

Nursing Students' Stress Management in Relation to the Level of Stress and Clinical Performance in Related Learning Experiences

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Abstract— Effective stress management is crucial for nursing students as they navigate the demands of their education and clinical training. This study examined the relationship between stress management, stress levels, and clinical performance among nursing students at a higher education institution in Ozamiz City offering a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. Using a descriptive-correlational survey design, the study randomly selected 123 third-year nursing students as respondents. Researcher-made questionnaires assessed their stress management, stress levels in clinical settings, and readiness for clinical performance. Documentary analysis also reviewed their grades in Related Learning Experiences (RLE). Data were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The respondents demonstrated very good stress management skills, including coping strategies, resilience, emotional regulation, stress reduction activities, and mindfulness. Stress levels were notably high, particularly related to patient care responsibilities, with moderate to high stress stemming from clinical environment factors, instructor evaluations, interpersonal challenges, and ethical considerations. Despite these high stress levels, the students maintained satisfactory clinical readiness and fair to satisfactory RLE grades. The study found that strong stress management skills helped manage stress levels but did not significantly impact clinical performance outcomes. In conclusion, fostering effective stress management remains essential for nursing students' well-being. Encouraging self-care practices and implementing stress-reduction strategies within clinical instruction could create a more supportive learning environment, promoting student resilience and success in clinical settings.

Keywords— assessment, clinical performance, coping strategies, emotional regulation, resilience.

INTRODUCTION

Nursing education combines theoretical learning and practical experience, with clinical learning making up half of the educational journey. This practical component is crucial for developing patient care skills, professional critical thinking, decision-making, and self-confidence. However, the clinical learning environment, as a social space with diverse expectations and needs, often lacks sufficient control over learning conditions, resulting in challenges and stress for both students and instructors (Arkan et al., 2018; Bhurtun et al., 2019).

During clinical activities, nursing students practice techniques under the supervision of licensed professionals, engaging with patients to gain hands-on experience in general and specialized care. Clinical duty is vital for learning from experienced nurses and building independence and confidence. It helps

students understand the complexities of health and disease. Starting clinical practice as early as the second year allows rapid development of skills like communication, critical thinking, professionalism, and teamwork. Initial clinical exposure is crucial, requiring attention to students' perspectives and emotions, as they may experience anxiety, fear, and self-doubt (Acosta et al., 2023; Hamadi et al., 2021).

Stress, as described by Selye, is a reaction to environmental stimuli. In the physical realm, stress occurs when one object exerts pressure on another, like one object placed atop another; if the second object cannot withstand the force from the first, it can lead to the second object's collapse. Similarly, according to Zheng (2022), in biological systems such as the human body, unmanaged or excessive stress can culminate in both physical and mental breakdowns, ultimately resulting in adverse health outcomes.

A typical baccalaureate nursing program is a rigorous 4-year course, often causing stress for students when academic demands exceed their capacity. Clinical training, particularly in the initial stages, can be anxiety-inducing and negatively impact both academic and clinical performance. This stress can lead to future career issues, substance abuse, and reduced empathy. Many nursing students leave their programs due to stress, but stress reduction programs have been effective in reducing attrition rates. Developing effective stress-coping strategies is essential for maintaining mental health and well-being (Chaabane et al., 2021).

Research within healthcare-related fields has unveiled concerning trends regarding stress, with nursing students experiencing higher stress levels than their peers, who are on an upward trajectory. Furthermore, the clinical experiences of student nurses may detrimentally impact various facets of their lives, including learning outcomes, academic performance, overall health, well-being, quality of life, clinical routines, and behavior. The demanding activities required during professional education may give rise to feelings of inadequacy, which, in turn, can contribute to heightened stress levels (Onieva-Zafra et al., 2020; Admi et al., 2018). A high prevalence of stress and anxiety is experienced among nursing students during their clinical experiences (Begam et al. 2020). The anticipation of new responsibilities, fear of making errors, and exposure to the emotional challenges of patient care contribute to heightened stress levels (Beck, 2018). The RLE phase intensifies these stressors as students navigate the complex interplay between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

Clinical learning experiences in nursing education offer valuable real-world practice but can also trigger stress and anxiety (Carless-Kane & Nowell, 2023). Students are concerned about unpredictable patient conditions (Sanad, 2019), the responsibility for delivering high-quality care under supervision (Brook & Kemp, 2021), and meeting instructor expectations, leading to anxiety (Aihie & Ohanaka, 2019). Communication with instructors can be daunting, and balancing constructive feedback induces anxiety.

