

Assessing the Quality of Nursing Education Among Students as a Basis for an Action Plan

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ABSTRACT

Faculty shortages have become a significant concern in nursing education, potentially affecting the quality of instruction and students' learning experiences. This study aimed to assess the quality of nursing education among students in a selected institution in Iloilo City in relation to faculty shortages and to determine whether demographic variables influence students' perceptions. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed. A total of 60 nursing students from Level II to Level IV were selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using a validated researcher-made questionnaire consisting of demographic profile and perception indicators, and were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson correlation. Findings revealed that faculty shortages have a high impact on nursing education, particularly in clinical exposure, academic guidance, instructional quality, and learning environment. Students reported limited supervision, reduced mentoring, and decreased access to faculty support. Despite these challenges, results showed no significant relationship between demographic variables and students' perceptions, indicating that the effects of faculty shortages are experienced consistently across different groups. The study concludes that faculty shortages significantly affect the overall quality of nursing education. These findings highlight the need for institutional interventions such as faculty recruitment, improved workload management, and enhanced academic support systems to ensure effective teaching and learning outcomes.

Keywords: Faculty shortage, nursing students, clinical education, quality of nursing education, academic support

INTRODUCTION

The global demand for healthcare professionals continues to rise, with the World Health Organization (2025) estimating a shortage of 4.5 million nurses by 2030, prompting countries like the Philippines to expand nursing education programs. Iloilo City has become a major nursing education hub in Western Visayas, but faculty shortages persist due to migration of experienced nurses abroad and retirement of senior staff. Some schools operate below recommended faculty-to-student ratios, leaving existing faculty with heavy workloads combining teaching and hospital duties. Limited local research has examined how this affects the quality of education. This study assessed the quality of nursing education in relation to faculty shortages, exploring students' perceptions of clinical exposure, academic guidance, instructional quality, and the learning environment. Findings show faculty shortages significantly impact both academic and clinical learning.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess the quality of nursing education as perceived by nursing students in a selected nursing institution in Iloilo City in relation to existing faculty shortages. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the student-respondents in terms of: age; gender; year level; general weighted average (GWA)?
2. What is the perceived impact of faculty shortages on nursing students in terms of: access to clinical learning experiences; availability of academic guidance and mentoring; and quality of instruction and classroom learning?
3. How do faculty shortages influence the overall learning environment and educational experience of nursing students? Is there a significant relationship between the demographic profile of the student-respondents and their perceptions of the impact of faculty shortages on the quality of nursing education? Based on the findings of the study, what action plan may be proposed to enhance the quality of nursing education in the institution?

Scope and Delimitations

This study assessed the quality of nursing education among students in relation to faculty shortages at a selected institution, specifically the University of San Agustin. It included nursing students from levels II, III, and IV, as these groups have sufficient exposure to both the academic and clinical components of the nursing program. The study examined students' perceptions of the impact of faculty shortages on four key areas: clinical exposure, academic guidance, instructional quality, and learning environment. It also considered the respondents' demographic profile, including age, gender, year level, and general weighted average (GWA), to determine whether these variables influence their perceptions.

Review of Related Literature

Faculty shortages have become a major challenge in nursing education worldwide. The growing demand for nurses, combined with faculty retirements and the migration of educators to higher-paying clinical or international roles, has created an imbalance between student enrollment and faculty availability, limiting schools' capacity to admit students and provide quality instruction and supervision (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2023). Faculty members are essential in delivering classroom instruction, clinical supervision, and mentoring, and their availability directly affects students' knowledge, clinical competence, and confidence. When faculty are limited, workloads increase, student interaction decreases, and feedback and individualized support suffer (Yancey & Moreland, 2022). This challenge is also evident in the Philippines, where rising enrollment has outpaced the supply of qualified educators, partly due to migration (Philippine Nurses Association, 2023). While previous research has focused on workforce issues, recruitment, and retention, fewer studies have examined how students themselves perceive the effects of faculty shortages on their learning experiences.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in two theoretical frameworks - the Constructivist Learning

Theory and the Donabedian Model of Quality Assessment which together explain how learning environments and educational structures influence the quality of nursing education. By integrating these two perspectives, the study provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how faculty shortages affect the quality of nursing education and students' learning experiences, forming the basis for evidence-based program and policy recommendations.

