

A STUDY TO ASSESS THE EFFECT OF EMPOWERMENT ON CLINICAL COMPETENCE AMONG BSC. NURSING STUDENTS AT SELECTED NURSING COLLEGE OF ERNAKULAM DISTRICT

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Student empowerment is the process in which the learner attains the ability to direct one's own self and utilises it to make independent decisions which bring out the benefit to the individual as well as to the society. Student nurses are the future of the healthcare system, who need to be motivated to steer the wheels of learning. **Objectives:** to assess the pre-test level of clinical competence among BSc Nursing students in experimental and control group, to assess the post-test level of clinical competence among BSc. Nursing students in experimental and control group, to evaluate the effect of empowerment on clinical competence among BSc. Nursing students, to find out association between pre-test level of clinical competence with selected demographic variables. **Methodology:** A Quasi-experimental research design was adopted with sample size 60 (30 each in Experimental and Control group). Purposive sampling technique was used and the subjects were randomly allocated to Experimental and Control group. Pre-test was conducted using self-structured checklist and the intervention was given to the Experimental group. Post-test was conducted in both groups after 7 days. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The result of the study shows that empowerment has a major role in improving the clinical competence among BSc. Nursing students. **Major Findings of the Study:** The pilot study was conducted and found the study was feasible. H1 was tested using paired t test and the result showed the calculated t value (20.2) is greater than the table value (2.06). Hence, H1 was accepted. H2 was tested using unpaired t test and the result showed the calculated t value (24.4) is greater than the table value (2.01). Hence, H2 was accepted. The association between pre-test level of clinical competence with selected demographic variables was calculated by "Chi-square test" and result showed gender has association with the pre interventional level of clinical competence. **The Result of the Study** shows regular empowerment of the students can improve the level of clinical competence to a great extent.

KEYWORDS

Assess, Empowerment, Clinical Competence, Nursing Students.

INTRODUCTION

As the country's future lies on the youth of that country, so the students are to be motivated to take charge of their life, steer the wheels of learning and acquire the necessary skills with integrity and self-motivation. It's being emphasised time and again that for the empowerment of students and the country indirectly, teachers need to open the doors to a new world of education. Also, it is the student's responsibility to take that first small step and head towards wisdom.

Student empowerment is the process in which the learner attains the ability to direct one's own self and utilises it to make independent decisions which bring out the benefit to the individual as well as to the society. Student nurses are the future of the healthcare system, who need to be motivated to steer the wheels of learning. Therefore, competence is a crucial attribute for assuring high quality, ethical and safe nursing care. In this process of learning a teacher plays a vital role in inculcating the ability to choose and drive self-decision power.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE

Nursing is both an art and science. For better understanding and gain of clinical skill, the educators and education system need to promote a sense of control and self-efficacy among the undergraduates. Students are not passive participants or empty vessels ready to be passively filled. But the educators need to widen their horizon and consider learners as respected partners in the process of learning. Very little is being researched and projected in the public domain about the extent of nursing students' empowerment and its impact on learning. Nursing students must be empowered. Hence a research study was undertaken by the investigator to assess the effect of empowerment on clinical competence among undergraduate nursing students.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

"A study to assess the effect of empowerment on clinical competence among BSc. Nursing students at selected nursing college of Ernakulam district".

OBJECTIVES

- 1) Assess the pre-test level of Clinical Competence among BSc Nursing students in Experimental and Control group.
- 2) Assess the post-test level of Clinical Competence among BSc. Nursing students in Experimental and Control group.
- 3) Evaluate the effect of empowerment on Clinical Competence among BSc. Nursing students.
- 4) Find out association between pre-test level of Clinical Competence with selected demographic variables.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

Assess:- The systematic process of measuring, evaluating, and determining the level of Clinical Competence among fourth year BSc nursing students.

Empowerment:- The term Empowerment refers to the process of becoming more confident, decisive and clinically proficient to contribute towards the care of the patient.

Clinical competence:- In this study, Clinical Competence refers to the perceived ability of BSc Nursing students to integrate knowledge, technical skills, critical thinking, ethical values, and communication to provide safe and effective patient care. This competence will be measured by self-structured observational checklist.

Nursing students:- Students undergoing training in fourth year BSc nursing course in a selected college of nursing.

