

Patients' Participation and Clinical Confidence Among Nursing Students in a Private College in Iloilo

ABSTRACT

Aims: To assess the level of patients' participation and clinical confidence among nursing students in a private college in Iloilo and to determine whether a significant relationship exists between these two variables.

Study design: Descriptive-correlational research design.

Place and Duration of Study: The study was conducted at a private college institution in Iloilo City, Philippines, among second-year, third-year, and fourth-year nursing students during the Academic Year 2025–2026, between September 2025 to May 2026.

Methodology: The study included 305 nursing students selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a two-part instrumentation process: a researcher-made Patients Participation Scale and an adapted Clinical Confidence Scale. Descriptive statistics, including the mean and standard deviation, were used to analyze the levels of patient participation and student clinical confidence, while Spearman's rho correlation was utilized to determine the relationship between the variables.

Results: Findings indicated that respondents perceived a high level of patient participation, with an overall mean of 3.28 out of 4.0. Students felt most competent when patients actively participated in care (mean=3.53). The overall clinical confidence was high (mean=10.61/12), though confidence in demonstrating clinical judgment was relatively lower (mean=0.74). A significant positive correlation was established between patients' participation and clinical confidence, suggesting that increased patient involvement is associated with higher student confidence.

Conclusion: Active patient involvement is a vital element in the development of student nurses' clinical confidence. The study recommends the integration of patient-centered teaching strategies and well-supervised clinical exposures to enhance students' professional competence and growth.

Keywords: Patient involvement, clinical competence, student nurses, clinical area.

1. INTRODUCTION

Patients' participation plays a vital role in the clinical education of student nurses, as it could influence their ability to perform nursing interventions effectively and develop clinical confidence. In nursing, trust forms the foundation of the caregiver-patient bond, enabling patients to rely on nurses' skills for safe and proficient care (Carpio et al., 2025). As novice learners, nursing students are often exposed to unfamiliar environments and diverse individuals, requiring them to strengthen their interpersonal and communication skills (Bibi et al., 2024).

However, one study in Australia shows that the majority of nursing students express that while patients and families value their involvement in nursing bedside handover, their participation remains inconsistent and often limited (Ghosh et al., 2025). They also mentioned that factors such as lack of awareness of their right to participate, poor timing of handovers, and fear of questioning nurses continue to hinder effective patient engagement in care. This can also influence the student's clinical confidence. A study in Ethiopia even reflects that more than half of the respondents (50.9%) show to have a low and moderate clinical confidence as nursing students (Gebreegziabher et al., 2024). It could reflect that clinical confidence develops through meaningful patient interactions and experiences during clinical placements (Suikkala et al., 2020; Granier, 2020). Anxiety, self-doubt, and emotional unpreparedness often hinder students' judgment and ability to translate theory into practice (Carpio et al., 2025). Moreover, limited communication with healthcare professionals and insufficient advocacy training create barriers to ensuring patient safety (Vahidi et al., 2025). On the other hand, patients may value empathy and also emotional connection in technical proficiency more, this reveals a possible gap between how students perceive their care and how it is experienced by the patients (Ulupinar & Karasu, 2025).

In a globally competent healthcare system, its foundation is directly dependent on how the success of the clinical education of future nurses, is aligned with the SDG 3 of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal, Target 3.c, which is mandated by the development of a quality health workforce (International Council of Nurses, 2017). By achieving this global objective, students are required to possess a high clinical confidence, because it is a vital pillar in shaping compassionate and competent nurses. Largely, nursing students' bidirectional and respectful communication is largely determined by how effective the patient participation is during the clinical learning, this increases the patients adherence, engagement, satisfaction, and eventually, health benefits (Cvetanovska et al., 2023).

In the Philippines, clinical confidence among nursing students is highly sensitive to the on-hand practice and patients interaction, these are deficiencies leading to increased stress, errors, and challenges in the real-world care. (Alam et al., 2025; Dolorfino et al., 2025; Almonte et al., 2025). A positive patient cooperation is facilitated by learning and boosts self efficacy, on the other hand, a higher clinical confidence itself is correlated directly with superior decision-making, a greater engagement, and enhanced competent skills (Suikkala, 2020; Tabriz, 2024; Alshammari et al., 2020). Critical learning environments however are often disrupted by students inexperience, poor communication, and other unique challenges such as language and cultural barriers (Meleis, 2019; Brush & Sochalski, 2021; Lorenzo, 2020; Mendoza, 2021). For this reason, educators must provide engagements on orientation to mitigate these issues and to facilitate a clearer interaction (Edward & Teibo, 2024), this is necessary to measure the influence of patients' participation on the confidence of students to ensure that they can translate theoretical knowledge into practice competence.

