A study to assess the challenges faced in clinical area by the student nurses of a selected nursing institute located in New Delhi.

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Abstract: *Student nurses play a vital role in the healthcare system, bridging the gap between theory and practice as they navigate the clinical environment. However, this journey is not without its challenges. From the moment they step into the clinical setting, student nurses encounter a myriad of obstacles that test their knowledge, skills, and resilience. This study was done to identify the challenges faced by the student nurses in clinical areas.130 student nurses who were pursuing Diploma in General Nursing Midwifery student nurses were selected by using total enumerative sampling technique. Structured questionnaire was developed to collect data and it was shared with the students in form of google form through a link. The study findings revealed that the majority of the student nurses (78, 60%) faced moderate challenges, nearly half of the student nurses (48,36.92%) faced many challenges and only few student nurses (4, 3.07%) faced minimal challenges in clinical area.*

Key Word*: Challenges, Clinical learning environment, Student Nurses, Issues in hospital, Factors.*

1. INTRODUCTION

"The hurdles we overcome as student nurses shape our character and prepare us for the realities of the nursing profession."

- *Amanda Thompson*

"Pursuing a career in nursing is a demanding and rewarding endeavor that requires dedication, hard work and a passion for delivering high -quality patient care" Moreover, it is a performance-based profession and the clinical learning environment plays an essential part in the accomplishment of professional abilities. Clinical learning in a complex environment affected by many factors nevertheless it provides a chance for nursing students to learn and understand theoretical knowledge and expand the mental, psychological, and psychomotor skills which are of significant for the patient care.

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. Studies show that the students' noneffective exposure to the clinical learning environment has increased dropout rates. Some nursing students have left the profession as a result of challenges they face in the clinical setting.

There are various challenges that occur in nursing education in clinical setting perhaps exploring those challenges encountered by undergraduate nurses in term of clinical setting difficulties helps to identify the significant problems hindering the professional development and competence, advance training and boost the quality of internship.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

According to Vijayshri M. Waghmare, Kanwaljeet Kaur (2022), Study to Assess the Adjustment Problems Faced by the 1stYr Basic B. Sc. Nursing Students. The sample size comprised of 207 1st year Basic B. Sc nursing student The

results of this study showed that the majority of 99 (47.82%) having moderate level of adjustment problem followed by 63 (30.43%) has low level of adjustment problem and 45 (21.73%) has high level of adjustment problem. There is a positive correlation between the Academic adjustment V/s psychological adjustment (0.70), Academic adjustment v/s Economic Adjustment (0.61), Academic adjustment v/s social adjustment (0.77), Psychological adjustment v/s Economic adjustment (0.47), psychological adjustment v/s social adjustment (0.64) and Economic adjustment v/s social adjustment (0.59). there was significant association between age, Religion, Type of family, Mothers education, Fathers education, Fathers occupation and place of residence and there was no significant association between, Gender, number of siblings, mother's occupation, monthly family income, is there anyone in nursing profession from your family and leisure time activity with the level of adjustment problem

According to Almaz Addisie (2020), A mixed study conducted to assess the challenges faced during clinical placement among nursing students. Total 179 third- and fourth-year undergraduate nursing students selected using

simple random sampling for the quantitative study and seven purposively selected students for qualitative study and the findings were: prevalence of challenge among nursing students was found to be 29 (16.9%). Consequently, in bivariate logistic regression, students' religion, residence, entrance year, learning institution and substance use were found to have association with challenge among nursing student. However, in multivariable analysis only substance use and learning institution found to have significant association. Furthermore, statistically significant negative moderate correlation between students' total challenge score and their overall competency score were identified [r= -0.672, P value = < 0.001]. In qualitative content regards student Nurses factors, lack of role model, instructors' responsibilities, inadequate support structure & communication, lack of equipment and college responsibility were emerged.

According to Tigistu Gebretensaye (2018), A qualitative study was conducted to explore challenges faced by nursing students in clinical learning environment. The participants consisted of nine nursing students, five males and four females aged between 22 and 24 years were involved Three major themes emerged were: learner's non-readiness, insufficient clinical supervision and unsupportive clinical environment. So, the study concluded that student face many challenges during their clinical experience includes lack of effective communication skill, inadequate follow-up of the instructors and unsupportive clinical environment.