Integrating with staff nurses and the healthcare team poses challenges as students fear appearing incompetent (Heng & Shorey, 2023). Interactions with patients' families can also be anxiety-inducing. Supporting families, empathizing, and managing conflicts contribute to students' stress, ultimately affecting their learning experience.

Elevated stress and anxiety levels have been linked to detrimental impacts on academic performance and clinical decision-making. According to research by Reddy (2018), heightened stress among nursing students can hinder information retention, impede critical thinking skills, and potentially compromise the quality of patient care. The Related Learning Experience (RLE), characterized as a high-stakes environment, exacerbates these challenges, emphasizing the critical necessity for effective stress management strategies (Jimenez et al., 2022). It underscores the importance of effective stress management as a preventive measure against escalating stress and anxiety levels.

Recognizing the profound impact of stress on the well-being and performance of nursing students underscores the critical importance of stress management. Effective stress management is closely associated with enhanced coping skills, increased resilience, and a more successful adaptation to the demands of clinical practice, as supported by research (Ab Latif et al., 2019). Students who engage in stress reduction programs report better academic performance, higher levels of self-confidence, and a greater sense of preparedness for clinical practice. These programs can include workshops on stress management techniques, peer support groups, counseling services, and wellness activities designed to promote mental health (Brook et al., 2021).

Understanding the specific stressors in the Related Learning Experience (RLE) and evaluating stress management strategies is crucial for developing targeted interventions. Stress and anxiety are common in nursing education, especially during clinical training. Implementing effective stress management strategies can help students cope with these challenges. Prioritizing nursing students' mental and

emotional well-being not only benefits them but also improves the quality of patient care they provide. Creating a supportive learning environment is essential for both students and the future of the healthcare industry (Joompathong et al., 2022).

The study aims to determine the nursing students' stress management in terms of coping strategies, resilience, emotional regulation, stress reduction activities and mindfulness. It also aims to determine the level of respondents' stress in terms of patient care responsibilities, clinical environment, clinical instructors and evaluation interpersonal relationships and emotional and ethical challenges. It aims to explore the relationship between the respondents' stress management, level of stress and clinical performance.

The study identifies a gap in the literature regarding comprehensive analysis of nursing students' stress management and its impact on clinical performance during RLE. Previous research has highlighted the significant stress and anxiety nursing students experience during clinical training, particularly in RLE (Sanad, 2019). Additionally, Sulosaari et al. (2022) have studied the effects of stress and anxiety on students' well-being and performance. Effective stress management is recognized as crucial, as it enhances coping mechanisms and resilience (Hughe et al., 2021).

However, what remains to be explored is a more in-depth analysis of the stress management strategies employed by nursing students during RLE. It is essential to understand the effectiveness of these strategies and identify those that prove most beneficial. While the importance of stress management is well-documented, a significant gap exists in investigating how these strategies influence the academic performance of nursing students during RLE. Recent studies could investigate whether effective stress management improves grades and clinical decision-making. Additionally, there needs to be more research examining the long-term impact of stress management on nursing students' professional development, overall career satisfaction, and the

potential prevention of burnout. Recent studies should focus on delving into these long-term outcomes.

Although there is a general understanding of the presence of stress and the significance of stress management for nursing students during RLE, there exists a substantial gap in the literature regarding the specific strategies in use, their impact on academic performance, long-term consequences, cultural and institutional influences, comparative studies, and the development of effective interventions. Addressing these areas in recent studies plays a pivotal role in bridging the existing gap in knowledge.

