

Knowledge on Nursing Empowerment, Prospects and Challenges

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Abstract

Nursing is a versatile profession and also one of the strongest pillars that the healthcare profession stands on. Nurses are closely related to real work environment where they always participate in patient care (Jones CB et al, 2007). Many a time student nurses face complexities from theory to clinical. Therefore it is essential that student nurses should be informed of those challenges and empower themselves to overcome all hurdles (Niaz et al, 2019). In general, empowerment is an essential factor which provides more power to the employees to make decision and self-determination within an organisation. In nursing, empowerment of nursing students means the opportunities or chances that help the student nurses to develop their professional life (Rudberg et al, 2022). Understanding the prospect of nursing, which means views regarding the scope and opportunities in nursing from every possible aspect, helps budding nurses to choose their areas of interest.

Key words: Nurses' empowerment, Challenges of nurses

To meet the demand of nursing profession and to become an active professional, nursing student must feel empowered during their academic course. Empowerment of nursing students helps to acquire the skills to face and overcome the challenges with confidence. Many studies show that new nurses have the intention to leave the profession due to certain reasons and which seems to be a major concern for both educational institutions as well as for healthcare system (Jones CB et al, 2007; Niaz et al, 2019). Quality of patient care and upliftment of nursing profession is solely dependent on workforce (Radhakrishnan & Anuchithra, 2016). So empowerment of nursing students from the beginning of their career is very important.

Also high level knowledge on prospects regarding nursing requires utmost attention as it brings positivity, motivation and confidence among nursing students to engage in patient care activities and overcome the hurdles. Understanding of prospects of nursing is equally important to make them mentally as well as physically strong enough to cope with demands and pressure that the current health care scenario puts upon them. There are only a handful of research studies conducted on empowerment, prospect and challenges among

nursing students. In North-eastern region of India no such studies have been conducted on this topic till date. Therefore, after rigorous literature review researcher has selected the topic for study which has a significant importance for the development of budding nurses.

Statement of Problem

A descriptive study to assess knowledge on nursing empowerment, prospect and challenges among the GNM nursing students in a selected School of Nursing, Dibrugarh (Assam).

Objectives

1. To describe the socio-demographic profile of nursing students.
2. To assess the level of knowledge on empowerment of nursing students.
3. To assess the level of knowledge on prospects among nursing students.
4. To assess the level of knowledge on challenges in nursing.

Literature Review

On the meaning and experience of Empowerment for nursing student

In a critical incident study conducted by Jones et al (2007) on the meaning of empowerment for nursing students, 109 written critical incidents were provided by 66 nursing students relating

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to empowering and disempowering experiences in clinical practice. After analysing the data, it was found that nursing students experience both empowerment and disempowerment during their clinical placements on three points - learning in practice, team membership and power.

A longitudinal study conducted by Rudberg SL et al (2022) on undergraduate nursing students' experience of becoming a professional nurse found that students started their education with dreams and less understanding of the complexity of the nursing profession as related to three points: learning in practice, team membership and power.

On knowledge and attitude of nursing students towards nursing profession

A descriptive study by Shahi & Bist (2022) on the knowledge and attitude regarding higher education among nursing students in selected nursing college of Nodia, NCR of Delhi revealed that the maximum number of sample (68%) have moderate knowledge towards higher education.

Devi (2013) conducted a study to assess the knowledge and attitude of nursing students towards nursing profession at Manipal College of Medical Sciences Pokhara in Nepal. The author found that majority of the nursing students (91.8%) had fair knowledge, and 96.2 percent had good attitude towards nursing profession in the sample; further. 68 percent had moderate knowledge towards higher education.

On challenges of nursing students

In a study on Nursing students' challenges at educational and clinical environment among 160 General Nursing students in Allama Iqbal Medical College, Lahore, Niaz FM et al (2019) found that the gap between the theory and practice was an important challenge for students', so researcher recommended that empowerment of students through training can reduce the gap between theory and practice.

A qualitative study was conducted by Moghaddam et al (2020) on challenges faced by nursing students to work with nursing personnel in Iran with 20 samples selected through purposive sampling technique. Senior nursing students were interviewed using in-depth semi-structured individual interview technique. Data analysis was done using MAXODA-12; results showed that the mean age and standard deviation of participants was 22.45±1.52 and the challenges of students by working with nurses are due to inappropriate social norms, inadequate organisational atmosphere and inadequate sources.