3. OBJECTIVES :

The objectives of this study were:

- To assess the challenges faced in clinical area by the student nurses.
- To compare the challenges faced in clinical area by the student nurses as per their batch.
- To find out the factors associated with the challenges faced in clinical area by the student nurses.

4. MATERIAL AND METHODS :

The research approach and design were quantitative and exploratory. 130 student nurses who were pursuing DGNM nursing student were selected by using total enumerative sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was used to assess the challenges faced in the clinical by student nurses of a selected nursing institute. The tool was comprised of three sections. **Section 1:** It Consist of demographic variable like age (in years), gender, year of study, nationality etc. of the student nurses; **Section 2:** Description on challenges faced in clinical area by student nurses. It consists of 10 questions, each question is having 4 options (never, sometimes, often and always). The scoring criteria is: Never = 1, sometimes = 2, often = 3, always = 4 and the reverse scoring is applicable for Question no - 3,5, 6, 8, 9 and 10. Maximum Score = 40; Minimum Score = 10. **Section 3:** consist of opinionnaire on factors associated with the challenges faced in the clinical area by student nurses. It consists of 5 questions like communication factor, IPR factor and time management factor. Structured questionnaire was shared with the students in form of google form through a link in their WhatsApp. The permission from the principal was taken before starting the study. The data was collected in the month of May 2024. The aims and objectives of this study were explained to each participant and written consent was obtained before data collection.

5. RESULT

The data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statics respectively . Table 1 shows that nearly half of the student nurses 67 (51.53 %) are in the age group of 17 to 20 years, 60 (46.15%) fall in the age group of 20 to 24 years, 2 (1.53%) in the age group of 24 to 28 years whereas only 1(1%) is in the age group of above 28 years. Majority of the student nurses were studying in 1st year 47 (36.15%), followed by 2nd year 48 (36.92%) and 3rd year 35 (26.92%). Majority of the students are 12th class passed 115 (88.46%), nearly 10 (7.69%) students are from the other health care related course and about 5 (3.84%) non- health care related course. 114(87.69%) students belong to India and rest 16 (12.3%) were non- Indian. More than the half of the nursing students got admission in nursing with self-motivation 94 (72.30%), nearly 16 (12.3%) due to parents/ family pressure, 0% peer pressure, about 7(5.38%) couldn't get desired course and 13 (10%) were having any other reason.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Demographic Profile of Student Nurses.
(N = 130)

S. No	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1.	**Age**		
(a)	17-20	67	51.53%
(b)	20-24	60	46.15%
(c)	24-28	2	1.53%
(d)	Above 28	1	1%
2.	**Year Of Studying**		
(a)	1st Year	47	36.15%
(b)	2nd Year	48	36.92%
(c)	3rd Year	35	26.92%
3.	**Educational Qualification**		
(a)	12th Class	115	88.46%
(b)	Other Healthcare Related Courses	10	7.69%
(c)	Other Non-Healthcare Related Courses	5	3.84%
4.	**Nationality**		
(a)	Indian	114	87.69%
(b)	Non-Indian	16	12.3%
5.	**How You Got Admission in Nursing?**		
(a)	Self-Motivation	94	72.30%
(b)	Parents/Family Pressure	16	12.3%
(c)	Peer Pressure	-	-
(d)	Couldn't Get Desired Course	7	5.38%
(e)	Any Other Reason	13	10%