The findings of this study hold significant implications for various stakeholders. Firstly, nursing students benefit from a deeper understanding of effective stress management strategies that can empower them to navigate the demanding environment of their Related Learning Experiences (RLE) with greater resilience and enhanced coping mechanisms, ultimately leading to improved academic performance and overall well-being. Nursing educators and institutions can benefit by tailoring their support systems and curricula to address the stressors students face during RLE, contributing to a more nurturing learning environment. Furthermore, healthcare institutions can produce better prepared and less stressed nursing graduates, thus enhancing patient care quality and reducing burnout rates among nurses. Ultimately, society reaps the rewards, as well-managed stress among nursing students ensures a stronger, more competent nursing workforce, leading to improved healthcare delivery and patient outcomes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, a descriptive-correlational survey design was employed to investigate relationships among variables. The research was conducted at a private school in Ozamiz City, with third-year nursing students selected as the study's respondents. Data collection was carried out using a custom-designed, researcher-developed questionnaire. To analyze the collected data, statistical measures such as Mean and Standard Deviation were used for descriptive analysis, while Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was applied to examine correlations

between variables. Ethical considerations were applied to ensure privacy and confidentiality of the respondents.

Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational survey design, a methodology that merges descriptive and correlational research approaches. Descriptive research aims to outline a phenomenon and its characteristics without delving into causation, typically using statistics like frequencies, percentages, and averages to identify trends (Zhang et al., 2020). Correlational research, in contrast, explores the relationships between two or more variables, often controlling extraneous factors to yield precise estimates or conservative hypothesis tests (Subia et al., 2018). The combination of these methods allows researchers to describe variables in detail while also examining potential connections between them. This design was well-suited for evaluating how nursing students' stress management relates to their stress levels and clinical performance.

Setting

The study was conducted in a private school in Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental, known for its modern facilities and experienced faculty. The institution offers accessible, high-quality education across various fields, including science, engineering, business, healthcare, and the arts. Students can pursue degrees, diplomas, and certifications, equipping them with the skills needed for career success. The school emphasizes producing well-rounded graduates ready to thrive in their chosen professions. It also collaborates with local businesses, government agencies, and nonprofits to provide students with valuable practical experience through internships and research projects.

Respondents

The respondents of the study were 123 third-year nursing students. This population was computed using the Raosoft calculator. The 123 respondents were chosen using the random sampling technique. Random sampling is a form of probability sampling where the researcher chooses a random subset of participants from a larger population.

The selection criteria included: (1) enrolled in the College of Nursing for the First Semester of the School Year 2023-2024 (2) enrolled in RLE subject, (3) had an experience in handling patients in one of the following areas: labor and delivery room, operating room, OB-Gyne ward, NICU, or pediatric ward, medical and surgical ward and (4) gave the consent to participate in the study.

Instrument

The following instruments were used in gathering the data:

A. Respondents' Stress Management Questionnaire.

It is a researcher-made questionnaire used to determine the level of respondents' stress management. This questionnaire was categorized into coping strategies, resilience, emotional regulation, stress reduction activities, and mindfulness. Each construct consists of 10 questions respectively. The questionnaire used a four-point Likert scale.

The research instrument underwent pilot testing to establish reliability and yielded a Cronbach's Alpha results for coping strategies (0.8769), resilience (0.8044), emotional regulation (0.8075), stress reduction activities (0.8744) and mindfulness (0.8769). Presented below was the continuum used to analyze the gathered data:

Scale	Responses	Continuum	Interpretation
4	Strongly Agree (SA)	3.41 – 4.00	Very Good (VG)
3	Agree (A)	2.61 – 3.40	Good (G)
2	Disagree (D)	1.81 – 2.60	Poor (P)
1	Strongly Disagree (SD)	1.00 – 1.80	Very Poor (VP)

