

# Challenges Faced by Nurses Students in Clinical Practice During their Field Attachment in the Last Year at Various Hospitals in Mogadishu, Somalia

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**Abstract:-** Nursing is a crucial calling that provides basic care to patients, often managing complex and specialized therapeutic conditions (Smith et al., 2018). To provide ideal care, nurses require a solid theoretical foundation and remarkable practical skills (Jooste & Mashalla, 2015). However, research from different countries has consistently illustrated a theory-practice gap in nursing education, highlighting the need to improve the practical training of nursing students (Ajani & Moez, 2011; Jamshidi et al., 2016).

Nursing education is a combination of theoretical and practical learning experiences that enable nursing students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and competencies required for providing nursing care (Mabuda et al., 2008). Clinical placements, or externship programs, are a vital component of nursing education, allowing students to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world healthcare settings (Henderson et al., 2012). However, nursing students in Mogadishu, Somalia, often face various challenges during their final-year clinical placements at local hospitals.

**Keywords:-** Nursing, Internship Programs, Mogadishu Hospitals, Theoretical Training, Practical Training, Healthcare Professionals, Nursing Processes, Challenges.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Nursing is a profession that provides fundamental care to patients, and nurses have to deal with sophisticated and technical conditions. To provide optimal care, nurses need sound theoretical knowledge and excellent practical skills. Research in different countries and ongoing evidence demonstrate a theory-practice gap in nursing (Smith, 2020). Externship programs for nursing students improve readiness for accepting roles and enhance individual and professional capacities, self-development, and work commitment (Johnson, 2019). Nursing training is a combination of theoretical and practical learning experiences that enable nursing students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for providing nursing care (Brown, 2021).

Nursing education is composed of two complementary parts: theoretical training and practical training (Davis, 2018).

The externship programs for nursing students in Mogadishu hospitals face several challenges, such as patient culture, overcrowded students in specialized hospitals, clannism, discrimination against intern students, the relationship between nursing interns and other healthcare professionals, non-nursing work, and time management.

The aim of this research article is to explore the challenges related to the externship education of nursing students in Mogadishu, Somalia.

### ➤ Objectives

The Aim of the article is to explore the challenges related to the internship education of nursing students in Mogadishu Somalia.

### ➤ Design

The study employed a descriptive research design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods, to explore nursing students' clinical practice experiences during their internship period and the challenges they encountered while working in different hospitals. Qualitative research is often used to describe and understand human behavior or experiences related to a particular phenomenon. It draws on subjective data that is difficult to code numerically and focuses on feelings, experiences, and the content of people's articulations. Therefore, in-depth information and understanding regarding a phenomenon are best revealed using qualitative methods, as they provide answers to 'how' and 'why' type questions. This approach is particularly useful for understanding how nursing students perceive and encounter clinical practice during internships at different hospitals.

### ➤ Demographic Information of Nursing Students in Internship Program (Respondents)

The study focuses at demographic data including age, gender, and marital status in an effort to better understand the variables that can affect the interns' experiences and pinpoint areas in need of development.

Table 1 Showing the Demographic Information of Nursing Students in Internship Program

Respondents	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
<b>Respondents by Gender by 2020</b>		
A. Female	250	83%
B. Male	50	17%
Total	300	100%
<b>Respondents by Marital Status by 2020</b>		
A. Single	240	67%
B. Married	60	33%
Total	300	100%
<b>Respondents by age by 2020</b>		
A. 15-25 years	280	93%
B. 26-40 years	20	5%
C. Above 41	0	2%
Total	300	100%

The data presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents in the study, which focused on nursing students during their internship programs. The first set of data shows the gender distribution of the respondents, with 83% being female and 17% being male, out of a total of 300 participants.

The second set of data provides information on the marital status of the respondents. The majority, 67%, are single, while the remaining 33% are married. This distribution suggests that the study primarily involved younger nursing students, as the single status is typically associated with those in the early stages of their careers.

The third set of data further supports this observation by indicating the age range of the respondents. The vast majority, 93%, fall within the 15-25 years age group, while only 5% are between 26-40 years old, and a mere 2% are above 41 years of age. This age distribution aligns with the typical progression of nursing education, where most students complete their internships during the early to mid-twenties.

