

Perceived Impact of Staff Nurses’ Attitudes on Nursing Students’ Clinical Training Experiences

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Abstract

Background: The clinical learning environment plays a vital role in shaping nursing students’ professional competence and confidence. Staff nurses, as key members of the clinical setting, significantly influence students’ learning experiences through their attitudes and behaviors. Positive attitudes enhance learning, while negative attitudes may hinder clinical development and satisfaction. To assess the perceived impact of staff nurses’ attitudes on nursing students’ clinical training experiences.

Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in a nursing institute. A total of 220 eighth-semester nursing students with at least one year of clinical experience were selected using a convenience sampling technique. Data were collected through a

structured self-administered questionnaire consisting of demographic information, perceptions of staff nurses' attitudes, and clinical training experiences. Data were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (correlation analysis) were applied, with $p \leq 0.05$ considered significant.

Results: The findings showed that students had a moderate perception of staff nurses' attitudes (mean = 3.47 ± 0.71) and a moderate level of clinical training experience (mean = 3.44 ± 0.71). The majority of participants (59.1%) reported moderate perceptions. A significant positive correlation was found between staff nurses' attitudes and clinical training experiences ($r = 0.62$, $p = 0.001$).

Conclusion: The study concluded that staff nurses' attitudes have a significant positive impact on nursing students' clinical training experiences. Supportive and encouraging behaviors enhance student learning, confidence, and satisfaction, while negative attitudes may hinder clinical development. Strengthening staff nurse engagement and improving the clinical learning environment are essential for improving nursing education quality.

INTRODUCTION

Nursing education blends theoretical knowledge with clinical experience, crucial for developing competent healthcare professionals [1]. Clinical training is essential, allowing students to apply classroom concepts in real-life patient care, fostering necessary psychomotor skills and clinical reasoning [2]. The clinical learning environment (CLE) significantly impacts students' outcomes, encompassing physical settings, social interactions, and teaching quality [3]. A positive CLE encourages active learning and professional development, while a negative environment can impair student performance and confidence. Clinical learning environments impact nursing students' professional growth, confidence, and competence [4].

Interpersonal relationships are crucial, with staff nurses acting as informal educators, mentors, and role models. Their attitudes significantly affect the learning process, as positive attitudes foster engagement, whereas negative attitudes can obstruct effective learning outcomes [5]. Interpersonal relationships between students and staff nurses are crucial in the Clinical Learning Environment (CLE) [6]. Staff nurses influence learning experiences through their behaviors and communication, acting as mentors and informal educators. Their attitudes towards students impact not only teaching and supervision but also the overall quality of clinical education [7]. Recent research reveals that nursing students' perceptions of the clinical learning environment greatly impact their academic adjustment, satisfaction, and professional growth. Clinical placements are vital for developing competence and identity, while staff nurses are crucial in shaping student learning through their attitudes and teaching willingness [8].

Positive staff nurse attitudes—approachability, supportiveness, and teaching willingness—foster a supportive learning environment, promoting student engagement and confidence. In contrast, negative attitudes like indifference and dismissiveness can create hostility, leading to student anxiety and decreased motivation, adversely impacting clinical performance [9]. Moreover, role modeling is crucial in nursing education; students emulate professional behaviors and communication by observing experienced nurses, enhancing their professional identity and commitment to nursing [10].

Clinical placements can induce stress and anxiety for nursing students, especially when staff are unsupportive. Emotional hurdles like fear of mistakes and lack of confidence impede learning. Effective communication is crucial for a positive learning environment, promoting respect and collaboration [11]. Additionally, organizational issues such as workload, staffing shortages, and time constraints impact nurses' attitudes,

hampering their ability to adequately supervise and teach students [12]. A longitudinal study revealed that personalization, involvement, and task orientation in the CLE affect student satisfaction and academic adjustment [6]. Additionally, effective clinical teaching environments enhance learning experiences and professional development, while cultural and institutional factors, including hierarchical structures, influence staff nurses' attitudes toward students in clinical placements [13].

In developing countries like Pakistan, challenges such as limited resources and high nurse-patient ratios adversely affect the clinical learning environment, increasing stress among staff nurses and impairing their interactions with nursing students [14]. Understanding nursing students' views on staff nurses' attitudes is vital for identifying educational gaps and enhancing training quality [8]. Research highlights that supportive clinical environments foster effective learning, leading to improved academic results and professional competencies [12]. Collaborative strategies, including mentor-ship programs and staff training, are essential to enhance staff-student interactions. This topic is valuable for nursing students, staff nurses, and nursing educators. Students gain insights into how staff nurses' attitudes affect their learning, confidence, and development. Staff nurses are encouraged to reflect on their mentoring roles, promoting positive learning environments. Educators receive evidence to enhance teaching strategies, boost collaboration with clinical staff, and improve student supervision during placements, ultimately benefiting the nursing profession. Thus, studying the impact of staff nurses' attitudes on nursing students' experiences is crucial and was the aim of the study for advancing clinical education and patient care quality.

Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional descriptive research design to assess the perceived impact of staff nurses' attitudes on nursing students' clinical training experiences. A cross-sectional approach was considered appropriate as it allows the collection of data at a single point in time to examine relationships between variables.

The study was conducted at a recognized nursing institute where students are enrolled in undergraduate nursing programs and undergo structured clinical training in affiliated healthcare facilities.

The target population consisted of 8th-semester nursing students who had completed at least one year of clinical experience. These students were considered suitable participants as they had sufficient exposure to clinical environments and interactions with staff nurses.

A total sample size of 220 nursing students was included in the study. The sample size was deemed adequate to ensure reliable statistical analysis and representation of the study population. A convenience sampling technique was used to recruit participants. Students who were readily available and willing to participate during the data collection period were included in the study.

The inclusion criteria was Nursing students enrolled in the 8th semester, Students with minimum one year of clinical experience, and Students willing to participate and provide informed consent. Students from earlier semesters, and students without clinical exposure, and Students unwilling to participate are excluded from the study.

Data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire adapted from previously validated instruments assessing the clinical learning environment and staff nurse–student interactions. The tool was developed after an extensive review of the

literature, particularly drawing from established scales such as the Clinical Learning Environment Inventory (CLEI) and the Clinical Learning Environment, Supervision and Nurse Teacher (CLES+T) evaluation scale [15].

The questionnaire consisted of three sections:

Section I: Demographic Data: This section included variables such as age, gender, and duration of clinical experience.

Section II: Staff Nurses' Attitudes: This section assessed students' perceptions of staff nurses' attitudes using multiple items covering: Supportiveness, Communication, Willingness to teach, Respect toward students and Feedback and supervision were evaluated using 5-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

Section III: Clinical Training Experiences: This section measured students' clinical learning experiences, including: Confidence in performing procedures, Opportunities for skill development, Satisfaction with clinical placement, Overall learning environment were evaluated using 5-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. Higher scores indicated more positive perceptions of staff nurses' attitudes and clinical learning experiences

After obtaining ethical approval and institutional permission, participants were approached during their academic sessions. The purpose of the study was explained, and informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. Questionnaires were distributed and collected upon completion.

Data were analyzed using statistical software such as SPSS. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) were used to summarize the data. Inferential statistics, such as the **chi-square test** or **t-test**, were applied to determine associations between variables. A p-value of ≤ 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Ethical approval was obtained from the institutional review committee. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Participation was voluntary, and students had the right to withdraw at any stage without any consequences.

Results

A total of 220 nursing students participated in this study. The data were analyzed using SPSS, and results are presented in terms of descriptive and inferential statistics.

The majority of participants were aged 21–25 years (68.2%), and most were female (63.6%). A large proportion had 1–2 years of clinical experience (72.7%), indicating adequate exposure to clinical environments.

| Category | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Age | | |
| 21–25 years | 150 | 68.2 |
| 26–30 years | 50 | 22.7 |
| >30 years | 20 | 9.1 |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 80 | 36.4 |
| Female | 140 | 63.6 |
| Clinical Experience | | |
| 1–2 years | 160 | 72.7 |
| >2 years | 60 | 27.3 |

2. Perception of Staff Nurses' Attitudes and Clinical Learning Experience Scores

The overall mean score of 3.47 indicates a moderate level of positive perception regarding staff nurses' attitudes. Supportiveness showed the highest mean score, while feedback and supervision scored comparatively lower.

The overall clinical training experience mean score (3.44) reflects a moderate level of satisfaction, indicating that while students had generally positive experiences, there is room for improvement.

| Mean Scores of Staff Nurses' Attitudes | | | Clinical Learning Experience Scores | | |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| # | Domain | Mean \pm SD | | Domain | Mean \pm SD |
| 1 | Supportiveness | 3.62 \pm 0.68 | 1 | Confidence in Skills | 3.52 \pm 0.69 |
| 2 | Communication | 3.48 \pm 0.72 | 2 | Learning Opportunities | 3.45 \pm 0.74 |
| 3 | Willingness to Teach | 3.55 \pm 0.70 | 3 | Satisfaction with Clinical Placement | 3.38 \pm 0.72 |
| 4 | Respect Toward Students | 3.40 \pm 0.75 | 4 | Clinical Environment | 3.41 \pm 0.70 |
| 5 | Feedback and Supervision | 3.30 \pm 0.73 | | | |
| | Overall Mean | 3.47 \pm 0.71 | | Overall Mean | 3.44 \pm 0.71 |

3. Level of Perception Based on Cutoff Values

The majority of students (59.1%) reported a moderate perception, while 27.3% had a good perception. A smaller proportion (13.6%) experienced poor perceptions of staff nurses' attitudes.