B. Respondents’ Level of Stress Questionnaire.

This was a researcher-made questionnaire that was used to determine the level of respondents’ stress experienced during their Related Learning Experiences. The questionnaire was categorized into the following constructs: patient care responsibilities, clinical environment, clinical instructors and evaluation, interpersonal relationships, and emotional and ethical challenges. Each construct consists of 10

questions respectively. The questionnaire used a four-point Likert scale. The research instrument underwent pilot testing to establish reliability and yielded a Cronbach’s Alpha results for patient care responsibilities (0.8232), clinical environment (0.7913), clinical instructors and evaluation (0.8387) interpersonal relationships (0.8277), and emotional and ethical challenges (0.8344). Below was the continuum used to analyze the gathered data:

Scale	Responses	Continuum	Interpretation
4	Strongly Agree (SA)	3.41 – 4.00	Very High (VH)
3	Agree (A)	2.61 – 3.40	High (H)
2	Disagree (D)	1.81 – 2.60	Low (L)
1	Strongly Disagree (SD)	1.00 – 1.80	Very Low (VL)

C. Respondents’ Clinical Performance.

This was a researcher-made questionnaire that was used to determine the respondents’ clinical performance in terms of readiness. The questionnaire was categorized into the following constructs: clinical competence, critical thinking, communication skills, and patient-centered care. Each construct consists of

10 questions respectively. The questionnaire used a four-point Likert scale. The research instrument underwent pilot testing to ensure reliability and yielded a Cronbach’s Alpha results for clinical competence (0.8364), critical thinking (0.8744), communication skills (0.8744), and patient-centered care (0.8827). Below was the continuum used to analyze the gathered data:

Scale	Responses	Continuum	Interpretation
4	Strongly Agree (SA)	3.41 – 4.00	Very Satisfactory (VS)
3	Agree (A)	2.61 – 3.40	Satisfactory (S)
2	Disagree (D)	1.81 – 2.60	Fair (F)
1	Strongly Disagree (SD)	1.00 – 1.80	Poor (P)

RLE Grades. The grades were based on the weighted raw score of the student’s summative assessment on their skills, knowledge, and attitude in their RLE. The grade were transmuted based on the passing rate of 75

percent. The student’s semi-final grades in their RLE was taken from the students’ respective clinical instructors. The interpretation used to analyze the gathered data is shown on the next page.

RLE Grades	Interpretation
96 – 100	Outstanding (O)
90 – 95	Very Satisfactory (VS)
85 – 89	Satisfactory (S)
80 – 84	Fair (F)
75 – 79	Poor (P)

Data-Gathering Procedure

Before data collection, the researcher obtained approval from the Dean of the Graduate School and

the Dean of the College of Nursing. The questionnaires were pilot-tested to ensure validity and reliability. Once approval was granted, the

questionnaires were distributed to 123 respondents at the beginning of their clinical training, following informed consent procedures. After data collection, a statistician analyzed the data using statistical measures. The researcher also received permission from the students' clinical instructors to access their semifinal RLE grades. Data collection was conducted at the start of the first clinical rotation to minimize the influence of external factors, such as homework and exam pressures, on students' stress levels as the semester progressed.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were adhered to during the planning and execution of the study. Initially, the study received clearance from the Misamis University Research Ethics Committee (MUREC). Respondents signed an informed consent form that outlined the study's purpose, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality measures, researcher's contact information, and conditions for participation, including the right to refuse or withdraw at any time. Additionally, the researcher ensured that privacy and confidentiality of the respondents were protected.

Data Analysis

The study used the following tools in the analysis of the data gathered:

- Mean and Standard Deviation. These tools were used to determine the nursing student's stress management, level of stress, and clinical performance in their Related Learning Experiences.
- Pearson Product—Moment Correlation (Coefficient r). This tool was used to explore the significant relationship between the nursing students' stress management, level of stress, and clinical performance in their related learning experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of the Respondents' Stress Management

The study focused on understanding respondents' stress management across various constructs: coping strategies, resilience, emotional regulation, stress reduction activities, and mindfulness. The respondents

generally reported very good levels of stress management ($WM=3.54$; $SD=0.1858$). Emotional stress regulation marks the highest ($WM=3.81$; $SD=0.3536$) suggesting that students have likely developed effective coping strategies for managing stress. Good levels of emotional regulation may reflect a supportive educational environment thus students perform better in both their academe and clinical duties. Stress reduction activities marks the lowest ($WM=3.40$; $SD=0.3283$) suggesting that students need more exposure in various exercises that would help them channel stress. Nursing students who manage stress well are more likely to transition into competent, resilient professionals who can handle the pressures of the nursing profession.