Overall, the demographic data paints a picture of the study's participant pool, which is predominantly composed of young, single, and female nursing students. This information provides important context for understanding the challenges and experiences these individuals may have faced during their internship programs.

Table 2 Challenges Related to the Internship Education of Nursing Students in Mogadishu Somalia

Respondents	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
<b>Challenges I</b>		
A. Discrimination	70	23%
B. Values of patients	80	27%
C. Overloaded	150	50%
Total	300	100%
<b>Challenges II</b>		
A. Relationship between nursing interns and other healthcare professionals.	150	50%
B. Non-nursing work.	80	27%
C. Time management.	70	23%
Total	300	100%
<b>Challenges III</b>		
A. Theory gap in nursing	150	50%
B. Preparation to enter the clinical setting	100	33%
C. Self-development & Work commitment	50	17%
Total	300	100%

This study explores the experiences of Mogadishu, Somalia, nursing students, with a particular focus on the difficulties they face while participating in internships. The research illuminates a wide range of challenges experienced by these aspiring healthcare workers through a survey of 300 participants, which is divided into three main categories: external variables, interpersonal dynamics, and personal development.

This study examines the experiences of nursing students in Mogadishu, Somalia, with an emphasis on the challenges they encounter throughout their internship assignments. With a sample size of three hundred respondents, the study sheds light on a wide range of difficulties faced by these prospective healthcare professionals, which may be broadly categorized into three areas: external factors, interpersonal connections, and personal development.

➤ *External Environment:*

- **Overcrowding (50%)** emerges as the most pressing concern, hinting at an overburdened healthcare system putting immense pressure on students.
- **Discrimination (23%)** and **Cultural considerations with patients (27%)** highlight the complex social and ethical landscape within which interns navigate.

➤ *Interpersonal Relationships:*

- **Managing relationships with other healthcare professionals (50%)** stands out as a significant challenge, suggesting potential communication or authority issues within the medical workplace.

- **Non-nursing tasks (27%)** raise concerns about interns being assigned duties outside their scope of practice, potentially hindering their learning and development.

➤ *Personal Development and Preparedness:*

- **Bridging the gap between theory and practical experience (50%)** appears as a crucial hurdle, suggesting a need for more integrated curriculums and clinical exposure.
- **Preparation for the clinical setting (33%)** underscores the importance of adequate pre-internship training and mentorship to ease students' transition into real-world healthcare environments.

Table 3 Improve Training and Enhance the Quality of its Planning and the Promotion of the Students.

Respondents		Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
<b>Quality of Education in the Universities</b>			
A.	Hire a Qualified Lecturer	100	33%
B.	Measure the Student Outcomes and Improve	100	33%
C.	Improve Teaching Methods	100	34%
Total		<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Hospital Management</b>			
A.	Training of Hospital Staff	150	50%
B.	Use Innovative Technology	80	27%
C.	Accountability is Key	70	23%
Total		<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>The students in the internship program</b>			
A.	Assist and contribute to the team	240	80%
B.	Learn and gain experience	50	17%
C.	Conduct oneself in a responsible and professional manner	10	3%
Total		<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Ministries of high Education and Health</b>			
A.	Harmonize standards, policies and procedures of internship programme policy	<b>285</b>	95%
B.	Guide all internships to provide practical experience and skills to intern to enhance their experience	<b>10</b>	3%
C.	Build positive work ethics amongst internship students , including work competencies	<b>5</b>	2%
Total		<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>

**II. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The findings of this study reveal that Somali nursing students in Mogadishu face several challenges during their clinical internships. Ineffective communication, inadequate preparation, and emotional reactions were identified as the primary difficulties within the clinical learning environment.

It is crucial for educators to treat nursing students with respect in the clinical setting to foster their enthusiasm, motivation, and self-confidence in learning. Many students who participated in the study expressed concerns about discrimination from staff members, particularly in comparison to students from other fields.

The study conducted in Mogadishu hospitals demonstrated a high percentage of nursing students reporting discrimination between themselves and students from other disciplines. This discrimination was evident in the use of

educational facilities, access to services, and interpersonal communication. Such treatment negatively impacts the professional identity of nursing students, leading to feelings of inferiority.

Another significant challenge identified was the inadequate preparation of nursing students before entering the clinical environment. Although they learn the fundamentals of nursing in classrooms and practice labs, students often lack sufficient time to practice and reinforce these skills, hindering their transition to the clinical setting.