Jamshidi et al (2016) studied the challenges of nursing students in clinical learning environment at Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Iran with 17 nursing students of different academic semesters and three clinical nursing instructors. Individual, group interview and observation method were used and found that the age range of participant was 20-23 years. After analysis the interview researcher found that ineffective communication, inadequate readiness and emotional reactions causes challenge to clinical learning environment.

A qualitative study conducted by Berhe & Gebreten (2021) on Nursing students' challenges towards clinical learning environment at the school of Nursing and Midwifery in Addis Ababa University. The researchers found that three major challenges were faced by the students i.e. learner's non-readiness, insufficient clinical supervision and unsupportive clinical environment.

Sampling criteria

Inclusion criteria: All GNM students of the selected School of Nursing present during the time of data collection.

Exclusion criteria: GNM students those absent during the time of data collection.

Description of tools

- 1. Socio-demographic proforma:** A 9-item self-structured socio-demographic proforma was developed by the researcher for the purpose of assessing the sample characteristics. Items were- age, religion, total family income, academic year, total sleep hours, total duty hours, total class hours, total leisure hours, total study hours.
- 2. Self structured knowledge questionnaire:** Three self structured dichotomous (Yes/ No response) knowledge questionnaire were developed by the researcher and validated by three experts.
 - a. *Knowledge questionnaire on empowerment of nursing:* It consisted of 10 items to assess nursing students' knowledge on empowerment. Items were based on motivation, professional standard, support from supervisors, communication of team members etc. Reliability of the tool was 0.76. If participant scores between 1-15 it means low and 16-20 means high level of knowledge on empowerment.
 - b. *Knowledge questionnaire on prospect of nursing:* The tool consisted of total 10 items that were based on job stability, bright aspects

of nursing, nursing as a profession, working hours etc. Reliability of the tool was 0.7. If participant score between 1-15 meant ‘Low’ and 16-20 meant ‘High’ level of knowledge on prospect.

- c. *Knowledge questionnaire on challenges of nursing:* The tool consisted of total 10 items. These were based on challenges face by nursing students after enrolling to the course. Reliability of the tool was 0.77. A participant score between 0-10 meant ‘Low’, 11-20 meant ‘Moderate’ and 21-30 indicated ‘High’ level of knowledge on challenges.

Table 1 and Fig 1 show that the age range of the participants was 18-32 years. The mean and the standard deviation were 21.24±2.74 and 2.746766093 respectively.

Table 1: Range, mean and standard deviation of age of participants (N=54)

Range	Mean	Standard deviation
Age (in years) 18-32	21.24074074	2.746766093

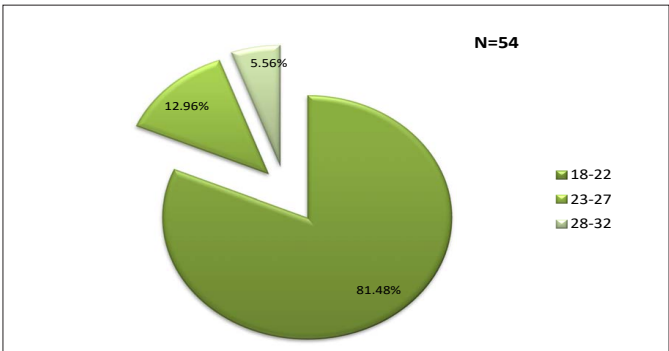


Fig 1: Pie diagram showing percentage distribution of age of participants.

Methodology

A schematic diagram of methodology adopted appears in Fig 2.