Coping Strategies. The Table shows that the respondents claimed having very good stress management in terms of coping strategies ($WM=3.76$; $SD=0.3470$). This finding means that respondents exhibited robust coping strategies, reflecting their adeptness in effectively managing stressors. This includes techniques such as time management, relaxation exercises, seeking social support and engaging in physical activities. It aligns with extensive literature highlighting the pivotal role of adaptive coping mechanisms in mitigating stress (Smith et al., 2020; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Adaptive coping, such as problem-solving has been consistently linked to lower stress levels and enhanced well-being (Algorani & Gupta, 2023). Moreover, studies emphasize that individuals employing such strategies tend to experience reduced psychological distress during challenging situations (Roma et al., 2020).

Regarding stress reduction activities and mindfulness, Kriakous et al. (2021) emphasized the role of engagement in various activities and mindfulness practices in mitigating stress levels. These findings support the results of the current study, indicating active involvement in stress-reducing practices (Van den Bergh 2021).

These findings reinforce the Stress and Coping Theory by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), suggesting that individuals employ diverse coping mechanisms to manage stress. The results align with this theoretical

framework, highlighting the role of coping strategies, resilience, emotional regulation, stress reduction activities, and mindfulness in effective stress management. These insights are relevant to interventions aimed at bolstering stress management skills and promoting mental well-being in various populations, paving the way for more targeted and effective stress management interventions.

Resilience. The Table indicates that the respondents exhibited very good stress management in terms of resilience (WM=03.42; SD=0.2626). This very good level of resilience suggests that they have a strong ability to recover from stressful situations, aligning with contemporary research on the importance of resilience in stress management (Ruengorn et al., 2022; Weaver, 2021; Caza et al., 2020). Resilience is a dynamic process empowering individuals to adapt positively despite adversities. Ruengorn et al. (2022) stress the significance of resilience in fostering psychological strength and recovery following traumatic events, aligning with the robust resilience observed among the respondents (Weaver 2021).

The research underscores stronger, resilient individuals exhibit superior coping mechanisms and lower stress-related outcomes (Ekrem et al., 2023; Li & Hasson, 2020; Meyer et al., 2020). Ching et al. (2020) emphasized that resilient individuals often employ adaptive coping strategies, maintaining psychological well-being despite significant stressors. Kansakar et al. (2020) underscored the adaptive nature of resilience, facilitating effective coping and emotional regulation amidst adversity. Moreover, Li & Hasson (2020) highlight resilience's role in promoting positive adaptation and stress reduction among individuals facing challenging life circumstances. The substantial resilience demonstrated by the respondents validates the pivotal role of resilience in stress management. These findings underscore the relevance of resilience theory, highlighting its protective function in mitigating the impact of stress and fostering psychological well-being among individuals.

Emotional Regulation. The Table shows that the respondents had a very good level of stress management in terms of emotional regulation

(WM=3.81; SD=0.3536). This finding indicates that the respondents tend to exhibit better stress management capabilities. Posing a calm and composed appearance helped in regulating one's emotion. Adeptness in managing emotions effectively is a crucial aspect of stress management (Thomas & Zolkoski, 2020). Polizzi and Lynn (2021) underscored the significance of emotional regulation in mitigating stress, emphasizing its role in modulating emotional responses to challenging situations. King Johnson et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of effective emotional regulation in promoting psychological well-being and reducing stress-related symptoms among individuals facing adversity. Diffley and Duddle (2022) emphasized the positive impact of strong emotional regulation skills in coping with stress and fostering resilience. Studies supported the idea that individuals proficient in emotional regulation tend to exhibit better overall psychological health (Xiyun et al., 2022). This finding underscores the importance of emotional regulation theories in understanding how effective emotion management contributes to stress reduction and psychological well-being.