Despite a significant recognition of the participation of patients in clinical education, there are remaining gaps in understanding its influence on student nurses' clinical confidence. The

issues that are commonly reported such as limited clinical exposure, insufficient confidence, and a lack of reflective opportunities persist, and factors like relational du nami, systemic barriers, and psychological aspects are often overlooked. Acknowledging that a meaningful and active patient involvement is strengthened by how students communicate, their competence, and confidence; this study examined the relationship between patients' participation and clinical confidence among nursing students in a private college in Iloilo. The findings of this study aimed to support the development of educational strategies such as patient-centered simulations, effective pre-clinical orientations, and reflective learning activities that may enhance student-patient interaction, professional growth. Conclusively, this study sought to contribute to the improvement of nursing education by promoting evidence-based approaches that helped develop compassionate, competent, and confident future nurses

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between patients' participation and the clinical confidence of nursing students in a private college in Iloilo. This design was selected as it enabled the assessment of relationships between variables without manipulating or altering any conditions, thus maintaining the natural setting of the study. Descriptive research design focused on portraying the current characteristics or situations of individuals or groups without introducing any changes or interventions (Thomas & Zubkov, 2023). On the other hand, correlational research design involved objectively assessing participants' scores on two or more variables to define and determine the strength of their relationship (Mekonnen, 2020). The aim of a descriptive-correlational research design was to describe variables and assess whether they were linked to other variables without manipulating the conditions or inferring causal links (Devi, Lepcha, Basnet, et al., 2022). The descriptive component of this study identified and described nursing students' perceptions and levels of clinical confidence during their clinical exposure, while the correlational component determined whether a significant relationship existed between patients' participation and the clinical confidence of nursing students in a private college in Iloilo.

2.2 STUDY SETTING

This study was conducted at a selected private higher education institution in Iloilo City. The institution offered a nursing program designed to prepare students for professional practice through the integration of clinical training with classroom instruction. The academic environment facilitated the assessment of patient participation and clinical confidence among nursing students during their Related Learning Experiences (RLEs). Furthermore, the chosen institution served as an appropriate setting for the study, accommodating a substantial number of nursing students who met the inclusion criteria and possessed the requisite clinical experience aligned with the study's objectives.

2.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The population of the study consisted of second-year, third-year, and fourth-year nursing students enrolled in a private college of nursing during the Academic Year 2025–2026. Respondents were selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure fair

representation from each year level and to minimize sampling bias. Only students who were bonafide and regular, met the inclusion criteria, and provided informed consent were included in the study, while those who were on leave of absence, not attending during data collection, or participated in the pilot study were excluded. The sample size was determined using the Raosoft sampling calculator with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. After computation, the sample was proportionally distributed across year levels to ensure equal representation. A random selection method through an online spin-the-wheel tool was used to give each respondent an equal chance of being chosen. This sampling approach strengthened the representativeness of the sample and enhanced the reliability of the findings within the selected population.

2.4 INSTRUMENTATION

The researchers used an adapted and researcher-made questionnaire as the primary data collection tool. The instrument was designed to measure patients' participation and the clinical confidence of nursing students. It consisted of three parts: Part I gathered the respondents' demographic profile, including sex and year level; Part II assessed patients' participation using a 15-item scale rated on a 4-point Likert scale; and Part III measured clinical confidence using a 12-item scale with dichotomous responses.

The Clinical Confidence Scale included two sub-domains, namely confidence in the clinical area and confidence based on knowledge, which evaluated students' self-assurance and application of nursing skills. Higher scores indicated greater levels of patient participation and clinical confidence. The questionnaire underwent validity and reliability testing to ensure accuracy and consistency of responses. Validity was established through expert evaluation, while reliability was tested through a pilot study involving selected nursing students. This ensured that the instrument was appropriate and reliable for data collection.