| Level | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Poor (<60%) | 30 | 13.6 |
| Moderate (60–75%) | 130 | 59.1 |
| Good (>75%) | 60 | 27.3 |

4. Association Between Staff Nurses' Attitudes and Clinical Experiences

There is a moderate to strong positive correlation ($r = 0.62$) between staff nurses' attitudes and students' clinical training experiences, which is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that better staff nurse attitudes are associated with improved student clinical experiences.

| Variables | Clinical Experiences | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|---------|
| | r-value | p-value |
| Staff Nurses' Attitudes | 0.62 | 0.001 |

Hypothesis Testing

Since the p-value (0.001) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This confirms that staff nurses' attitudes significantly influence nursing students' clinical training experiences.

Null Hypothesis (H_0): No significant relationship exists between staff nurses' attitudes and clinical training experiences. Result: Rejected

Discussion

The study investigated the impact of staff nurses' attitudes on nursing students' clinical training experiences. Findings indicated a moderate perception of these attitudes among students (59.1%, mean score 3.47), aligning with previous research showing a supportive yet improvable clinical learning environment (mean = 3.56) [16]. The results suggest that while support is present, shortcomings remain in supervision and feedback quality, which are critical for students' academic adjustment and performance [17].

In the study, staff nurses exhibited the highest supportiveness, while feedback and supervision received the lowest scores among attitude domains. This pattern is consistent with evidence showing that positive interpersonal behaviors in nursing often lack structured teaching and feedback due to time constraints. A multi-country study emphasized the importance of effective supervision and teaching for fostering a positive clinical learning environment [7, 18]. Additionally, nursing students reported a moderate satisfaction level with their clinical training (mean = 3.44), paralleling results from a longitudinal cohort study that found similar moderately positive satisfaction levels, indicating that clinical experiences are somewhat satisfactory but not fully so [6].

The study indicates a moderate satisfaction level among students, influenced by staff nurse engagement and teaching competence. Positive attitudes of staff nurses correlate significantly ($r = 0.62$, $p = 0.001$) with enhanced clinical learning experiences. Approachable nursing environments support student confidence, while inconsistent supervision hinders overall satisfaction, that are similar with the a study conducted in 2025.

Previous research corroborates a strong link between the clinical learning environment and student satisfaction ($r = 0.572$, $p < 0.001$) [19,7].

The study concludes that staff nurses' attitudes significantly influence clinical learning outcomes, emphasizing the importance of interpersonal interactions in nursing education. However, 13.6% of students reported negative experiences, including inadequate support and communication, which can lead to stress and decreased engagement in learning [20].

The study reveals that lower scores for feedback and supervision are linked to organizational challenges like high workload and staffing shortages, limiting nurses' engagement in teaching. Additionally, while staff nurses serve as informal educators, many lack formal teaching training, resulting in inconsistent student supervision [21]. The research highlights that effective communication and professional relationships are vital; students who see staff nurses as approachable are more engaged in clinical learning, enhancing their sense of belonging and confidence. Staff nurses play a crucial role as informal educators during clinical placements, although many lack formal teaching training, leading to inconsistencies in student supervision [22]. The study highlights that effective communication and professional relationships are vital; students view approachable and respectful nurses as key to active participation in clinical learning, fostering a sense of belonging essential for their confidence and development.

In developing countries like Pakistan, challenges such as limited resources, overcrowded facilities, and high patient-to-nurse ratios impact staff nurses' attitudes and their capacity to support students. The study highlights the importance of experiential learning, where positive role modeling by nurses fosters professional development, while negative behaviors hinder learning. The observed moderate perception and satisfaction

indicate a need for structured interventions, including staff training programs, mentorship, and policies to enhance clinical teaching roles.

This study has several limitations impacting the interpretation of findings. It utilized a cross-sectional design, preventing causal inferences about staff nurses' attitudes and nursing students' clinical experiences. The convenience sampling may introduce selection bias, limiting generalizability. Conducted in one nursing institute, it may not reflect diverse clinical environments elsewhere. The self-administered questionnaire could lead to response biases, including social desirability. Additionally, external factors like staff nurses' workload, institutional policies, and clinical conditions were not thoroughly examined, potentially affecting students' perceptions.

Conclusion

The study reveals that nursing students perceive staff nurses' attitudes and clinical training satisfaction as moderate. A significant positive correlation exists between staff nurses' attitudes and nursing students' learning experiences, emphasizing the impact of supportive behaviors on educational outcomes. Staff nurses are vital in influencing clinical education through their communication and support. Positive attitudes boost students' confidence and competence, while negative ones impede learning. The research underscores the importance of improving staff nurse-student interactions, enhancing supervision, and implementing structured training to foster a better clinical learning environment, ultimately benefiting nursing education and patient care.

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