Stress Reduction Activities. The Table shows that the respondents have a very good level of stress management in terms of stress reduction activities (WM=3.40; SD=0.3283). This finding suggests that the active participation of respondents in stress reduction activities indicate their commitment to managing stress levels effectively. Popovic et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of engagement in stress reduction activities, emphasizing their role in promoting well-being and reducing stress-related symptoms.

Chaabane et al. (2021) discussed the positive impact of stress reduction activities on enhancing coping strategies and reducing stress among individuals facing challenging situations. The active participation of respondents in stress reduction activities underscores the significance of such practices in stress management (Martin et al., 2022). This finding aligned with stress reduction theories, emphasizing the role of proactive engagement in various activities to mitigate stress and promote psychological resilience.

Mindfulness. The Table shows that the respondents had very good level of stress management in terms of mindfulness (WM=3.42; SD=0.3493). This construct of mindfulness practices involves paying deliberate attention to the present moment in a non-judgmental and accepting manner. It has gained recognition for their profound impact on stress reduction and mental well-being. Regular mindfulness practice can significantly reduce stress levels by promoting relaxation and reducing the impact of stressors. Valikhani et al. (2020) highlighted the positive relationship between mindfulness practices and reduced stress levels, emphasizing its role in enhancing psychological health. Long et al. (2021) discussed the benefits of mindfulness in stress reduction, citing its effectiveness in fostering adaptive coping strategies and promoting emotional regulation. Furthermore, Querstret et al. (2020) emphasized the association between mindfulness practices and

improved mental well-being, highlighting its role in reducing stress-related symptoms and enhancing overall psychological resilience.

The findings resonate with Lazarus and Folkman's Stress and Coping Theory (1984), which emphasizes that individuals use coping strategies to manage stress. The study's results align with this theory by showcasing respondents' employment of coping mechanisms across various stress management constructs. Understanding that respondents possess strong stress management skills can lead to interventions that reinforce these strategies. Also, promoting mindfulness and stress reduction activities could enhance individual stress management. These implications can guide future research and interventions to bolster stress management skills in various populations, fostering better mental health outcomes.

Table 1. Respondents' Stress Management (n = 123)

Constructs	WM	StDev	Interpretation
Coping Strategies	3.67	0.3470	Very Good
Resilience	3.42	0.2626	Very Good
Emotional Regulation	3.81	0.3536	Very Good
Stress Reduction Activities	3.40	0.3283	Very Good
Mindfulness	3.42	0.3493	Very Good
Overall Weighted mean	3.54	0.1858	Very Good

Legend: 3.41 – 4.00 Very Good (VG) 1.81-2.60 Poor (P) 2.61 – 3.40 Good (G) 1.00-1.80-Very Poor (VP)

Level of the Respondents' Stress

The presented Table illuminates nursing students' perceived stress levels across various professional responsibility constructs (OWM=3.40; SD=0.3700). The implications of this heightened stress are multifaceted, potentially impacting the well-being and academic engagement of nursing students. Pervasive stress may detrimentally affect their overall mental health, potentially leading to burnout and reduced life satisfaction. The construct of patient care responsibilities marks the highest (WM=3.45; SD=0.3606) suggesting that students have increased pressure in taking on responsibilities in handing patients. Furthermore, the demanding nature of their professional responsibilities such as patient care and clinical evaluations, might compromise academic

engagement, hindering students' focus, motivation, and performance. Interpersonal relationship marks the lowest (WM=3.36; SD=0.2975) suggesting that students need effective communication with patients and other healthcare team to foster mutual respect and understanding in delivering quality nursing care. Addressing these stressors is imperative for fostering a positive learning environment, ensuring optimal academic outcomes, and nurturing the mental and emotional resilience of nursing students as they navigate the challenges inherent in their educational journey.