Figure 1: **Distribution of challenges faced in clinical area by student nurses**
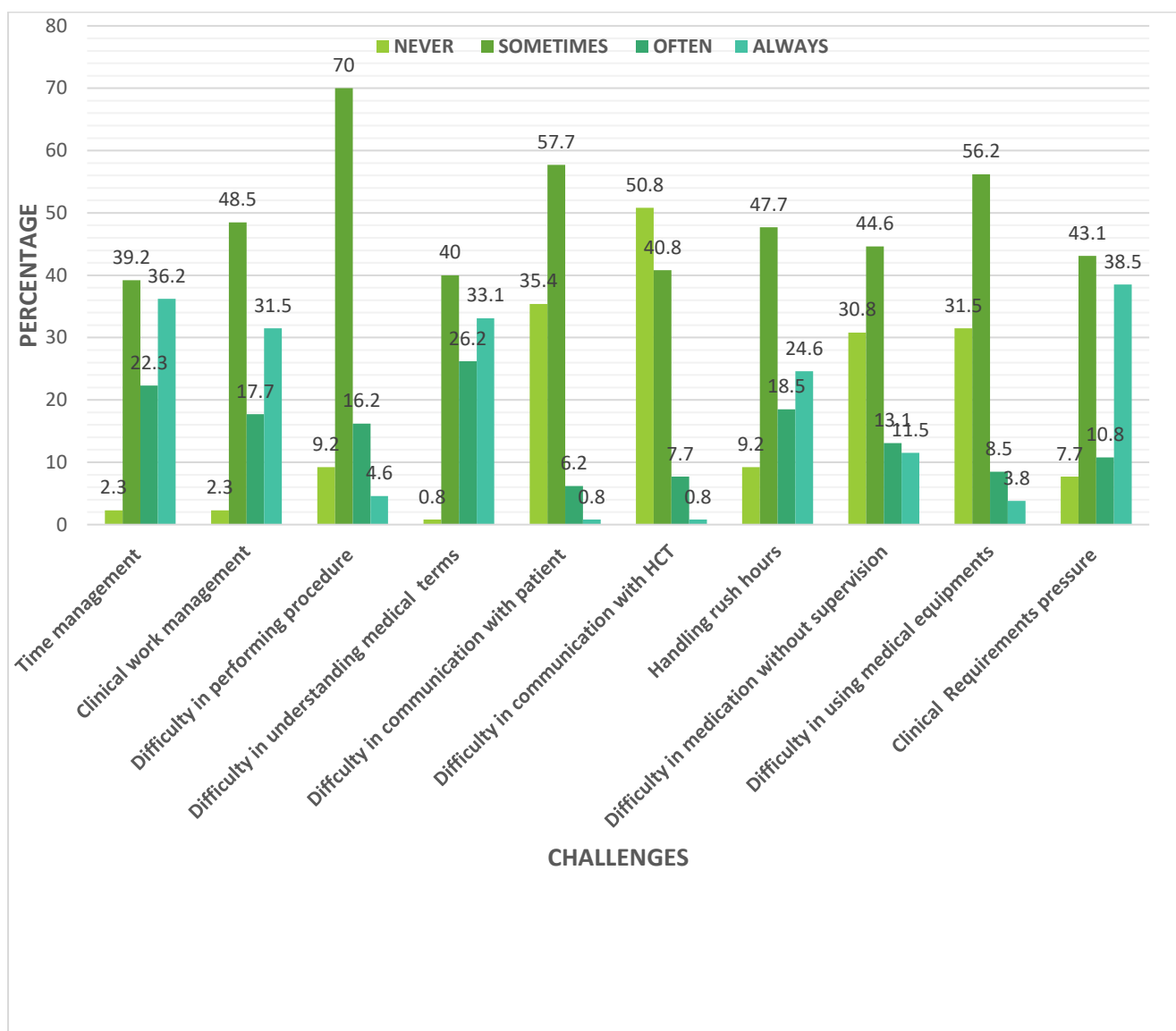

Figure no. 1 depicts that majority of student face difficulty while performing procedures(91,70%), nearly (75,57.7%)face difficulty in communicating with patients, few face difficulty in using medical equipment's (73,56.2%) and rest other student nurses face problem in management of work in clinicals(63,48.5%), (62,47.7%) able to handle rush hours,(58,44.6%) difficulty in administering medication, (56,43.1%) face pressure of clinical requirement,(53,40.8%) face problem in communicating with other health care team member and (51,39.2%) face problem in management of time in clinical area.

