

Assessing the satisfaction level of Nursing students towards clinical placement across academic year in private Nursing colleges at Banu

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ABSTRACT

Background and Objectives: Assessing the Satisfaction Level of Nursing Students towards Clinical Placement across Academic year in Private Nursing Colleges At Bannu. The aim of this research was to assess the satisfaction of undergraduate nursing students regarding their clinical placements in Private Nursing Colleges at Bannu.

METHODOLOGY: A cross-sectional survey was conducted with nursing students from private nursing colleges in Bannu. An adapted questionnaire was used from a study published in 2023 to assess their clinical satisfaction in different areas, such as mentorship, availability of resources, and interactions with instructors. The sample consisted of 70.2% male and 29.8% female students belonging to both third and fourth-year academic levels.

RESULTS: Many students experienced the clinical placements with low to moderate satisfaction. Only 20.8% demonstrated high satisfaction, while 42.3% reported a low satisfaction level. Fourth-year students were satisfied more than third-year students, and there was a positive correlation between academic progression and clinical comfort. General hospital setting: Allocation to general hospitals provided exposure to a wide range of clinical experiences but had several stressors regarding the level of acuity and availability of resources (77.4%).

CONCLUSION: Much lies behind the influencing factors for clinical satisfaction regarding nursing students it is growing with a greater emphasis on the improvement of mentorship, resource allocation, and gender-sensitive support. The development of such areas would improve the experiences of learning and potential satisfaction levels of the students. Future longitudinal approaches within a diversified setting of research will dissect causative factors relating to clinical satisfaction.

KEYWORDS: Nursing students, clinical placement satisfaction, mentorship, gender dynamics, clinical learning environment, undergraduate nursing education

INTRODUCTION

Clinical placement is an actual, structured real-world environment where students transition from theoretical learning to practical application. This environment is critical for closing the gap between academic scholarship and practice, developing clinical skills, critical thinking, and professional competence. Working closely with experienced healthcare professionals provides valuable insights related to patient care, safety protocols, and the dynamics of healthcare teams, forming an integral part of students' professional growth and readiness for future practice. Positive and supportive relations with clinical mentors and team members significantly influence students' learning experiences. Clinical placement not only enhances

practical abilities but also provides confidence and competency, essential for readiness in actual practice roles as healthcare professionals (1).

Structuring the clinical environment enriches nursing students' experiences. A good clinical setting provides an applied learning environment that approximates actual healthcare settings, reminding students of their application skills. The different experiences during clinical placements influence students' perceptions of nursing as a profession and its foundational role. A clinical curriculum develops critical competencies such as clinical reasoning, decision-making, self-assessment, and academic motivation, vital for preparing students for real healthcare settings (2). Positive

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clinical placement experiences nurture critical thinking and problem-solving skills while fostering self-confidence, essential for building professional identity and commitment to nursing values (3).

A well-planned clinical placement offers a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment, preparing students for the challenges inherent in nursing practice. Essential preparatory elements, including preclinical orientation, student grouping, and clearly defined learning objectives, anchor students to maximize hands-on learning opportunities (4). However, poorly structured clinical environments and inadequate assessment practices can emotionally exhaust students, hinder learning, and affect patient care quality. Addressing such shortcomings by fostering supportive environments can enhance students' professionalism and preparedness for nursing demands.

Significant gaps in clinical placements include unmet psychosocial needs, the absence of relaxation areas, and a lack of adequate supervision. Recognizing these needs enables clinical environments to support students' well-being and resilience, facilitating a productive learning atmosphere (5). Exposing students to diverse healthcare settings and specialties enhances satisfaction and career aspirations. Effective coordination between training institutions and healthcare facilities is critical for creating an integrated learning framework, providing practical experiences that guide students toward competent nursing practice (6).

Student satisfaction with clinical placement leads to valuable experiences crucial for professional development. Measuring satisfaction informs improvements in nursing programs, enhancing education quality. Satisfactory placements contribute to academic success, student retention, and professional growth, emphasizing the need for upgraded clinical supervision and proactive measures to support nursing students' learning and skill development (7, 8, 9).

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive cross-sectional design to assess nursing students' satisfaction with clinical placements across academic years in private nursing colleges in Bannu. The research was conducted at Al-Mumtaz College, Al-Burhan College, and Taj College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences, Bannu, with a sample of 168 students selected using Simple Random and Convenient sampling from a population of 250. Inclusion criteria involved students with at least one year of clinical rotations, while those

unwilling or lacking consent were excluded. Data was collected through a 24-question questionnaire, encompassing sociodemographics and satisfaction levels measured via a 5-item Likert scale. SPSS version 26 was used for analysis, categorizing satisfaction into low (20–46), average (47–73), and high (74–100) levels, with results displayed using descriptive statistics. Ethical approval was obtained, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw.

RESULTS

The gender distribution of respondents reveals a notable predominance of males in the study sample. Out of 168 participants, 118 (70.2%) were male, while 50 (29.8%) were female. This indicates a significant gender disparity, with males constituting the majority of the sample.