Recent studies have focused on perceived stress and its connection to professional responsibilities. Green et al. (2021) found that occupational burnout related to

workplace stress is common among nurses who routinely deal with trauma, suffering, and heavy workloads. Qiu et al. (2020) discovered that resilience was inversely related to physical and mental fatigue. Resilient individuals are better at recovering from fatigue-inducing circumstances such as long work hours and caregiving responsibilities. They also tend to have stronger problem-solving abilities and social support systems, which help them address and manage the root causes of fatigue.

Patient Care Responsibilities. The Table shows that the respondents had a very high level of stress in terms of patient care responsibilities (WM=3.45; SD=0.3606). The demanding nature of patient care responsibilities, coupled with the elevated stress levels, may adversely impact students' ability to focus, stay motivated, and actively engage in their academic pursuits. High stress in patient care responsibilities could lead to reduced concentration during studies and clinical rotations, hindering effective learning experiences. Additionally, persistent stress may contribute to feelings of burnout, potentially diminishing students' overall enthusiasm for their academic journey. Therefore, experiences associated with patient care responsibilities are crucial for maintaining optimal academic engagement, ensuring the quality of learning experiences, and nurturing the resilience of nursing students throughout their education.

In the study of Arkan et al. (2018), students observe the caregiving activities of nurses and their communication with the patient in the clinical environment. The responsibility of providing direct patient care requires a certain level of clinical competence and confidence. Nursing students may experience stress if they feel inadequately prepared or lack confidence in performing tasks related to patient care. They may also feel stressed due to the pressure of managing time efficiently, prioritizing patient needs, and handling a demanding workload during clinical rotations (Arkan et al., 2018). According to Kahu and Nelson (2018), student success and retention remain key issues for higher education institutions. The basis of the student engagement enhances our understanding of the student experience. It emphasizes

the importance of self-efficacy, emotions, belonging, and well-being as critical factors that mediate the relationship between student engagement and success.

Clinical Environment. The Table shows that the respondents had a high level of stress in terms of clinical environment (WM = 3.40; SD 0.3214). This includes clinical instructors, clinical staff, hospital setting and equipment. This finding highlights potential challenges within the healthcare setting that could impact nursing students like heavy workloads, resource limitations, and challenging working conditions. These stressors can have profound implications for the student's overall well-being and academic engagement. Excessive workload and resource constraints may compromise the quality of clinical experiences, affecting students' ability to learn and apply their skills effectively. Interventions such as workload management strategies, enhanced resource allocation, and support mechanisms within the clinical environment should be considered to mitigate stress and ensure a conducive learning atmosphere for nursing students.

Clinical environment plays a major role in elevating overall stress levels. It encompasses various factors, such as the clinical setting, staff, and patients that surround nursing students (Asghar Khan et al., 2019). Aljohani (2021) noted that clinical practice significantly contributes to stress among nursing students. It includes unfamiliarity with the clinical environment, lack of confidence in practice, and fear of errors when using advanced technology or equipment. Additionally, nursing students often face client suffering, pain, death, and dying, all of which can lead to heightened stress levels. Gemuhay et al. (2019) also found that negative criticism, limited practice opportunities, staffing shortages, and a high student-to-clinical instructor ratio impact student performance. Previous research indicates that the clinical environment can induce anxiety and stress, resulting in negative emotions among students (Ahmad & Anwar, 2018).

Clinical Instructors and Evaluation. The study disclosed that nursing students experience a high level

of stress in terms of clinical instructors and evaluation ($WM=3.38$; $SD=0.2916$). This finding underscores the impact of assessment processes and interactions between a student and his instructor revealing increased level of students' stress. The educational environment's evaluative components play a crucial role in shaping students' perceptions and experiences. High stress in this domain may result from various factors, including the pressure associated with assessments, feedback mechanisms, and expectations set by clinical instructors. Addressing this stress requires a multifaceted approach, incorporating supportive feedback mechanisms, clear communication of expectations, and additional resources for skill development. Educational institutions can create a more supportive and productive learning environment for nursing students by promoting a collaborative and empathetic relationship between students and clinical instructors.

