

NURSING STUDENTS' VIEWS REGARDING THEIR FIRST CLINICAL PLACEMENT



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Background

The purpose of nursing training, which is composed of both theory and practice, is to develop students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor knowledge, skills, and attitudes. As an indispensable part of nursing training, clinical practice enables students to practice what s/he has learnt in a real setting by integrating and experiencing their knowledge (Karagözoğlu, Özden, Türk, & Yıldız, 2014; T. Levett-Jones, Fahy, Parsons, & Mitchell, 2006). It is known that a favorable regulation of clinical practice areas contributes students to develop nursing knowledge/skills, to interact with other members of the team, and to increase self-confidence and professional readiness (Chuan & Barnett, 2012; Edwards, Smith, Courtney, Finlayson, & Chapman, 2004).

There are various studies analyzing nursing students' views on clinical practice, levels of anxiety, and effect of different clinics on learning experience in the literature. In the study conducted by Tracy Levett-Jones, Pitt, Courtney-Pratt, Harbrow, and Rossiter (2015), anxiety levels of 144 freshers in a nursing department regarding clinical practice were examined and it was found that 34% of the students did not feel ready for clinical practice due to lack of knowledge, skills, and confidence, and therefore, their anxiety levels were high. In another study by Shaban, Khater, and Akhu-Zaheya (2012), clinical setting and assignments were found to be sources of stress. Killam, Mossey, Montgomery, and Timmermans (2013) investigated freshers' views regarding unsafe clinical conditions and evaluate the data. found that students perceived some factors to be threatening safety, such as imposing expectations on students, vague assessment process, limited communication with health professionals, and lack of assessment standards.

In order for nursing students' clinical training to fulfill its aim, it is critical to know the difficulties students encounter, and find out and evaluate their views on clinical practice. Among all student groups, freshers need special attention since they encounter clinical University. practice areas for the first time and deal with many factors. Consequently, this study was planned to identify views of freshers in a nursing department who perform clinical practice for the first time.

Methods

Design

This is a descriptive study conducted to identify views of freshers in a nursing department on clinical practices.

Setting and Sample

The population of the study was composed of 278 students taking the "Fundamentals of Nursing Course" and the study was conducted with the 253 students who agreed to participate in the study.

The first clinical practice of students in the Nursing Department is done within the context of the "Fundamentals of Nursing Course" in the spring term. It is the first course students take as part of their professional courses, and is composed of 112 hours of theory, 80

hours of laboratory practice, and 160 hours of clinical practice. After completion of their **Table 1. Student Nurses' Views regarding Clinical Practice (n = 253)** theoretical courses, students complete laboratory practice after which they start their clinical practice under the supervision of one instructor.

Data Collection and Instruments

The study was implemented after the final exam following the completion of clinical practices. Students were both informed about the study and asked to participate within the same class. Those who accepted were asked to answer the questions in the form. The data was collected using the question forms which was composed of three parts. In the first part, there were 9 questions about students' socio-demographic characteristics. The second part was composed of 26 questions under the subtitles "Physical Learning Setting, Communication, Roles, and Functions of the Nurse and Contributions of Clinical Practice". The third part included 44 propositions about students' views and evaluations regarding clinical practice.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using the statistical package program SPSS, version 16.0 for windows, and numbers, percentage, standard deviation, and min-max were used to

Ethical Considerations

Written approval of the institution and students was obtained and the ethical appropriateness of the study was approved by the ethical committee of the Hacettepe

Results

Mean age of the students was 20.2; 85.4% of the students were female, 71% of them graduated from an high school, 85.4% had a grade point average between 2.51 and 3.50, 64.8% lived in dorms, and 41.9% voluntarily entered the nursing department whereas 40.3% choose this department for employment opportunities.

About 80% to 90% of the students evaluated the suitability for use and quantitative adequateness of equipment, number, and professional competence of nurses, and state of reaching healthcare staff when they need to as "Good" and "Very Good".

Students stated to not have observed nurses' fulfilling the role of defending patient (23.7%) and role of researcher (30%). In terms of giving customized care for patients, approaching the patient in an integrated way, and being a role model for students, between 40-50% of the students evaluated nurses as "Moderate" and "Bad".