2.5 DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE

Prior to data collection, the researchers secured the necessary approvals from the appropriate authorities and obtained permission from the College of Nursing. Respondents were selected using stratified random sampling, and all required materials, including printed questionnaires and informed consent forms, were prepared to ensure a systematic and ethical process. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their rights, and informed consent was obtained before participation.

The questionnaires were distributed in paper format to eligible second-, third-, and fourth-year nursing students and were completed within a designated 15-minute period. The researchers provided guidance when necessary while ensuring professionalism, minimal disruption, and the privacy and comfort of the respondents.

Completed questionnaires were collected, reviewed for completeness, and organized for data processing. The data were then tallied, encoded, and analyzed using statistical software. All responses were kept confidential, with no identifying information disclosed. The completed questionnaires and data files were securely stored and accessible only to the research team, ensuring confidentiality and data integrity throughout the research process.

2.6 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. All data were encoded, tabulated, and processed using statistical software to ensure accuracy and consistency. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and mean,

were used to summarize the demographic profile of the respondents and the levels of patients' participation and clinical confidence. Inferential statistics were employed to determine the relationship between patients' participation and clinical confidence among nursing students. A coding manual was used to guide data entry, wherein sex was coded as male (1) and female (2), and year level was coded as second year (1), third year (2), and fourth year (3). Patients' participation was measured using a 4-point scale ranging from not at all (1) to always (4), while clinical confidence was measured dichotomously as not confident (0) and confident (1). These statistical methods enabled the researchers to analyze the data systematically and identify significant relationships between the variables.

2.6 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

In this study, descriptive statistics were used to organize, summarize, and present the data gathered from the respondents. A coding scheme was applied to ensure consistency in data entry and analysis, while missing or incomplete responses were treated as system-missing values and handled using appropriate statistical methods. The mean was used to determine the level of patients' participation and clinical confidence among nursing students, while the standard deviation measured the variability or consistency of responses. In addition, frequency and percentage were utilized to describe the distribution of respondents based on demographic characteristics such as year level and gender, and to show patterns in responses.

For inferential analysis, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to determine whether the data followed a normal distribution, which guided the selection of the appropriate correlation test. Pearson's r was applied for normally distributed data, while Spearman's ρ was used for non-parametric data to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between patients' participation and clinical confidence. The statistical analysis was conducted at a 0.05 level of significance, where the null hypothesis was rejected if the p -value was less than 0.05, indicating a significant relationship between the variables.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

The sample population for this study consisted of 305 student nurses, of whom 79.7% were female ($n=243$) and 20.3% were male ($n=62$). As shown in Table 1, approximately one-third of the sample were second-year nursing students (34.8%), while 29.8% were in their third year of nursing. The largest proportion of participants were fourth-year nursing students (35.4%). All respondents were enrolled in a private nursing college located in Iloilo and were participating during the semester following the completion of their previous semester, specifically during the 2nd semester of the 2025-2026 academic year.

Table 1

Profile of the Respondents (n = 305)

Variables	<i>f</i>	%
Sex		
Male	62	20.3
Female	243	79.7
Year Level		
2nd Year Level	106	34.8

3rd Year Level	91	29.8
4th Year Level	108	35.4
Total	305	100%

Level of Patients' Participation

The mean responses from each indicator of the patients' participation questionnaire were utilized to assess the level of patients' participation as perceived by student nurses. Each indicator has a numerical value, with higher mean scores reflecting greater perceived participation.

Findings show that, in general, respondents perceived an overall positive patients' participation, with an overall mean of 3.28 out of 4. The highest indicator (m=3.53) shows that patients' participation during care makes student nurses feel more capable and competent. It shows that participation increases the students' competence in clinical decision making and is influenced by respect for the student nurse's role and supervision of the Clinical Instructor.

Conversely, the data also revealed certain areas where patients' participation can be enhanced. The indicators with lower mean scores were observed in engagement in decision-making (m=2.94), which were perceived to occur only sometimes. This can lead to the idea that patients may not always actively share preferences or participate in decisions, which was also noted in the study of Suikkala et al. (2021). Table 2 presents the data.