HYPOTHESES

- H₁-There is significant difference between pre and post-test level of clinical competence among Experimental and Control group.
- H₂-There is significant difference between the post-test level of clinical competence between Experimental and Control group.
- H₃-There is significant association between pre-test level of clinical competence with selected demographic variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sl. No.	Title of the study	Author/year	Major findings	Remarks
1.	Graduating Nursing Students' Empowerment and Related Factors: Comparative Study in Six European Countries	Laura Visiers, Jimenez, Lissa Kuokkanen, Helena Leino Klipi, et al. (2022)	Graduating nursing students' self-assessed empowerment level was moderate, with differences among countries. Students with high empowerment had good attrition, and better academic achievements, and a higher competence level.	Empowerment needs to be enhanced during nursing education.
2.	Descriptive correlational study to determine relation between nurse educators' empowerment and nursing students' clinical competence.	Salmein Ahamed Fath et.al 2019	positive correlation between nurse educators' empowerment and nursing students' clinical competence.	Periodic training courses should be provided in order to keep nursing students updating knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding to clinical practice.

3.	The meaning of empowerment for nursing students: a critical incident study.	Bradbury-Jones C, Sambrook S, Irvine F. (2007)	Students experience empowerment and disempowerment in clinics in areas like learning in practice, team membership and power. Continuity of placement, a mentor and time had empowered and disempowered if they were absent.	Supportive mentors are vital in the empowerment of nursing students.
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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Research approach - Quantitative Research Approach
- Research design - Quasi-Experimental Design (Non –equivalent control group pre –test post- test design.)
- Population - B.Sc. Nursing students
- Setting for the study – Selected College of Nursing in Kerala. Availability of the subjects, and familiarity of the investigator were few reasons for selection of setting
- Sampling technique- Purposive sampling
- Sample size - 60 (30 Control & 30 Experimental)

SAMPLING CRITERIA

Inclusion criteria:

- 4th year B.Sc. nursing students.
- Students who are willing to participate in the study.

Exclusion criteria:

- Students who are
- Not available at the time of data collection

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Tool 1: Demographic data

It includes age, gender, religion, type of family, interest towards nursing profession and ordinal position in the family.

Tool 2: Observational Checklist

This is to assess the clinical competence of Control and Experimental group. It has 24 components for assessing the clinical competence. Each component carries 1 marks.

Tool 3: Intervention

- Procedure demonstration (and redemonstration)
- Keep a to-do-list. (structured prioritization)
- Feynman technique (learning by teaching)
- Practice memorization (active recall/ spaced repetition)
- Find your why (meaningful work)
- Health talk (communication skill)

CONTENT VALIDITY

Content validity obtained from experts in the field of nursing.

RELIABILITY OF THE TOOL

Reliability was checked through test-re test method and r value was 0.7. Thus, the tool was found to be reliable.

PILOT STUDY

Pilot study was conducted. Pre-test done in both groups. Interventions were provided to experimental group. Post-test done in both groups after 7 days. Data collected were subjected to statistical analysis and the study was found to be feasible.

DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

A prior permission was obtained from authority.

Planned and confirmed samples by discussing with authority.

30 Control & 30 Experimental group was selected by purposive sampling.

Consent was obtained from the subjects.

Pre-test done in both groups and intervention given to Experimental group.

Post-test done in both groups after 7 days.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The study adheres to ethical principles, informed consent was obtained, confidentiality was maintained, and the right to withdraw from the study at any point was given to participants. To ensure the ethical conduct of the research, suggestions of expert were obtained.

PLAN FOR DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is planned to be done by using descriptive and inferential statistics based on the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Part-1

Section A: Description of baseline characteristics

Table-1: Frequency distribution of nursing students regarding demographic variables N=60

Sl. No.	Demographic variables	frequency	Percentage
1.	Age		
	a. 21-22	51	85
	b. 22-2	07	12
	c. >23 years	02	03
2.	Gender		
	a. Male	09	15
	b. Female	51	85
3.	Religion		
	a. Hindu	28	47
	b. Chistian	21	35
	c. Muslim	11	18
4.	Type of family		
	a. Nuclear	56	93
	b. Joint	02	03
	c. Extended	01	02
	d. Broken	01	02
5.	Interest towards nursing profession		
	a. Yes	54	90
	b. No	06	10
6.	Ordinal position in the family.		
	a. First	32	53
	b. Second	18	30
	c. Third	07	12
	d. Fourth	03	05

The data presented in table 1 shows that, among students 85% were the age group between 21-22 years. Majority students were females (85%). 47 % students belong to Hindu by religion. Type of family (93%) were nuclear, majority of the students (90%) have interest towards nursing profession, regarding ordinal position in the family 53% students were first order.

Part-II

Section A: Distribution of pre-test level of clinical competence among BSc. Nursing students in Experimental and Control group.