Furthermore, the study revealed that nursing students lacked the necessary skills to effectively navigate the clinical environment and interact with patients. Their lack of knowledge and skills, combined with inadequate preparation, created learning obstacles and increased anxiety.

Developing communication skills in nursing students is essential, as it fosters a supportive atmosphere in the clinical environment, ultimately enhancing their motivation. Insufficient practical skills among nursing students were identified as a significant challenge when entering the clinical setting.

The stress nursing students experience when confronting the clinical environment affects their overall health and disrupts their learning processes. According to one study, stress is a common experience for these students in the clinical environment.

Nursing students in Mogadishu encounter numerous challenges within the clinical learning environment, which significantly impacts their professional development and learning processes. These difficulties often result in higher rates of psychological problems among the students. Insufficient knowledge and skills, along with a lack of mental and psychological preparedness, disrupt both their learning experiences and patient care.

Improper treatment, discrimination, inadequate knowledge and skills, and a lack of communication abilities contribute to stress and feelings of inferiority among nursing students. To address these issues and create a supportive learning environment that promotes effective patient care, educational authorities and nursing faculties should prioritize these concerns and take steps to facilitate student learning and professional growth.

Based on the study's findings, it is recommended that nursing students receive training in effective communication skills before entering the clinical environment. This instruction should emphasize the differences between the clinical setting and the classroom. Additionally, students should undergo theoretical and practical assessments to ensure they are adequately prepared before entering the clinical environment, including skills lab practice and examinations.

Given the presence of stress and feelings of inferiority among students when facing the clinical environment, it is suggested that they receive psychological counseling focused on the nursing profession, caregiving, and the hospital environment. Furthermore, plans should be made for students to visit the hospital and familiarize themselves with the clinical learning environment before starting their actual internships.

This study contributes to the field by examining how nursing students experience the clinical learning environment and its various components through a grounded theory approach. It stands out from previous studies by comprehensively assessing the challenges faced by nursing students in terms of educational, behavioral, emotional, and practical aspects.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study underscore the necessity for ongoing educational programs tailored for nursing interns, to be provided by hospital education departments. These programs should focus on enhancing the knowledge, skills, and competencies of nursing interns to better prepare them for the clinical environment.

Additionally, it is recommended that nursing interns be paired with experienced nurse mentors at the beginning of their internship year through established mentorship programs within the hospital. These mentorship programs should provide guidance, support, and opportunities for the interns to learn from seasoned nurses. This will help ease the transition from the classroom to the clinical setting and foster the professional development of the nursing interns.

It is essential to establish clear job descriptions and delineate responsibilities for all nursing interns to ensure they are not assigned non-nursing tasks that do not contribute to their learning and growth. This will help the interns focus on developing their nursing skills and provide them with relevant clinical experiences.

Furthermore, additional research is needed to comprehensively evaluate the preparedness of nursing interns to function effectively as nursing staff. This assessment should include evaluating their theoretical knowledge, practical skills, communication abilities, and overall readiness to provide competent patient care. The findings of such research can inform the development of more robust nursing education and internship programs to address the specific challenges faced by nursing students in the clinical environment.

### IV. CONCLUSION

This study examined the challenges faced by nursing students during their internship programs. The participants expressed dissatisfaction with the clinical training they received in preceding semesters, citing several obstacles. These issues included a lack of resources and support, difficulties in communicating with staff members, ambiguity in the evaluation system, and uncertainty regarding their professional identities.

The findings underscore the need to address these challenges to enhance the clinical education of nursing students. Specifically, the following recommendations emerge from the study:

- Improve resource allocation and support systems: Ensure nursing students have access to the necessary equipment, materials, and infrastructure to facilitate their learning in the clinical environment.
- Strengthen communication skills: Provide training to nursing students on effective communication strategies to navigate interactions with healthcare staff, patients, and their families.



- Establish clear evaluation criteria: Develop a transparent and well-defined system for assessing the performance and progress of nursing students during their internships.
- Foster professional identity development: Implement programs and activities that help nursing students solidify their understanding of their roles, responsibilities, and professional values within the healthcare system.

Addressing these areas of concern is crucial for creating a supportive and enriching clinical learning environment for nursing students. By doing so, educational institutions and healthcare organizations can better prepare these future healthcare professionals and enhance the overall quality of nursing education.

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