
Influence of Clinical Instructor Support on the Clinical Confidence of Student Nurses During Duty Rotation

Benelyn Joy A. David¹, Joel John A. Dela Merced²

<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-7901-5228>¹, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1459-5274>²

St. Bernadette of Lourdes College¹, EduHeart Knowledge Network and Publishing, Inc.²

bdavid@sbllc.edu.ph¹ jdelamerced@sbllc.edu.ph²

ABSTRACT

Clinical confidence is critical for student nurses navigating hospital-based practice, and the quality of guidance received during clinical rotations plays a decisive role in shaping this confidence. This study examines the influence of clinical instructor support on the clinical confidence of student nurses undergoing duty rotation at a selected medical institute. A descriptive-comparative design is employed among Bachelor of Science in Nursing students from various year levels who have completed at least one supervised clinical placement. Data are gathered using a structured questionnaire adapted from the Clinical Learning Environment, Supervision, and Nurse Teacher (CLES+T) Evaluation Scale and the National League for Nursing Self-Confidence in Learning Scale (NLN SCLS). Clinical instructor support is assessed across five domains: emotional support, cognitive and instructional support, feedback and supervision, role modeling, and accessibility; clinical confidence is measured across five corresponding domains: clinical skills, communication, decision-making, emergency handling, and readiness for practice. The study is grounded in Bandura Social Cognitive Theory, Vygotsky Sociocultural Theory, and Benner Novice to Expert Model, which together support the view that clinical confidence develops through meaningful instructor-student interaction. The findings are expected to reveal the extent to which instructor support influences students confidence and whether this relationship differs across demographic variables such as year level, sex, clinical area, and exposure frequency. Results are intended to inform mentorship programs, faculty training, and clinical learning environment design, contributing to the development of confident, competent, and compassionate nurses.

Keywords: *clinical instructor support, clinical confidence, student nurses, nursing education, clinical rotation, mentorship, descriptive-comparative*

INTRODUCTION

Clinical instructor support is widely recognized as one of the most influential factors shaping student nurses' confidence during clinical rotation. Instructors who provide consistent emotional support, constructive feedback, and accessible guidance help students bridge the gap between classroom theory and real patient care, while those who are distant, critical, or unavailable can leave students feeling unprepared and anxious in clinical settings. This dynamic has taken on greater urgency as nursing programs face growing enrollment alongside strained clinical placement capacity, making the quality of instructor-student interaction, rather than exposure

alone, a key determinant of how confident and competent graduating nurses become (World Health Organization, 2022).

This study examines the influence of clinical instructor support on the clinical confidence of student nurses undergoing clinical rotation, with attention to how this relationship varies across demographic factors such as year level, sex, clinical area, and exposure frequency. The findings are intended to inform mentorship program design, faculty development, and clinical learning environment policy, ultimately contributing to the development of confident, competent, and compassionate nurses.

Statement of the Problem

Clinical rotations are widely considered one of the most essential parts of nursing education because they allow student nurses to translate classroom knowledge into actual patient care. Through these experiences, students begin to develop not only their technical skills but also their confidence in handling real clinical situations. Clinical confidence, understood as a student's belief in their ability to perform nursing tasks effectively, plays a significant role in shaping their performance, decision-making, and readiness for professional practice. In today's healthcare environment, where systems are increasingly strained by workforce shortages, the need to produce confident and competent nurses has become more pressing. Global reports have emphasized that strengthening the nursing workforce is a key priority to ensure quality healthcare delivery (World Health Organization, 2022).

This study aims to determine the relationship between clinical instructor support and the level of clinical confidence of nursing students. The study seeks to describe the extent of support provided by clinical instructors and the level of confidence demonstrated by student nurses during their clinical duties, as well as to examine the relationship between these variables.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the student nurses in terms of: 1.1 Age 1.2 Sex 1.3 Year level 1.4 Clinical area 1.5 Frequency of exposure
2. What is the level of clinical instructor support as perceived by the student nurses in terms of: 2.1 Emotional support 2.2 Cognitive support 2.3 Feedback 2.4 Role modeling 2.5 Accessibility
3. What is the level of clinical confidence of student nurses during clinical rotation as indicated by: 3.1 Clinical skills 3.2 Communication 3.3 Decision-making 3.4 Emergency handling 3.5 Readiness
4. Is there a significant relationship between the level of clinical instructor support and the level of clinical confidence among student nurses?
5. Is there a significant difference in the level of clinical confidence of student nurses when grouped according to their demographic profile?
6. What Program can be proposed based on these findings?