Table 2

Distribution of Mean Responses on the Level of Patients' Participation as Perceived by Student Nurses During Clinical Exposure (n = 305)

Level of Patients' Participation Indicators	Mean
Patients' participation during care makes me feel more capable and competent in my clinical duties.	3.53
Patients respect my role as a student nurse, which boosts my self-confidence.	3.48
Patients willingly allow me to perform nursing procedures with CI's supervision.	3.48
Patients' willingness to be involved in their care increases my confidence in clinical decision-making.	3.46
Patients provide consent and show trust when I carry out nursing procedures under supervision.	3.43
Patients are open to communication, which makes me more confident in providing care.	3.37
Patients participate willingly when I perform new skills with CI's supervision.	3.33

Patients follow instructions during health teaching.	3.32
Patients encourage my learning by being receptive to my role as a student nurse.	3.31
Patients actively participate in their own care by complying with treatment / care plans.	3.27
Patients ask questions about their care when I am performing nursing care procedures.	3.15
Patients share relevant information about their condition without being prompted.	3.13
Patients provide honest feedbacks about the nursing care given to them.	3.05
Patients express their preferences regarding how care is delivered.	2.96
Patients allow me to engage them in decision-making about their care.	2.94
Overall m(sd)	3.28/4 (0.45)

Level of Clinical Confidence

Responses from each indicator of the clinical confidence questionnaire were used to assess the level of clinical confidence. Each indicator has a numerical equivalent that shows a higher level of clinical confidence as the total score increases. Findings show that in general, respondents have an overall clinical confidence with an overall mean of 10.61 out of 12.

Under the level of clinical confidence based on knowledge subdomains, the overall mean 5.22 out of 6. The highest indicator (m= 0.95) reveals that respondents contribute to public protection by creating and maintaining a safe environment. However, the lowest indicators of clinical confidence was in the area of demonstrating clinical judgment with the mean value of 0.74.

In the area of level of confidence in the clinical area subdomains, the overall mean 5.39 out of 6. The highest indicator (m= 0.92) reveals that respondents establish an adaptation of a holistic orientation towards healthcare. Conversely, overall ability to practice as a safe and competent nurse obtains the lowest indicator with the mean of 0.87.

Table 3

Distribution of Student Nurses According to Level of Clinical Confidence in Terms of Confidence in Clinical Area and Confidence Based on Knowledge (n = 305)

Level of Clinical Confidence Indicators	<i>Confident f</i>	<i>Not Confident f</i>	<i>Confident %</i>	<i>Not Confident %</i>
I. Confidence based on Knowledge				

Contributing to public protection by creating and maintaining a safe environment	290	15	95.08	4.918
Taking account of social, cultural, spiritual, legal, political and economic influences on nursing care	279	26	91.47	8.52
Based upon best available evidence, applying knowledge and skills to safe nursing practice	274	31	89.84	10.16
Evaluating and documenting outcomes of nursing	268	37	87.87	12.13
Delegating duties to others	257	48	84.26	15.74
Demonstrating clinical judgement	226	79	74.10	25.90
Total Knowledge m(sd)			5.22/6 (0.80)	
II. Confidence in the Clinical Area				
The adoption of a holistic orientation towards healthcare	281	24	92.13	7.87
Practicing evidence-based care	279	26	91.47	8.52
The provision and management of care	274	31	89.84	10.16
Addressing quality standard	273	32	89.51	10.49
Addressing lifelong learning to identify and meet needs of patient	269	36	88.20	11.80
Overall ability to practice as a safe and competent nurse	267	38	87.54	12.46
Total Clinical Area m(sd)			5.39/6 (0.74)	
Overall Clinical Confidence m(sd)			10.61/12 (1.86)	

Relationship Between Patients' Participation and Clinical Confidence Among Nursing Students

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to assess the normality of the data, the result showed a p-value of .000, which is less than .05 level of significance. This indicates that the data were not normally distributed, therefore, the Spearman rho correlation coefficient was applied. The statistical analysis revealed a significant correlation between patient participation in care and the perceived clinical confidence ($r_s = .234$, $p = .000$). Since the

p-value was less than .05, the null hypothesis was rejected, confirming that a significant relationship exists between the two variables.

The findings indicate a positive or parallel relationship between patient participation and clinical confidence. This means that as patient involvement in care increases, the perceived clinical confidence of student nurses also increases. Both variables move in the same direction, showing a direct relationship.