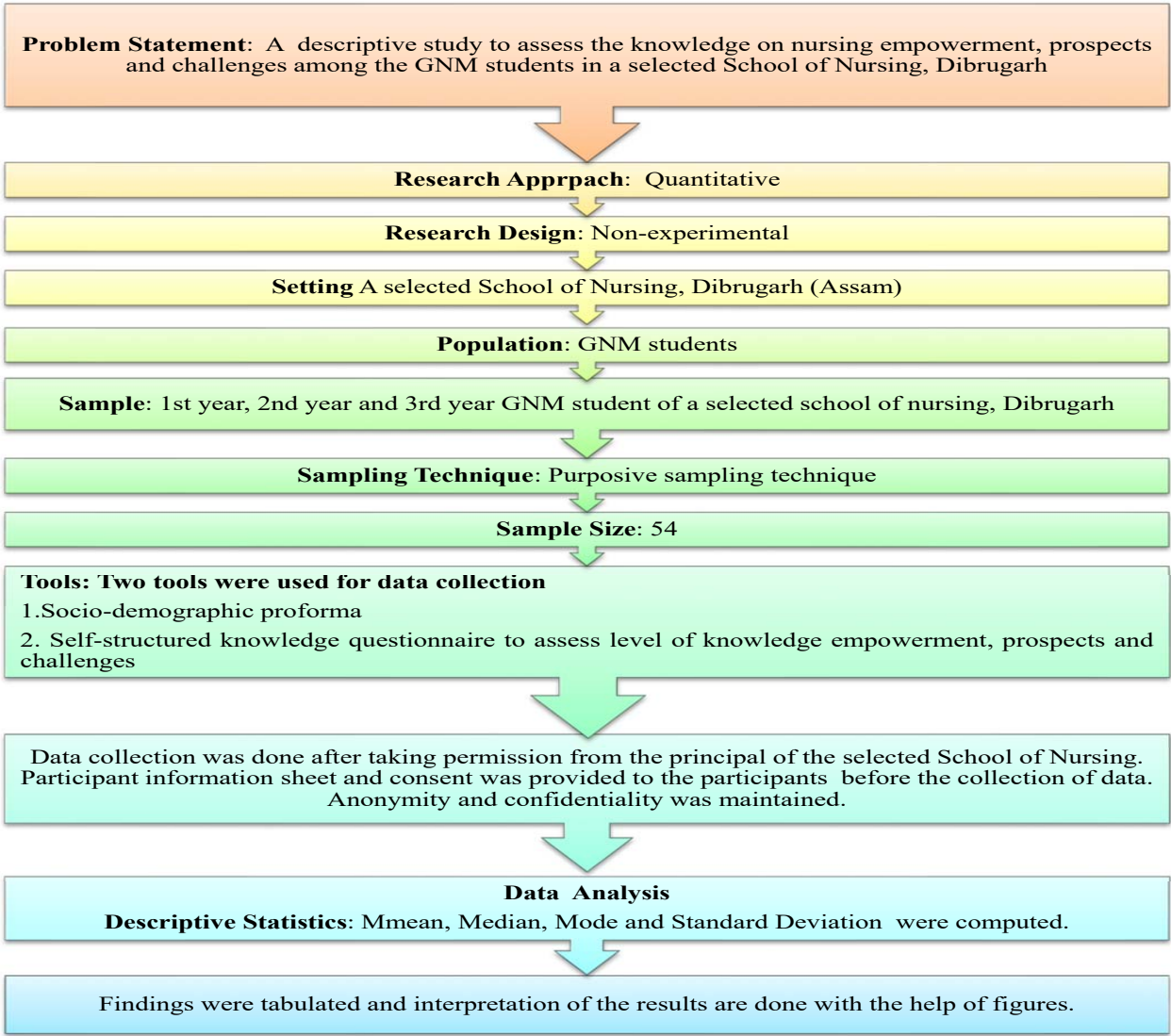


Fig 2: Schematic diagram of methodology used.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of selected socio-demographic variables (N=54)

Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Religion		
Hindu	11	20.37
Christian	42	77.78
Others	1	1.85
Academic year		
1st year	20	37.04
2nd year	18	33.33
3rd year	16	29.63
Total duty hours including all shifts (current)		
Less than 6	51	94.44
More than 6	3	5.56
Total leisure hours (per day)		
0.5-3.5	39	72.22
4-7	15	27.78
Total sleep hours (per day)		
3-5	4	7.4
6-8	50	92.6