Significance of the Study

This study on The Influence of Clinical Instructor Support on the Clinical Confidence of Student Nurses During Duty Rotation holds great importance for multiple stakeholders in the field of nursing education and practice. The results are expected to contribute to improving the quality

of clinical instruction, strengthening nursing education outcomes, and enhancing professional competence among future nurses.

Specifically, the findings are expected to benefit student nurses, clinical instructors, nursing schools, hospital administrators, and policy makers by informing mentorship program design, faculty development, and clinical learning environment policy.

Scope and Delimitations

This study focuses on examining the influence of clinical instructor support on the clinical confidence of student nurses during their clinical rotations. It is anchored on the premise that the quality and nature of guidance, feedback, and emotional support provided by clinical instructors significantly affect students' development of confidence and competence in performing nursing tasks. The scope of this study covers selected nursing students enrolled in Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs who are currently engaged in hospital-based or community-based clinical rotations during the academic year. It includes both male and female nursing students from different year levels, particularly those who have completed a minimum number of clinical hours required by their nursing schools.

Review of Related Literature

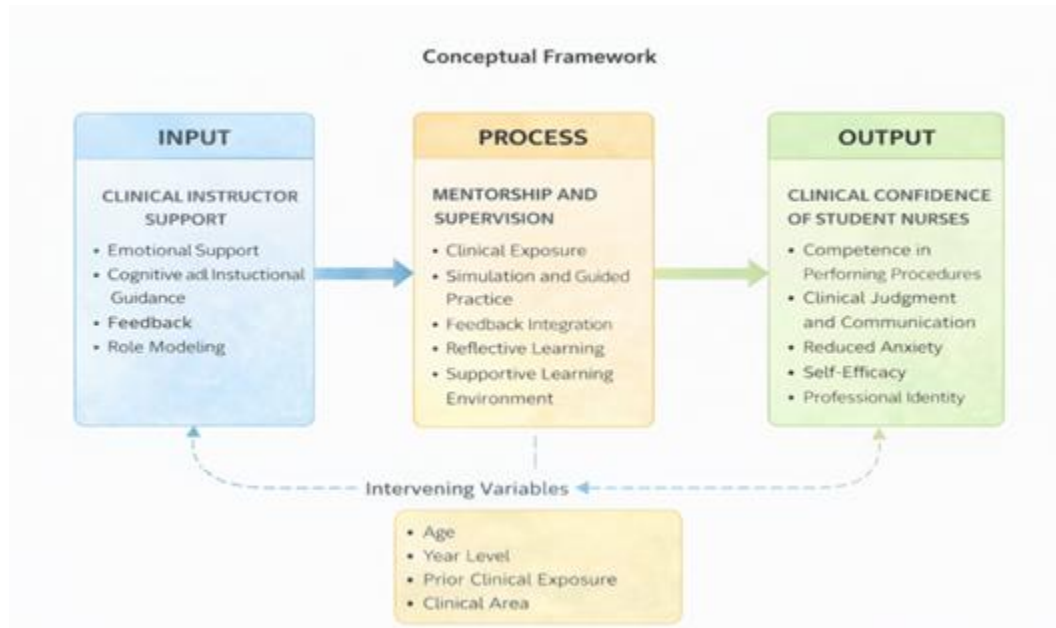
The literature examined from 2021 to 2024 offers an extensive insight into the substantial impact of clinical instructor support on the confidence, competence, and professional development of nursing students. Both global and local research continually demonstrates that effective clinical education is contingent not only upon the availability of clinical exposure but also on the quality of mentorship, communication, emotional support, and the learning environment fostered by clinical instructors.

Clinical education is the basis of nursing formation around the world. It turns academic learning into practical skills and a professional identity. Research conducted in the United States, Europe, and Australia underscores that structured, supportive, and student-centered clinical training enhances performance, self-efficacy, and motivation among nursing students (Rodríguez-García et al., 2021; Ferri et al., 2023; Leal-Costa et al., 2024). A well-run clinical learning environment that includes simulation, mentorship, and hospital experience makes nurses who are self-assured, strong, and able to make their own clinical decisions. This worldwide trend fits with competency-based frameworks that the World Health Organization (2022) and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN, 2021) support. These frameworks stress mentorship as a key part of clinical education.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on three theories that are connected to each other and explain how support from teachers helps students learn, gain confidence, and grow professionally: Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986), Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978), and Benner's Novice to Expert Model (1984), which is specific to nursing. When these theories are combined, they give a complete picture of how student nurses learn skills, internalize professional ideals, and gain confidence through guided clinical experiences with the help of clinical instructors.