Figure 2: Distribution of student nurses according to the challenges faced by them in clinical area.
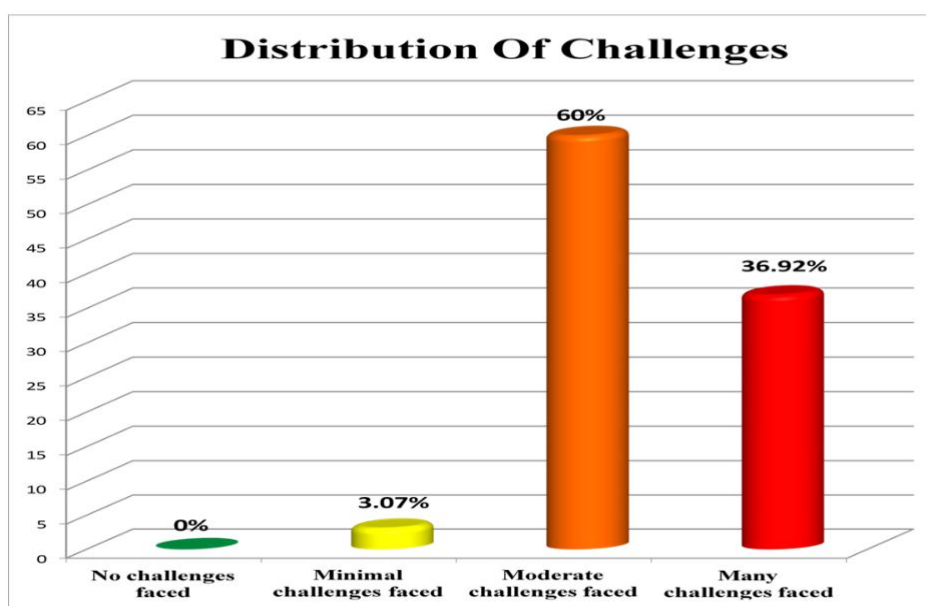
Data represented in figure no.2 shows that majority of the student nurses face moderate challenges (78, 60%), half of the student nurses (48, 36.92%) have many challenges faced and few student nurses (4, 3.07%) faced minimal challenges.

Table no- 2 Shows that the χ^2Tab value (5.99) is more than the χ^2Cal value (3.7) which implies that batch of the student nurses has non-Significant effect on challenges faced by student nurses in clinical area.

Table :2 Chi- square value of challenges faced in clinical area by student nurses.

YEAR OF STUDY	ABOVE MEDIAN	BELOW MEDIAN	χ^2Cal	χ^2Tab	df
First Year	37	11			
Second Year	42	6	3.7	5.99[NS]	2
Third Year	24	10			

Table: 3 Indicates that the calculated f-value (9.95, 2.87) is more than the tabulated f- value (3.07, 0.375) respectively which implies that batches of the student nurses have Significant effect on the challenges faced in clinical area by student nurses in clinical area.

Table:3 ANOVA value of challenges faced in clinical area by student nurses.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE	N (No. of sample)	TOTAL	MEAN =X	F Cal	F Tab
I. YEAR OF STUDY					
First Year	48	1309	27.27		
Second Year	49	1437	29.32	9.95*	3.07
Third Year	33	1028	31.15		
TOTAL	**130**	**3774**	**87.74**		
II. REASONN FOR CHOOSING NURSING					
Self-motivation	96	2829	29.46		
Parents/ family pressure	16	419	26.18		

Couldn't get desired course	6	172	28.66	2.87*	0.375
Any other reason	12	354	29.5		
TOTAL	**130**	**3774**	**113.8**		

Table no.4 shows that majority of the student nurses (41,31.53%) were having low confidence, nearly (26,20%) were having shortage of staff in clinical area, and many of them facing problem with lack of equipment (16,12.30%), lack of knowledge (13,10%), improper communication skill (12,9.23%), lack of supervision (12,9.23%) and about (10,7.69%) were having lack of skill/practice. Most of the student nurses faced biasness (35, 26.92%), inadequate time management (32,24.61%), some were having lack of knowledge and skill (24,18.46%), lack of opportunities (23,17.69%) and about (16,12.30%) were facing problem with inadequate supervision in clinical area. Majority of student nurses were not having good interpersonal relationship with doctor (45,34.61%), with other health care worker (23,17.69%), nearly (20,15.38%) with teacher, with patient about (20,15.38%) whereas (13,10%) with other student nurses and (9,6.92%) respectively with the nurses.

Table no.4 Frequency and Percentage Distribution factors associated with the challenges faced by student nurses in clinical area

S.NO	Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Q1.	**The factor which hinders the most in clinical area**		
(a)	Lack of knowledge	13	10%
(b)	Low confidence	41	31.53%
(c)	Improper communicating skills	12	9.23%
(d)	Lack of supervision	12	9.23%
(e)	Lack of skills/practice	10	7.69%
(f)	Shortage of staff	26	20%
(g)	Lack of equipment	16	12.30%
Q2.	**The factor which hinders the most in clinical area**		
(a)	Student nurses faced biasness	35	26.92%
(b)	Inadequate supervision	16	12.30%
(c)	Inadequate time management	32	24.61%
(d)	Lack of opportunities	23	17.69%
(e)	Lack of knowledge and skills	24	18.46%
Q3.	**The most challenging interpersonal relationship factor**		
(a)	With patients	20	15.38%
(b)	With nurses	9	6.92%
(c)	With doctors	45	34.61%
(d)	With other health care worker	23	17.69%
(e)	With teachers	20	15.38%
(f)	With other student nurses	13	10%
Q4.	**Key factor which affects the communication with the patients**		
(a)	Verbal/non-verbal communication	23	17.69%
(b)	Culture/religion/nationality/ Economic status	34	26.15%
(c)	Patient body language	19	14.61%
(d)	Does not affect me	54	41.53%

STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES

The challenges faced by student nurses were addressed and the following strategies were discussed with faculty members through lecture cum discussion method as shown in image 1&2 :

- **Effective Time Management:**
  Time management is essential in clinical settings. Clinical instructors should ensure that the workload for students is evenly distributed to allow for a balanced and manageable learning experience. The instructor can assign tasks, procedures, and viva exams based on the syllabus completed in different clinical areas. This helps avoid overwhelming students while ensuring they gain a comprehensive understanding of various procedures.

- **Minimize Frequent Shifting of Students:**
  Frequent shifting of students between different units can disrupt their learning to improve the clinical experience, students should be allowed to spend adequate time in each clinical area to build familiarity and competence.

- **Redemonstrations in Clinicals:**
  On the first day of each clinical posting, the instructor should demonstrate procedures to students. This ensures that all students understand the expectations and the correct methods for various tasks. Additionally, instructors should brief students on the specific procedures that can be performed in the clinical area, helping them prepare and align their learning objectives with the unit's activities.

- **Mentorship for Students:**
  Peer mentorship can be extremely valuable. Encouraging students to help each other—especially in completing written assignments—fosters collaboration and a supportive learning environment. Senior students or those with more experience can guide their classmates, making the learning process smoother and more comprehensive.

- **Introduction to Medical Terminology:**
  Familiarizing students with medical abbreviations, prefixes, suffixes, and medical terminology is vital for effective communication in clinical settings. Instructors should incorporate these elements into their teaching while discussing patient cases, as this enhances students' ability to understand and interact with clinical documentation and communication.

- **Biomedical Engineering Classes:**
  Biomedical engineering or technical training should be tailored to the specific batch of students. Scheduling these classes in line with students' clinical postings ensures that the information is relevant and immediately applicable, helping them understand how medical technology integrates with patient care.

- **Student Feedback:**
  Regular feedback should be gathered from students to assess the challenges they face during their clinical postings. This feedback can provide valuable insights into areas for improvement and instructors in adapting teaching methods or resolving issues that may hinder effective learning.

By implementing these strategies, clinical learning can be more structured, supportive, and aligned with the students' educational goals, ultimately enhancing their competence and confidence in the clinical environment.

(Image 1 and 2 , source of images is principal investigator's camera , prior permission is taken from HOD)

6. DISCUSSION:

The present study was aim to assess the challenges faced by student nurses in the clinical area. The similar study was conducted by "Almaz Addisie (2022) Ethiopia in among 290 student nurses. The study was conducted to assess the challenges faced during clinical placement among nursing students. This study shows that the prevalence of challenges among nursing students was found to be 29(16.9%), and other study was conducted by "Sorumlu Yazar and Elif Akyuz (2022) among 249 student nurses. The study was conducted to assess experienced by nursing students in clinical learning environment and their suggestion. The study shows that 49.8% experienced challenges in clinical area, related to nurse (37.5%), related to education (13.5%), related other challenges (27.0%). We concluded that 60% of student nurses faced moderate challenges, nearly 36.92% faced many challenges and about 3.07% minimal challenges faced.

7. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the challenges faced by the student nurses in clinical settings, by identifying these challenges we can develop such strategies that will foster a supportive learning environment and bridge the theoretical & practice gap which will ultimately enhance the quality of patient care.

8. LIMITATIONS

This study is limited to female nursing students in a selected nursing institute and conducted on only 130 number of student nurses.

9. RECCOMENDATIONS

1. Another study on the factors related to the challenges faced by student nurses in clinical area may be conducted.
2. More research can be done on the challenges faced in clinical area by student nurses of all genders.
3. Similar study may be done on the frontline nurses working in tertiary care hospitals.
4. The study may be conduct on student pursuing other nursing and other healthcare associated courses. (e.g., B.Sc. Nursing, M.Sc. Nursing and OT technicians)

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