students, similarly 30 participants (24%) were from third year, and the remaining 29 students (23.2%) were in their fourth and final year of undergraduate nursing studies.

Table 4: Responses of the participants to each statement

Statement	Response									
	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Lack of students' self-interest at clinical place.	27	22	48	38	8	6	33	26	9	7
Stipend being not given	53	42	45	36	10	8	9	7	8	7
Unavailability of the clinical instructor at the clinical placement.	50	40	42	34	6	5	18	14	9	7
Non-cooperative Nursing staff at clinical placement	29	23	47	38	10	8	28	22	11	9
Being degraded as nursing student	48	38	44	35	6	5	16	13	11	9
Student feels that clinical placement does not help in the degree education	3	2	40	32	5	4	48	38	29	23
Students are not guided properly regarding clinical placement.	31	25	50	40	7	6	24	19	13	10
Students doesn't feel clinical placement is important.	11	9	35	28	7	6	49	39	23	19

Inadequate resources at clinical place	36	29	58	46	12	10	16	13	3	2
Students are not allowed to work independently/freely at the clinical placement.	36	29	47	38	11	9	20	16	11	9

SA strongly agree, A agree, U uncertain, D disagree, SD strongly disagree, n=frequency, % percentage.

This table shows detailed insights into factors contributing to nursing students' lack of interest in clinical placement based on the frequency and percentages of the participants in the questionnaire.

The students in the clinical placement regarding the statement “Inadequate resources at clinical place” were found to have the highest factor (46% agree and 29% strongly agree). In comparison, only 13% disagreed and 10% were neutral on this statement. Based on the “stipend not being given” statement, 42% of nursing students strongly agreed, 36% agreed, 7% disagreed, and strongly disagreed findings were found. Furthermore, another factor regarding clinical teacher results shows that 40% of participants strongly agree, 34% agree, and 18% disagree with the highest results of the statement “unavailability of clinical instructor at the clinical placement,” which produces low confidence and difficulty learning in the clinical areas. In terms of the “lack of students’ self-interest at the clinical place,” the statement marked results with 22% strongly agreeing, 38% of participants agreeing, 26% disagreeing, and the lowest response 7% strongly disagreed, while the remaining 8% of participants had an uncertain response. When asked about “being degraded as a nursing student while on clinical placements,” participants voluntarily responded to this statement 38% strongly agree, 35% agree, 16% disagree, 11% strongly disagree about the mentioned statement, and only 5% are uncertain.

Regarding statement nursing students “doesn’t feel clinical placement is important.” 39% disagree, 19% strongly disagree, 6% uncertain about the same statement, while 28% agree due to many reasons; on the other hand, only 9% support with strongly agree. With the statement “nursing student feels that clinical placement does not help in the degree education, i.e., knowledge, skills, and attitude,” 38% disagree, 23% strongly disagree with this statement, while only 2% strongly agree and 4% remain uncertain about the asked question.

While asked about the statement “students are not guided properly regarding clinical placement,” the views of participants are different. 25% strongly agree, 40% agree, 19% disagree, 10% strongly disagree, and the remaining 6% of nursing students are uncertain about this statement.

Furthermore, 38% and 23% of the participants had agreed and strongly agree on the statement of “non-cooperative nursing staff at clinical placement” because of workload, stress, and incompetency regarding teaching and instructing, while 22% and 9% disagreed and felt nursing staff were very cooperative and helping in teaching learning process, in contrast, 8% remain uncertain.

Lastly, based on this statement, “students are not allowed to work independently/freely at the clinical placement” students replied 29% and 38% agree and strongly agree, while 20% disagreed about the asked statement, and the remaining 9% participants, respectively, strongly disagree and uncertain. Thus, major factors that influence learning for nursing students at clinical placement in this study include financial issues, inadequate equipment to practice in the clinical areas, non-participation of instructors in students' clinical supervision, and inadequate practical demonstrations before each clinical experience.

Discussion

The study was planned to identify the factors towards nursing students' lack of interest in clinical placement, as clinical training is an integral part of nursing education. Clinical practice provides an opportunity to make decisions, apply theories, prioritize those decisions, learn time management skills, and implement at clinical settings (Lee et al., 2015). The results of this study revealed that a significant portion of students experienced disinterest during their clinical placements.

Regarding demographic data, female participants were highest at 72% and 28% were male students, married 11.2% and unmarried 88.8%. In contrast, a study conducted in Ethiopia in which the study result showed that females were 71.5% and male were 28.5%, respectively, another finding matched unmarried 83.1% and married data was 16.9% to support the current study (Addisie et al., 2020). Based on academic year of study, participants were categorized into 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th final year, which were randomly selected. Similarly, another study was conducted in Saudi Arabia, the study result showed a random selection of the participants, which supports this study (Baghdadi et al., 2023). In addition, the result of the current study showed that around 38% and 22% agree and strongly agree with the lack of interest, while supporting results were matched in a study of (Aragaw et al., 2019). Moreover, results of this study approximately 57.1% displayed negative attitudes toward clinical practice. In contrast, another study was conducted in Spain, and the result supports this study (Serrano-Gallardo et al., 2016).

In the present study, majority of students more than 64% respondents that clinical placement is a supportive learning area for skill and confidence development, hence students mostly disagree with this statement "Students don't feel clinical placement is important" likewise (Lamont et al., 2015) support our study, as favorable clinical placement increases nursing students' capacity for critical analysis and problem-solving, boosts self-assurance, and advances nursing professionalism and identity.

Regarding the statement "Inadequate resources at clinical place" 46% and 29% agree and strongly agree with this statement, which shows the highest percentage of this question, indicating another factor that inhibits learning, ultimately producing a lack of interest. Therefore, similarly, a study conducted by (Moyimane et al., 2017) nursing staff expressed frustration regarding the lack of essential diagnostic, resuscitation, and monitoring devices. Some nurses voiced concerns about the subpar quality of medical equipment. Additionally, nursing personnel highlighted issues with insufficient and unsuitable equipment for teaching nursing procedures to students, which consequently affects the learning process for these aspiring nurses. Furthermore, nursing students' perceptions of lack of interest in clinical placement are affected by stipends not being given, inadequate equipment to practice in the clinical areas, non-participation of instructors in students' clinical supervision and inadequate practical demonstrations before each clinical experience. Conversely, a study conducted by (Panda et al., 2021) Unsupportive learning environments combined with unwelcoming nursing students, shortage of clinical instructors, and a lack of sense of belonging among students are a few key challenging factors with a negative impact on students' learning while on clinical setting.

With the statement "nursing students are not allowed to work independently/freely at the clinical placement" results show 29% agree and 37% strongly agree. This result supports this finding of (Ayenew et al., 2024) corroborates our observations that ineffective exposure to clinical learning environments has led to increased attrition rates among nursing students.

Therefore, some have abandoned the profession due to the difficulties they encounter in clinical settings. Nursing students are vulnerable in the clinical environment and this reduces their satisfaction with the clinical training. Therefore, understanding these aspects is critical for taking effective action to solve the problems.

Conclusion

To summarize, the clinical placement experience for students is complex and influenced by various factors. These include financial challenges, insufficient equipment, limited personal resources, minimal recognition and backing from other healthcare professionals, absence of guided reflection, and lack of opportunities to share clinical experiences with peers. These issues can ultimately lead to students developing a diminished interest in their clinical placements. It is highly recommended that early identification of these factors can exempted students “lack of interest” in clinical placement, along with proper guidance and support from health workers can enhance clinical interest and that subsequently help in challenges that nurses face in clinical practice in their early career.

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