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“A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY TO ASSESS CHALLENGES IN CLINICAL TRAINING FACED BY NURSING STUDENTS IN SELECTED AREA OF MAHARASHTRA”.

Authors:

Ms.Snehal Dadaso Pachupate Assistant Professor
Ms.Pratiksha Suryawanshi Clinical Instructor
Ms.Tejasree Tikudave Clinical Instructor
Mr.Mithun Divekar, Clinical Instructor
MES College of Nursing Ghanekhunt Lote

Introduction: Clinical training is an essential component of nursing education, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Through clinical experiences, nursing students develop critical thinking skills, clinical competence, and professional attitudes necessary for quality patient care. However, numerous challenges during clinical placements can impact students' learning outcomes and their overall readiness for professional practice. Aim: "To assess the challenges faced by nursing students during clinical training in selected areas of Maharashtra. Methodology: Design: A Descriptive cross-sectional study design. Setting Nursing students. Sample Size is 82. Sampling Technique Convenience sampling Technique Description of tools The data collection tool is a structured questionnaire consisting of two sections. Section A includes demographic data such as age, gender, type of institution, clinical area, and duration of clinical training. Section B contains 15 Likert scale statements to assess the challenges faced by nursing students during clinical training, with responses ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Result: The findings of the study show that the majority of students (91.5%) were in the age group of 18–20 years and most of them were female (86.6%). Among the participants, 54.9% were B.Sc. Nursing students and 45.1% were GNM students. More than half of the students were posted in Life Care Hospital (56%), while 43.9% were in Parshuram Health Rural Centre. Regarding clinical duration, 53.7% of students had completed 1 month of clinical training and 45.1% had completed 2 months. The results also indicate that most students agreed (68.29%) and strongly agreed (24.39%) that they face challenges during clinical training. The overall mean score was 54.62 ± 7.08 , which indicates a moderate level of challenges faced by nursing students during clinical practice.

Conclusion: Based on the study findings, it can be concluded that the majority of participants had a **positive attitude** toward the subject of the study. With 92.68% of respondents agreeing, the results indicate a high level of acceptance and effectiveness. Therefore, the intervention under study can be considered successful and well-supported by the participants.

Key Words: Clinical Training, Nursing Students, Clinical Learning Challenges, Nursing Education, Clinical Learning Environment.

Introduction: Clinical training is an essential component of nursing education, as it bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Through clinical exposure, nursing students gain opportunities to apply classroom knowledge to real-life healthcare situations and patient care. This experience enables them to develop critical thinking abilities, clinical competence, decision-making skills, and professional attitudes that are necessary for delivering quality healthcare services. Clinical postings also allow students to understand patient needs, perform nursing procedures, and work collaboratively with the healthcare team. However, despite its importance, nursing students frequently encounter several challenges

during their clinical placements, which may influence their learning outcomes and readiness for professional practice.¹

In India, particularly in states such as Maharashtra, clinical training has become increasingly complex due to the rapid growth of nursing education institutions. The number of nursing colleges has increased significantly, but the availability of adequate clinical facilities has not expanded proportionately. As a result, many hospitals face overcrowding of students during clinical postings, which limits the opportunities for individual supervision and hands-on practice. Additionally, factors such as shortage of experienced clinical instructors, variations in patient load, and limited availability of clinical resources further contribute to the difficulties faced by nursing students during their training.² Maharashtra also has diverse healthcare settings, ranging from highly specialized private hospitals to government hospitals with limited resources, which may create differences in the quality of clinical exposure received by students.³

Nursing students commonly report several difficulties during clinical training that affect their learning experience. These include lack of proper orientation before clinical postings, inadequate supervision from clinical instructors, and insufficient opportunities to perform nursing procedures independently. Students may also experience a gap between theoretical knowledge taught in classrooms and the practical practices observed in hospital settings. Furthermore, heavy workloads, limited clinical materials, and communication barriers with patients and healthcare staff may reduce students' confidence and hinder their clinical skill development. In some cases, negative attitudes or lack of cooperation from staff nurses may also create an uncomfortable learning environment for students.⁴ With the increasing complexity of healthcare systems, advancements in medical technology, and higher expectations for patient care, nursing students are required to be more competent and well-prepared than ever before. Therefore, identifying and addressing the challenges faced by students during clinical training is essential for maintaining the quality of nursing education and ensuring effective patient care.⁵

The clinical learning environment is often dynamic and unpredictable, exposing students to various real-world healthcare challenges. During their clinical postings, students may face emotional stress, anxiety, and time pressure while performing procedures or managing patient care responsibilities. Limited availability of equipment and learning resources, inconsistent supervision, and lack of clearly defined clinical objectives may further complicate the learning process. These factors may restrict students' opportunities to practice clinical skills and gain confidence in performing nursing procedures independently. Since clinical training forms the core of nursing education, it plays a crucial role in integrating the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains of learning. Through direct interaction with patients and healthcare professionals, students develop both technical skills and interpersonal communication abilities that are essential for professional nursing practice.⁶