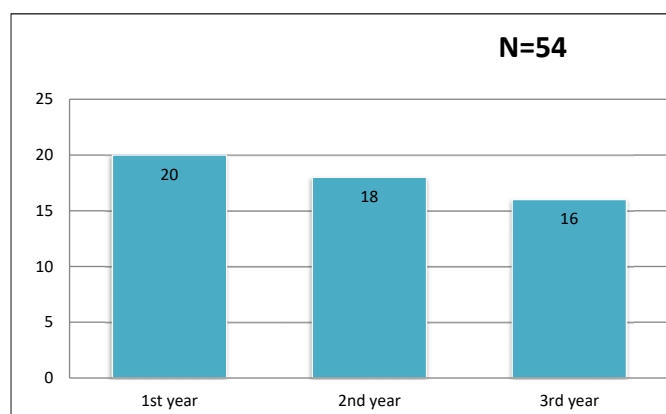


Fig 5: Frequency distribution of academic year of participants

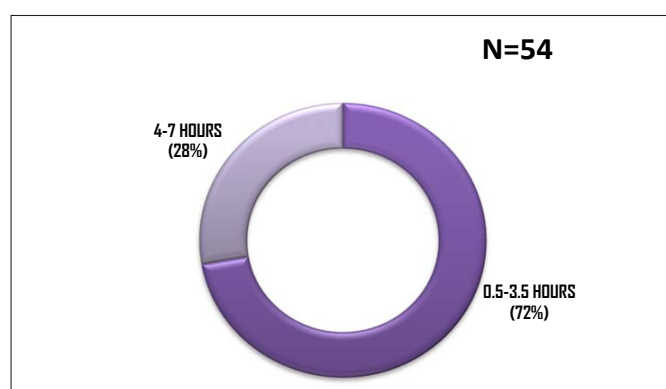


Fig 6: Doughnut diagram showing percentage distribution of total leisure hour of participants

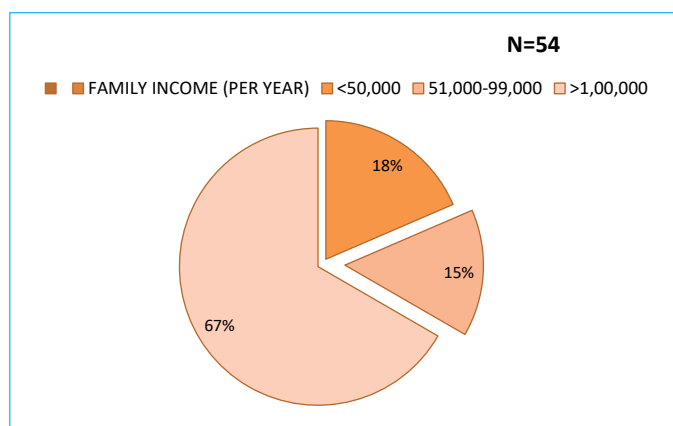


Fig 3: Percentage distribution of family income of participants

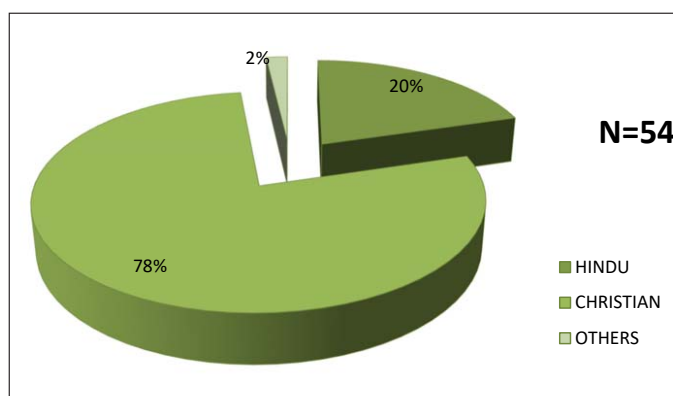


Fig 4: Percentage distribution of religion of participants

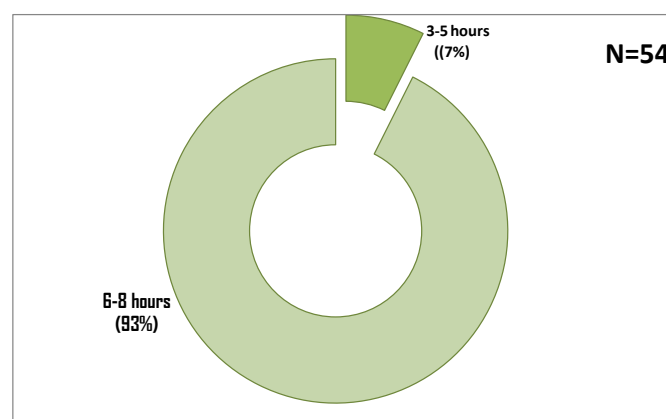


Fig 7: Doughnut diagram showing percentage distribution of total sleep hours of participants.

Table 2 depicts that majority of respondents were Christian (77.78%) followed by Hindu (20.37%) and others (1.85%). Also, 37.04 percent respondents were in 1st year followed by 33.33 percent in 2nd year and 29.63 percent were 3rd year students. The table also depicts that 94.44 percent respondents spend their time in duty for less than 6 hours whereas only 5.56 percent respondents spend their time in clinical duty for more than 6 hours. The researcher also found that majority of respondents use 0.5-3.5 hours leisure

hour i.e., 72.22 percent whereas 27.78 percent use 4-7 hours. The study also reveals that 92.6 percent respondents use their sleep hour for 6-8 hours per day whereas 7.4 percent use 3-5 hours in sleep per day.