When analyzing the respondents based on their year of study, it was observed that 80 students (47.6%) were in their 2nd year, while 88 students (52.4%) were in their 3rd year. Although the distribution is relatively close, the number of 3rd-year students slightly exceeded that of 2nd-year students.

The "Type of Nursing Ward of Last Clinical Placement" demonstrated diverse clinical exposure among the 168 participants. The majority reported placements in "Other" wards, comprising 43 participants (25.6%), followed closely by placements in the "Surgical" ward, which accounted for 42 participants (25.0%). The "Medical" ward ranked third with 35 participants (20.8%), while 24 participants (14.3%) were assigned to "Geriatrics" wards. Additionally, 20 participants (11.9%) were placed in "Pediatrics," and only 4 participants (2.4%) reported placements in "Gynecology" wards. This distribution underscores the varied clinical experiences of nursing students, with a significant focus on surgical and medical care. Regarding the "Category of the Hospital Where the Clinical Placement Took Place," the data highlights that 130 participants (77.4%) were placed in general hospitals, making it the most common clinical setting. Specialized care centers accounted for 33 placements (19.6%), while 5 participants (3.0%) had their placements in outpatient departments. These findings emphasize the reliance on general hospitals for clinical training, reflecting their central role in nursing education. This data is further detailed in Table 1, providing a comprehensive overview of the participants' demographic and clinical placement characteristics. Level of Satisfaction" groups data for participant satisfaction

scores into three unique groups: Low Level of Satisfaction, Average Level of Satisfaction, and High Level of Satisfaction.

Table 1: Sociodemographic pattern of respondents.

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Males	70.2
	Females	29.8
Year of study	2 nd year	47.6
	3 rd year	52.4
Category of Hospital	General	77.4
	Specialized	19.6
	Out patients	3
Type of ward	Surgical	25
	Medical	20.8
	Paedriatics	14.3

Out of the 168 participants, the majority score was in the "Low" satisfaction category and was at 71 participants or 42.3%. This is an indication that almost half of the participants felt not satisfied or very low in satisfaction with services or experiences evaluated. A large proportion of the respondents, 62 people or 36.9% reported "Average" satisfaction levels. This group represents those that were moderately experienced, neither all dissatisfied nor highly satisfied, reflecting a neutral or mixed sentiment. Meanwhile, only 35 participants (20.8%) scored "High," making it the smallest group. This relatively low percentage of highly satisfied respondents suggests that a smaller portion of the population had exceptionally positive experiences, highlighting potential gaps in service quality or unmet expectations for many respondents. The overall distribution shows a positive skew towards the lower end of satisfaction levels, where a large percentage of the respondents (42.3%) reported dissatisfaction. Such a finding brings to the fore areas where improvement is needed to raise satisfaction levels. The low number of participants in the "High" satisfaction category (20.8%) points to the need for targeted interventions to raise satisfaction among the population at large. This classification is helpful in gaining insights into the satisfaction levels of the participants and lays a foundation for potential areas of improvement in service delivery, training, or patient engagement strategies.

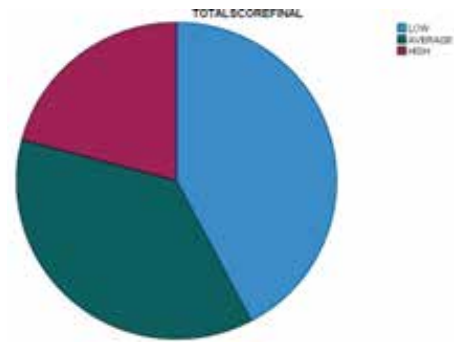


Figure 1: Level Of satisfaction

DISCUSSION

The research explores the satisfaction of nursing students regarding their clinical rotations, and findings suggest a general low to moderate satisfaction, which is in agreement with other studies about the challenges in clinical practice. Clinical rotations are part of nursing education, allowing students to be exposed to actual practice in patient care and health environments. As Smith et al. (10) mentioned, deficits in resources are one of the major hindrances in the effectiveness of clinical learning. These deficits tend to comprise inadequate staff and medical equipment, as well as clinical training programs that are disorganized and unstructured, thus offering students numerous barriers to attempting to get hands-on experience. More importantly, Lee and Kim (2) highlight how inadequate systematic support in the clinical environment presents an added disadvantage to this learning process. Mentorship and hospital facilities are essentials for enhancing students' clinical experience. As Garcia et al. (11) pointed out, supportive environments are critical for increasing satisfaction levels. These encompass consistent guidance from clinical instructors, well-organized rotations, and availability of essential resources. Mentorship, in particular, has been shown to foster confidence and competence among students, enabling them to perform better in clinical settings. Yet, the study revealed that a significant portion of students (46.4%) experienced limited communication with their mentors, which negatively impacted their satisfaction. This finding is echoed by Li and Zhou (6), who assert that adaptive mentoring tailored to students' individual needs is critical for their growth and satisfaction. Similarly, Miller and Ahmed (7) advocate for structured mentorship programs that encourage open communication and regular feedback. Gender dynamics also play an important role in influencing clinical experiences among nursing students. According to Johnson et al., (2) male students face