Conceptual Framework



Methodology

This chapter presents the research methodology, including the research design, participants, research setting, data collection instrument, data gathering procedures, statistical treatment, and ethical considerations. These methods ensured the validity, reliability, and ethical conduct of the study in examining the relationship between clinical instructor support and clinical confidence among student nurses.

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive-comparative research design, which was deemed most appropriate for determining the relationship between clinical instructor support and the clinical confidence of student nurses during their clinical rotations. According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), a descriptive-comparative design is a quantitative approach that aims to describe existing conditions and to explore the relationships among variables without manipulating them. It allows the researcher to measure the degree and direction of association between two or more variables as they naturally occur in the research setting. This design is particularly useful in educational and behavioral studies where the goal is to understand how one variable influences or is associated with another within a specific context.

Research Steps

The necessary approvals were first secured from the Institutional Ethics Review Board (ERB) and the relevant hospital and school administrations. Eligible student nurse respondents were then identified and administered the structured questionnaire after securing their informed consent. Completed questionnaires were collected, encoded, and statistically analyzed using SPSS. The results were then interpreted in relation to the study's research questions, leading to the conclusions and recommendations, including the proposed Project RISE program.

Data Collection and Sample Selection

This study was conducted at a selected medical institute, a government tertiary hospital in Metro Manila, and involved student nurses enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program who were undergoing clinical rotations there, drawn from partner nursing schools and assigned across wards such as medical-surgical, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, psychiatry, and community health. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into two parts: Part I on the respondents' demographic profile, and Part II using standardized tools measuring clinical instructor support and clinical confidence.

Research Hypotheses

This study tested the following null hypotheses:

1. There is no significant relationship between the level of clinical instructor support and the level of clinical confidence among student nurses.
2. There is no significant difference in the level of clinical confidence of student nurses when grouped according to their demographic profile.

Data Analysis Methods

The data gathered were organized, tabulated, and statistically analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), applying descriptive and inferential statistical tools appropriate to each research question.

Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki, which provides internationally recognized guidelines for conducting research involving human participants. The Declaration of Helsinki, established by the World Medical Association (WMA) and most recently revised in 2013, emphasizes respect for individuals, the right to make informed decisions, the protection of participants from harm, and the integrity and transparency of research. These principles served as the foundation for ensuring that the rights, safety, and well-being of all respondents were upheld throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The final sample comprised 100 student nurses, mostly 20–21 years old (48%), female (68%), and in their third/fourth year (80%). Instructor support was rated Strongly Agree overall, led by cognitive/instructional support ($M = 3.39$) over emotional support ($M = 3.31$); the lowest-rated indicator was regaining confidence after mistakes ($M = 3.18$). Support was significantly related to clinical confidence overall ($r = .64$, $p < .001$). Confidence did not differ by age, sex, or clinical area, but differed by year level ($F = 5.76$, $p = .004$) and exposure frequency ($F = 6.28$, $p < .001$).

SUMMARY

This study examined clinical instructor support and clinical confidence among 100 student nurses at a selected medical institute. Support correlated significantly with confidence, varying by year level and exposure frequency, leading to the proposed Project RISE program.

CONCLUSIONS

Clinical instructor support is essential to student nurses' clinical confidence, which is developmental and context-sensitive, shaped more by year level and clinical exposure than demographic traits. Mistake-related confidence is best addressed through Project RISE.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that nursing schools adopt Project RISE for restorative debriefing after clinical errors, sustain cognitive and emotional instructor support with year-level-tailored supervision, and evaluate Project RISE against the 3.18-to-3.40 confidence target in future research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my family, especially my parents Nelou David and Benilda David, for their unwavering love and inspiration; to my friends Mr. Resty Anibigno and Mr. Esmeraldo Delas Armas IV for their constant encouragement; to my adviser Dr. Arby James E. Abonalla, RN, PhDN, DPA, PDSML, for his expertise and guidance; and to our statistician for enhancing the quality of this research. I also thank Dr. Joel John A. Dela Merced, RN, LPT, FPCHA, EPSQua, Dean of the Graduate School, for his support, and above all, Almighty God for the wisdom and strength to complete this study.

AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools were used to assist with formatting, structural organization, and grammar in preparing this manuscript. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret research data; the authors are credited for all academic contributions and conclusions presented in this study.

References:

- AACN. (2021). The essentials: Core competencies for professional nursing education. American Association of Colleges of Nursing.
- Bandura, A. (1986). Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory. Prentice Hall.
- Benner, P. (1984). From novice to expert: Excellence and power in clinical nursing practice. Addison-Wesley.
- Ferri, P., et al. (2023). Nursing students' evaluation of clinical learning and supervision: A comparative study. Acta Biomedica.