Challenges encountered during clinical training can have a significant impact on students' professional development and psychological well-being. Continuous exposure to stressful situations, inadequate support, and limited learning opportunities may lead to decreased self-confidence, dissatisfaction with the nursing profession, and emotional distress among students. In some cases, these challenges may even contribute to higher dropout rates from nursing programs. Therefore, it is important to systematically assess and understand the challenges experienced by nursing students during clinical postings.⁷ The present study aims to identify the challenges faced by nursing students during their clinical training in selected areas of Maharashtra. Understanding these challenges will help nursing educators, administrators, and policymakers develop appropriate strategies such as mentorship programs, structured orientation sessions, and skill enhancement workshops to improve the clinical learning environment and prepare competent nurses for the healthcare system.

Research gaps:

Limited studies are conducted on challenges faced by nursing students during clinical training in selected areas of Maharashtra. Insufficient data is available on clinical learning experiences of nursing students. Few studies have focused on factors like supervision, workload, communication barriers, and clinical resources affecting clinical training. Lack of studies that identify strategies to manage challenges in clinical training for nursing students.

Objective:

1. To identify the challenges faced by nursing students in clinical training.

Methodology:**Research Approach:**

A quantitative research approach

Research Design:

A descriptive cross-sectional research design

Samples and Sampling technique:

The study sample consisted of 82 nursing students selected using a convenience sampling technique from selected clinical areas in Maharashtra.

Tools Used in the study:

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of two sections. Section A included demographic variables such as age, gender, course, hospital name, and duration of clinical training. Section B consisted of a 15-item Likert scale questionnaire designed to assess challenges faced by nursing students in clinical training, with responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Intervention

No intervention was conducted in this study.

Method of Data Collection:

After obtaining permission from the concerned authorities, data were collected from nursing students who met the inclusion criteria. The purpose of the study was explained, informed consent was obtained, and the structured questionnaire was distributed to the participants and collected after completion.

Results/Findings: The results of the present study are presented based on the objectives of assessing the challenges faced by nursing students during clinical training. The demographic variables and responses related to challenges in clinical training were analyzed using frequency, percentage, and weighted mean scores.

Table 1: Distribution of Participants According to Demographic Variables

n = 82

Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1.Age (years)		
18–20 years	75	91.5%
21–23 years	5	6.1%
Above 24 years	2	2.4%
2.Gender		
Male	11	13.4%
Female	71	86.6%
Other	0	0%
3.Course		
B.Sc. Nursing	45	54.9%
GNM	37	45.1%
ANM	0	0%
4.Hospital Name		
Parshuram Health Rural Centre	36	43.9%
Life Care Hospital	46	56.1%
5.Duration of Clinical Training		
1 Month	44	53.7%
2 Months	37	45.1%
More More than 2 months	1	1.2%

Table 2: Challenges Faced by Nursing Students**n=82**

Sr.no	Category	Score	frequency	percentage
1	Strongly disagree	1 to 15	0	0.00%
2	Disagree	16 to 30	1	1.22%
3	Neutral	31 to 45	5	6.10%
4	Agree	46 to 60	56	68.29%
5	strongly agree	61 to 75	20	24.39%

Discussion: The present study aimed to assess the challenges faced by nursing students during clinical training in selected areas of Maharashtra. The findings revealed that most students were motivated to attend clinical training and reported that clinical postings were related to the theory taught in class. Many students also agreed that they received adequate guidance from clinical instructors and support from staff nurses, which positively influenced their clinical learning experience. Similar findings were reported by Papp et al. who stated that supportive clinical supervision and positive staff attitudes improve students' confidence and clinical competence.⁸

However, the study also identified several challenges faced by nursing students during clinical training. These included lack of proper orientation before clinical postings, excessive workload, limited availability of clinical materials, communication barriers with patients and staff, and anxiety while performing clinical procedures. Therefore, identifying these challenges is important for improving clinical education. Providing proper orientation, adequate supervision, and supportive learning environments can enhance students' confidence and improve the overall quality of nursing education.

Conclusion: The study concludes that nursing students face several challenges during clinical training, such as lack of proper orientation, heavy workload, limited clinical materials, communication barriers, and anxiety during procedures⁹. However, many students also reported receiving guidance from clinical instructors, support from staff nurses, and motivation to attend clinical postings. These factors contribute positively to their learning experience. Identifying these challenges is essential for improving the quality of clinical education. Providing adequate supervision, proper orientation, and supportive learning environments can enhance students' confidence, clinical competence, and overall professional development in nursing practice.¹⁰

Conflict of Interest:

The researcher declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this research article. The study was conducted independently without any financial support or influence from external organizations. The data collected and analyzed in this research are presented honestly and without any bias. The researcher confirms that there are no personal or professional conflicts that could have influenced the study findings.

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