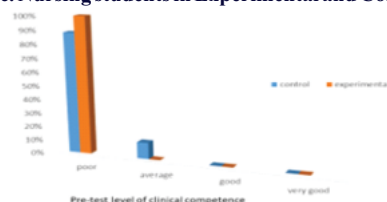


Fig.1: Distribution of pre-test level of clinical competence in Experimental and Control group.

The above figure depicts that, in the pre-test level of Experimental and Control group majority (100% and 88%) students have poor level of clinical competence.

Distribution of post –test level of Clinical Competence in Experimental and Control group.

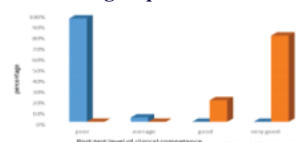


Fig.2: Distribution of post –test level of clinical competence in Experimental and Control group.

The above figure illustrates that the post test of Experimental group, 80% have very good and 20% have good where as in Control group 96% have poor and 4% have average level of clinical competence.

Section B: Analysis of pre and post-test level of clinical competence in Experimental and Control group.

Table-2: Comparison of pre- and post-test level of clinical competence between Experimental and Control group. n=60

		Mean	Standard Deviation	't' value
Experimental	Pre-test	4.92	1.5253	20.2
	Post-test	19.84	1.3503	
Control	Pre-test	5.52	1.2288	10.3
	Post-test	6.64	1.7483	

Significant at 0.05 level

The above table reveals the calculated t value (20.2) is greater than table value (2.06) which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence, H1 is accepted. It indicates empowerment is effective in improving clinical competence among students.

Section C: Analysis of post-test level of clinical competence in Experimental and Control group.

Table:3 Comparison of post-test level of clinical competence between Experimental and Control group. n=60

	Mean	Standard deviation	t value
Experimental group	19.8	1.35	24.4
Control group	6.64	1.74	

Significant at 0.05 level

The above table reveals that the calculated t value (24.4) is greater than the table value (2.01) which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence, H2 is accepted. It indicates that empowerment is effective in improving the level of clinical competence in experimental group compared to control group.

Section D: Association of pre-test level of clinical competence with selected demographic variables.

Table:4 Association of pre-test level of clinical competence with selected demographic variables. n=60

Demographic variables	Calculated chi-square	Degree of freedom	Table value	Inference
Age	0.284	1	3.84	NS
Gender	4.9	1	3.84	S
Religion	0.183	2	5.99	NS
Nature of interest	0.624	1	3.84	NS
Ordinal Position	2.25	2	5.99	NS
Type of family	0.969	2	5.99	NS
Annual income	1.89	3	7.82	NS

Significant at 0.05 level

The above table shows among demographic variables, the calculated chi-square value of gender, 4.9 is greater than the table value 3.84. It indicates there is significant association between the pre-test level of clinical competence and gender.

NURSING IMPLICATIONS

Nursing Education

- Educators should move beyond traditional teaching by providing opportunities for decision-making and autonomy, which increases student confidence.
- Incorporating mentorship programs helps bridge the gap between theory and practice, enhancing competence.

Nursing Practice

- Creating an environment that encourages open communication and supports students in reporting concerns boosts psychological empowerment.
- Reducing fear of retaliation and providing access to resources strengthens clinical performance.
- Implementing workshops and training programs to enhance structural empowerment and psychological empowerment can bridge the gap between theory and clinical practice.

Nursing Administration

- Nurse managers should foster "structural empowerment" by ensuring students have access to information, support, and resources, which directly impacts their ability to provide quality care.

Nursing Research

- Future research should focus on longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of empowerment strategies on retention.
- Studies need to explore the specific impact of mentoring and diverse clinical experiences on empowering nursing students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Awareness programs to teachers can be included about the importance of empowering students.
- The strategies for improving clinical competence should be included in the nursing curriculum.
- The presence of clinical instructors throughout the clinical training in each ward is encouraged.
- The study can be conducted in large samples. Thereby findings can be generalized.
- A qualitative study can be conducted to assess the prospects and challenges in nursing curriculum.

CONCLUSION

Nursing is a profession within the healthcare sector focused on the care of individuals, families, and communities so they may attain, maintain, or recover optimal health and quality of life. Nursing empowerment facilitates nurses in delivering quality care to the clients. Patients are more satisfied when they perceive their care came from well-qualified and competent staff. Hence, clinical competence hastens the recovery of patients. The study reveals that empowerment of nursing students helps to improve the clinical competence levels and will help in their future professional life.

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