Table 3: Frequency and percentage distribution of level of empowerment of participants (N=54)

Variable	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)	Mean	Standard deviation
Level of knowledge on empowerment			29.59259	0.858224
High	54	100		
Moderate	0			
Low	0			
Level of knowledge on prospect			28.35185	1.739197
High	54	100		
Moderate	0			
Low	0			
Level of challenge			23.01852	2.638544
High	47	87.04		
Moderate	7	12.96		
Low	0	0		

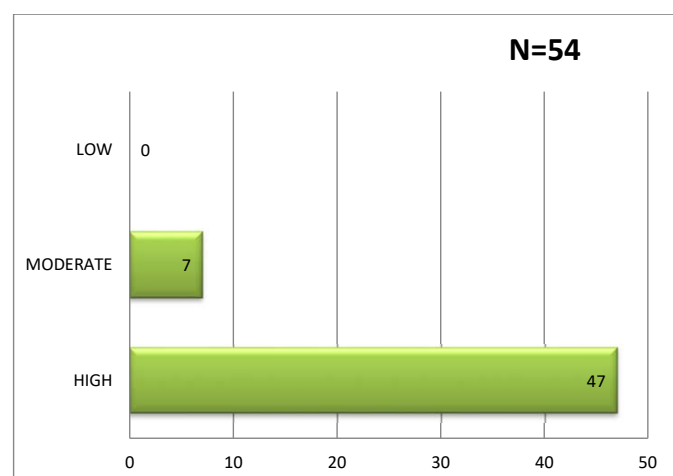


Fig 8: Percentage distribution of level of knowledge on challenges in nursing.

Table 3 and Fig 7 depict that all the participants (100%) had high level of knowledge on empowerment towards nursing and on prospects of nursing. It was also found that 87.04 percent of respondents have high knowledge on challenges in nursing whereas 12.96 percent had moderate knowledge on challenges in nursing.

Discussion

In the current study the age range of the participants was between 18-32 years. All the participants (100%) were female and over a third (37.04%) of the participants were 1st year students followed by 33.33 percent and 29.63 respectively in 2nd year and 3rd year. This study is supported by study of Arcaloid Rose R et al on structural and psychological empowerment and its influencing factors; in this study among nursing students aged 19-43 years, majority of the respondents were female and maximum respondents were from the 4th year (43.2%), while 23.2 percent and 25.9 percent were in the second year and third year respectively.

The study revealed that all the participants (100%) had high level of knowledge on empowerment towards nursing. In contrast, in another study Virtanen et al (2016) revealed that nursing students' knowledge improved after using the computer simulation as a learning method, but the students still lacked holistic knowledge of an empowerment.

In the current study, all the participants (100%) had high level of knowledge on prospects of nursing. The results of the study are consistent with the findings of Erkin & Ozsoy (2011), who reported that 51.7 percent of the participants choose nursing as a profession considering job security. In this study, 47 percent of participants had high level of challenges and 7 percent had moderate level of challenges. In line with finding of this study, Moghadam et al (2020) in their study on challenges faced by nursing students to work with nursing personnel revealed that the challenges of students with nurses are due to inappropriate social norms, inadequate organisational atmosphere and inadequate sources.

Interpretations

For Empowerment: In the current study researcher found that all the participants (100%) perhaps had high level of knowledge on empowerment towards nursing.

For Prospects: The researcher found that all the participants (100%) had high level of knowledge on prospects of nursing.

For Challenge: This study revealed that 47 percent of the participants had high knowledge on challenges and 7 percent had moderate level of knowledge on challenges.

Implications for Nursing Education

This study will help mitigate the challenges being faced in clinical practice by improving intellectual

and technical skills, and supportive environment and team work.

It will also help in conducting new research particularly on similar topics such as on challenges of the nursing students, bringing improvement in nursing education and also in clinical field.

Recommendation

The findings of this study can be used in bringing about reforms in nursing education. Awareness about empowerment, prospects and challenges is helpful for the students too. Further studies should be conducted on the similar topic. In depth understanding of problems face by nursing students requires further research.

Conclusion

An empowered professional can motivate co-workers and contribute to the fulfillment of the organisational objectives. Likewise a competent and empowered senior nursing student can motivate their juniors and will be able to provide high quality care for patients (Riaz et al, 2023). Therefore, periodic interaction between nursing students and administrative head of the school or college of nursing is required. There is also a need for discussion regarding strategies to support nursing students to overcome challenges and cope with them.

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