Conceptual Framework

This study is based on the assumption that faculty shortages affect the quality of nursing education. Faculty shortage is the independent variable, while the dependent variables are four dimensions of educational quality: clinical exposure, academic guidance, instructional quality, and learning environment. Respondents' demographic characteristics—age, gender, year level, and general weighted average—serve as intervening variables that may or may not relate to their perceptions.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive correlational research design, a quantitative non-experimental approach used to determine the relationship between variables without establishing causality. Descriptive correlational research aims to systematically describe a phenomenon and examine the degree and direction of association between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Research Design

This design is appropriate for the study as it allows the researcher to explore the relationship between students' perceptions of faculty shortages and the quality of nursing education without manipulating any variables. Correlational research is useful in identifying whether variables are positively or negatively related and in determining the strength of such relationships (Polit & Beck, 2021).

Research Steps

The study commenced with a comprehensive review of local and international literature related to faculty shortages, nursing education, educational quality, and student learning experiences, which guided the development of a structured questionnaire. After expert validation and institutional approval, eligible nursing students were selected through purposive sampling and asked to provide informed consent. Data were collected through printed and online questionnaires, then analyzed statistically and interpreted in relation to the study's objectives and existing literature, forming the basis for the conclusions and recommendations.

Data Collection and Sample Selection

The study was conducted at the College of Nursing of the University of San Agustin, Iloilo City, Philippines. The total population consisted of 1,936 nursing students enrolled in Levels II to IV. The sample size was estimated using Slovin's formula with a 15% margin of error, yielding a minimum sample requirement of 43 respondents. To improve representation and compensate for possible nonresponse, the final sample size was increased to 60

respondents. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on predetermined inclusion criteria.

Data Analysis Methods

The researcher checked and organized the collected data for completeness and accuracy. Responses were encoded, tabulated, and prepared for statistical analysis. Frequency and percentages described respondents' demographic profile (age, gender, year level, GWA). The weighted mean determined students' perceptions of the impact of faculty shortages. Pearson's r was used to examine relationships between demographic characteristics and perceptions.

Research Hypotheses and Validation

The study was guided by the following null hypothesis: there is no significant relationship between the demographic profile of nursing students, specifically age, gender, year level, and general weighted average (GWA), and their perceptions of the impact of faculty shortages on nursing education. To ensure the validity of the research instrument, a researcher-developed questionnaire was prepared based on an extensive review of the related literature and the study's objectives.

Study Limitations and Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to ethical standards in conducting research to protect the rights and welfare of the respondents by obtaining informed consent from all participants, maintaining anonymity and confidentiality, and allowing participants to withdraw at any time. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that the data collected were handled with integrity and honesty. The information gathered was accurately recorded, analyzed, and reported without any form of manipulation or fabrication.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that faculty shortages significantly affect both academic and clinical components of nursing education. The high impact on academic guidance suggests reduced access to mentoring and consultation, consistent with previous studies highlighting increased faculty workload as a barrier to effective teaching. Similarly, limited clinical exposure reflects insufficient supervision, which may compromise skill development and preparedness for professional practice. The impact on the learning environment further emphasizes the systemic nature of the issue, affecting scheduling, academic support, and student engagement. The absence of a significant relationship between demographic variables and perception indicates that the effects of faculty shortages are universally experienced among students.

SUMMARY

This study examined nursing students' perceptions of the impact of faculty shortages on nursing education in a selected institution in Iloilo City. It explored their demographic background, how faculty shortages affect clinical exposure, academic guidance, instructional quality, and the learning environment, and whether demographics shaped their views. Results showed that faculty shortages had a strong impact overall, with academic guidance rated

highest, followed by clinical exposure, learning environment, and instructional quality. Students also felt the shortage strongly in the learning environment, citing limited consultation time, scheduling issues, reduced academic support, and weaker clinical preparation.

CONCLUSIONS

Faculty availability is essential for quality nursing education, as adequate supervision, mentoring, and academic support ensure meaningful learning experiences. The learning environment depends heavily on faculty capacity to guide students and manage academic responsibilities, meaning limited faculty resources can weaken educational delivery. Addressing faculty shortages through stronger support systems, improved workforce planning, and enhanced academic resources is critical to sustaining quality nursing education and preparing competent future professionals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings and conclusions, it is highly recommended that academic administrators strengthen faculty recruitment and retention programs to address faculty shortages. Providing competitive compensation, professional development opportunities, and a supportive work environment may help attract and retain qualified nursing educators. Additionally, effective workload distribution should be implemented to ensure that faculty members can adequately perform their teaching and mentoring roles.

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AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

Artificial Intelligence (AI)-assisted technology (ChatGPT, OpenAI) was used during the preparation of this manuscript to improve grammar, language clarity, sentence structure, organization, and overall readability. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret data; all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

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