	Affected my learning positively		Did not affect my learning		Affected my learning negatively	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Factors Regarding the Patient and Patient's Relatives						
Situations stemming from the patient's clinical status (being angry, sad, in pain, anxious etc.)	83	32.8	74	29.3	96	37.9
Nursing care practices given to the patient	221	87.4	16	6.3	16	6.3
Providing care to the patient with risk of infection from blood and body liquid	109	43.1	108	42.7	36	14.2
Providing care to the patient with a terminal illness	80	31.6	144	56.9	29	11.5
Patient's attitude towards the student	155	61.3	56	22.1	42	16.6
Patient's relatives' attitude towards the student	143	56.5	61	24.1	49	19.4
Patient being a health worker	80	31.6	131	51.8	42	16.6
Factors regarding Clinical Setting						
Nurse's attitude towards the student	176	69.6	31	12.3	46	18.2
Auxiliary staff's attitude towards the student	110	43.5	117	46.2	26	10.3
Physicians' attitude towards the student	93	36.8	143	56.5	17	6.7
Communication between the clinical staff	145	57.3	96	37.9	12	4.7
earning opportunities the nurse provides the student	212	83.3	26	10.3	15	5.9
Workload of the nurse in the clinic	92	36.4	92	36.4	69	27.2
Sharing nurse workload with the student	197	77.9	34	13.4	22	8.7
he diversity of the equipment used for patient care	197	77.9	43	17.0	13	5.1
Vork pace of the clinical application area	150	59.3	55	21.7	48	19.0
eedback of the nurses regarding the student's learning experience	183	72.3	56	22.1	14	5.5
he ease of applying what is learnt in the courses in the clinic	195	77.1	25	9.9	33	13.0
Nurses' attitudes and evaluations regarding nursing profession	112	44.3	79	31.2	62	24.5
Charge nurse's attitudes	158	62.5	60	23.7	35	13.8
he presence of nurses who can be a role model to the student	190	75.1	28	11.1	35	13.8
he conformity of theoretical knowledge and practice	140	55.4	32	12.6	81	32.0
actors Regarding the Instructor						
nstructor's attitude towards the student	229	90.5	13	5.2	11	4.3
nstructor's expectations from the student	211	83.4	22	8.7	20	7.9
nstructor's level of knowledge	239	94.5	12	4.7	2	0.8
nstructor's professional skill	234	92.5	18	7.1	1	0.4
nstructor's feedback regarding the student's learning experience	232	91.7	17	6.7	4	1.6
nstructor's communication with the clinical staff	211	83.4	41	16.2	1	0.4
Teaching methods of the instructors	218	86.2	32	12.6	3	1.2
The number of students per instructor	58	22.9	43	17.0	152	60.1
actors Regarding the Student						
heoretical readiness for clinical practice	204	80.6	20	7.9	29	11.5
Practical readiness for clinical practice	193	76.3	25	9.9	35	13.8
Prejudices regarding clinical practice	47	18.6	108	42.7	98	38.7
Starting and continuing communication with the patient	202	79.8	26	10.3	25	9.9
ear of making a mistake	44	17.4	69	27.3	140	55.3
ear of harming the patient	34	13.4	71	28.1	148	58.5
rejudices regarding clinical practice area	35	13.8	116	45.8	102	40.3
revious experience in a hospital setting	56	22.1	157	62.1	40	15.8
dentifying herself/himself with the patient	113	44.7	102	41.3	38	15.0
Communicating with the instructor	217	85.8	28	11.0	8	3.2
Clinical evaluation grade anxiety	40	15.8	139	55.0	74	29.2
Communication with other nursing students	175	69.2	62	24.5	16	6.3
Jnknown medical terms and illnesses	102	40.3	58	22.9	93	36.8

Patient's emotional state (being angry, sad, anxious, and in pain) and attitudes towards students were stated to be factors affecting learning negatively for 37.9% and 16.6% of students respectively (Table 1).

Professional knowledge levels of instructors (94.5%) was stated to be a "factor affecting their learning positively" whereas the number of students per instructor was stated to "have a negative effect on their learning" (60.1%) (Table 1).

Students stated that the oretical (80.6%) and practical readiness (76.3%) for clinical practice, starting and continuing communication with the patient (79.8%), and communication with the instructor (85.8%) were factors that affected their learning positively; but prejudices regarding clinical practice (38.7%), fear of making a mistake (55.3%), prejudices towards clinical practice area (58.5%), and clinical practice grade anxiety (29.2%) were stated to be factors affecting their learning negatively (Table 1).

Conclusion

Being aware of what students experience during their first clinical practice will help instructors prepare settings where students can have more positive experiences. This study showed that students' learning was affected by healthcare professionals they worked with as well as clinical wards and clinical instructors.

Research Highlights

- Suitability of physical setting to fulfill students personal needs, opportunity of practicing the skills learnt was assessed as "Moderate" and "Bad".
- Instructors' attitudes towards and expectations from students, levels of professional knowledge, feedback, communication with healthcare staff, and teaching methods were stated to affect students' learning positively.
- Prejudices towards clinical practice, and clinical area, fear of making mistake, grade anxiety and patient's emotional state and attitudes were stated to be factors affecting students learning negatively.

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