Although the relationship was statistically significant, the strength of the correlation based on the Spearman rho value ($r_s = .234$) is considered weak. This finding aligns with the interpretation of correlation coefficients by Aprianti (2020), stating that r values ranging from 0.21 to 0.40 are classified as weak correlations. Therefore, while patient participation is related to clinical confidence, the degree of influence is small.

Other sources of evidence to support this research are presented by Sahlsten et al. (2021), describing how nursing students learn through interacting with patients and getting timely feedback about how they have performed in practical situations from participating patients, thereby enhancing their self-efficacy as professionals. Yazdani et al. (2023) also found nursing students who participated in collaborative, patient-focused delivery of care had significantly greater self-confidence and perceived level of proficiency than their peers; thus, students who participated in patient care had a positive relationship between patient participation and self-confidence when providing nursing care. In addition to these findings, Liu et al. (2023) established a positive correlation between student clinical performance and self-esteem; they demonstrated there was an increase in nursing student confidence when experiential learning methods were employed that required interaction with patients. The findings of these studies suggest that engaging with patients increases students' perceived nursing competence.

Table 4

Spearman's rho Results for Relationship between Patients' Participation and Clinical Confidence (n=305)

	Clinical Confidence		
	Confidence based on Knowledge	Confidence in the Clinical Area	Overall
Participation	r_s value= .194** p value=.001	r_s value= .208** p value=.000	r_s value= .234** p value=.000

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4. CONCLUSION

The study revealed that student nurses experienced a high level of patient participation during clinical rotations, which positively influenced their clinical skills and proficiency, although patient involvement in decision-making was less evident. It also found that student nurses had a generally high level of clinical confidence, particularly in patient safety and knowledge-based competencies, but showed lower confidence in clinical judgment and independent decision-making. Additionally, there was a weak but significant positive relationship between patient participation and clinical confidence, indicating that increased

patient engagement contributes to the development of students' competence and readiness for professional nursing practice.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

As supported by the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed: Nursing students should be encouraged to promote patient engagement during clinical practice through effective communication, respectful interactions, and comprehensive explanations of procedures. Involving patients through health education, detailed explanations, and clear communication may enhance their confidence in performing nursing procedures and clinical judgment. Additionally, nursing students are advised to reflect on their clinical experiences to identify both their strengths and areas requiring improvement. Seeking guidance from clinical instructors and participating in clinical review sessions may support the ongoing development of clinical confidence, particularly in situations that demand clinical judgment and decision-making. Nurse educators are encouraged to develop and implement educational strategies that emphasize the significance of patient participation as an integral component of clinical practice. Providing structured opportunities for patient interaction, practical discussions, and simulation-based activities may foster students' clinical self-efficacy and critical thinking skills. Continuous feedback and guidance can assist students in addressing developmental gaps and refining their competencies.

Hospital administrators are advised to review and enhance clinical policies and practices that support student learning while ensuring patient safety. Facilitating student nurses' participation in patient care and promoting collaboration with patients during clinical sessions can strengthen their confidence and skill development. Ensuring adequate clinical supervision and fostering collaboration among healthcare professionals may contribute to an optimal learning environment that balances high-quality patient care with effective educational experiences. Future researchers are encouraged to consider the limitations of this study and to explore additional avenues for investigation. Expanding the sample size and including respondents from multiple institutions can improve the generalizability of the findings. Employing qualitative or mixed-methods approaches, such as interviews or observations, may provide deeper insights into student-patient interactions and help reduce response bias. Allocating sufficient time and resources for data collection can facilitate a more comprehensive assessment of patient participation, especially in areas related to shared decision-making and patient care preferences. Longitudinal studies may also offer a clearer understanding of how clinical confidence evolves over time in relation to patient participation throughout nursing education.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest in relation to this study.

CONSENT

All authors confirm that informed consent was obtained from the participants prior to data collection.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

The study was reviewed and approved by the Iloilo Doctors' Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IDIREC) prior to its conduct, ensuring that all ethical standards in research involving human participants were strictly followed. The researchers adhered to established ethical guidelines, including the protection of participants' rights, privacy, and confidentiality, and obtained informed consent before participation. All procedures were conducted in accordance with accepted ethical principles for human research, ensuring that the study complied with institutional and international ethical standards.

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