particular challenges in satisfying their needs during rotations, such as social stigma and stereotyping. These often follow from societal perceptions that nursing is for women only, creating particular stressors on male students' experiences. To bridge these gaps, Al-niarat and Abomoghli (12) recommend gender-sensitive approaches toward nursing education to make the educational environment more inclusive. Khan and Begum (13,15) also propose that interventions such as workshops and counseling be specifically tailored to create a balanced and supportive learning environment for all students. The findings also showed that the satisfaction levels of the senior students were slightly higher than those of the junior students. Among the respondents, 47.6% were fourth-year students, while 52.4% were third-year students. This aligns with findings by Splitgerber et al. (14,16), who attribute the higher satisfaction levels among senior students to their increased confidence and competence gained through experience. Senior students are typically more familiar with clinical procedures and expectations, which allows them to navigate challenges more effectively than junior students.

The clinical placement setting also influenced students' satisfaction levels. General hospitals, where the largest percentage of placements, 77.4%, took place, offered varied learning opportunities yet caused extreme stress due to patients' acuity and workload. It is similar to what is indicated by Garcia et al. (6) and Kim and Tanaka (7), who indicate the pace at which general hospitals function tends to overwhelm their students, especially those in the lower rungs with less experience in clinical settings. On the other hand, specialized care units provided more targeted support and were associated with higher satisfaction levels. According to Hassen et al., "the smaller patient-to-staff ratio and targeted learning opportunities in specialized units create a more conducive environment for skill development.(18,19,20)"

The high variation of satisfaction levels was another striking finding of the study. The mean score of satisfaction was 49.61 and the standard deviation was 18.959. Such diversity calls attention to the various experiences faced by nursing students while performing their clinical rotations. Quality mentorship, availability of resources at a hospital, and an individual's response mechanism contribute towards such differences. Chen et al. (8) and Dillu and Soren (15) focus on delivering individually customized feedback and

providing person-centered support in dealing with students' differential needs. For example, regular debriefing sessions and one-on-one mentoring can help students process their experiences and identify areas for improvement. While the study provides valuable insights into the factors affecting nursing students' satisfaction during clinical rotations, it also underscores the need for further research. Longitudinal studies are essential to explore how satisfaction levels evolve over time and to assess the impact of tailored interventions in different clinical settings. Comparative studies across various institutions could provide a broader perspective on best practices for enhancing student satisfaction.

However, there were critical outcomes in regard to the overall findings; more significantly, these highlight critical points of importance, focusing on quality mentorship, effective student support systems. Key strategies include improving resources deficits, developing gender-sensitive schemes, and offering differentiated individualized feedback for attaining higher levels of student satisfaction. Therefore, based on this perspective, programs in nursing education must strategize about how better to position graduates and get them better prepared and focused for their future performance and success in clinical work environments.

CONCLUSION

As concluded from this survey, a major proportion of nursing students respond with low to moderate degrees of satisfaction regarding their clinical placements. This finding suggests how clinical placement experiences are rich and complex and are, therefore, influenced by factors such as the hospital context, gender dynamics, mentorship quality, and resources. The results coincide with earlier studies and conclude that clinical satisfaction among nursing students often results from a combination of institutional, societal, and individual factors. Improving the clinical learning environment, and hence the preparedness and enthusiasm of students to practice professionally depends on these issues.

Strength of the study: This study's special strength includes the focus placed on students' unique nursing experiences made during clinical exposures, making it comprehensive by providing proper information about level satisfaction with factors affecting satisfaction as research of this sort has yet to be held in some areas like Bannu. The study also equips the ability to peer deeper into other demographic factors such as gender

that affect clinical satisfaction in virtue of sample size and gender distribution. Placing the findings within a larger perspective and building validity by comparison with other recent and pertinent studies offers a much more vivid view of trends in nursing education.

Limitation of the Study: Despite its contributions, this study has several deficiencies. For one, as the study was conducted within a specific institutional and spatial context, the findings do not have as much of a generalizable application to any other area or education setting where clinical placement satisfaction differs. Longitudinal designs would be necessary to trace temporal patterns in satisfaction across student clinical education since its cross-sectional design restricts its ability to examine trend changes in satisfaction.

Recommendations: Several recommendations are based on these findings. Hospitals and schools of nursing should adopt structured mentoring programs under which the students receive regular encouraging advice. Improvement in the resource base of the clinical environment, such as good provision of medical facilities and equipment may also increase the quality and satisfaction of experiences by students. Moreover, gender-sensitive teaching approaches and awareness programs in clinical education may help to overcome some of the specific issues that male nursing students encounter and may provide a friendlier environment to all. Future studies could investigate changes in satisfaction levels over time and also draw participants from a more diverse set of institutions. It can use longitudinal designs.

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