Research shows that students often experience anxiety about being evaluated (Arkan, 2018). The evaluation process can lead to stress due to clinical instructors, insufficient clinical practice time, a high student-to-instructor ratio, or students' perceptions of their role as merely subjects of evaluation. The significant stress related to clinical instructors and evaluation may result from the pressure to excel under educators' observation and the fear of unfavorable assessments. Gregersen et al. (2021) underscored the effects of evaluative practices on healthcare professionals' well-being and highlighted the importance of providing constructive feedback and support.

Interpersonal Relationship. The construct that nursing students claimed having a high level of stress was related to interpersonal relationships in the professional setting ($WM=3.36$; $SD=0.2975$). This finding points to challenges in communication, teamwork, or conflicts with colleagues. It highlights the crucial role of supportive workplace dynamics in mitigating stress within healthcare education. Effective communication and positive interpersonal relationships are essential components of a collaborative and conducive learning environment. Addressing stress in this domain may involve implementing communication skills training, fostering

teamwork initiatives, and providing conflict resolution resources. By proactively addressing challenges related to interpersonal relationships, educational institutions can contribute to creating a more supportive atmosphere, ultimately enhancing the overall well-being and experience of nursing students during their professional training.

Saukkoriipi et al. (2020) suggested that personalized supportive supervision and ongoing feedback tailored to students' learning needs, objectives, and learning stages, as well as the contributions of educators hired by educational institutions, are vital for fostering positive learning experiences. Suikkala et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of a clinical learning environment focused on relationship-based healthcare, which is key to motivating future healthcare professionals to collaborate with patients. Given the potential stress from new relationships and an unfamiliar environment, it is crucial for students to feel welcomed and accepted as equal members of interprofessional teams.

Emotional and Ethical Challenges. The construct that nursing students experienced a high level of stress was related to emotional and ethical challenges ($WM=3.42$; $SD=0.2422$). This finding emphasizes the profound impact of navigating complex ethical dilemmas and emotional aspects of patient care on their overall well-being. The healthcare profession inherently involves emotionally charged situations and ethical decision-making, contributing to heightened stress levels among students. Addressing this stress requires a comprehensive approach, incorporating education on ethical principles, emotional resilience training, and opportunities for students to debrief and reflect on challenging experiences. By offering sufficient support to help students navigate emotional and ethical challenges, educational institutions can help shape well-rounded, resilient healthcare professionals, ultimately improving the quality of patient care.

Studies by Jia et al. (2021) and Cleary et al. (2018) emphasized the importance of emotional intelligence and resilience in nursing students for handling challenges in clinical placements and future practice.

Emotional intelligence informs cognition, which in turn drives effective decision-making impacting patients and healthcare providers. Ethical challenges are common in clinical nursing practice, and an infectious environment can increase these challenges, potentially leading nurses to experience negative emotions and psychological pressure that could harm their mental health (Jia et al., 2021).

Addressing these challenges requires strategies that promote effective stress management, resilience-building, and ethical decision-making among nursing students and professionals. By integrating comprehensive training in emotional intelligence, resilience and ethical reasoning into nursing education, institutions can better equip future nurses to handle the emotional and ethical complexities of their profession.

Table 2. Level of the Respondents' Stress (n=123)

Constructs	WM	StDev	Interpretation
Patient Care Responsibilities	3.45	0.3606	Very High
Clinical Environment	3.40	0.3214	High
Clinical Instructors and Evaluation	3.38	0.2916	High
Interpersonal Relationship	3.36	0.2975	High
Emotional and Ethical Challenges	3.42	0.2422	High
Overall Weighted mean	3.40	0.3700	High

Legend: 3.41 – 4.00 Very High (VH) 1.81-2.60 Low (L) 2.61 – 3.40 High (H) 1.00-1.80-Very Low (VL)

Respondents' Clinical Performance

Evaluation of nursing student's clinical performance is crucial aspect of healthcare. This study reveals that patient-centered care marks the highest (WM=3.44; SD=0.1613) showing that students valued patients as a holistic approach in their nursing care. Students promote patient care satisfaction and greatly value the involvement of patient in the nursing care plan. While the clinical competence marks the lowest (WM=3.27; SD=0.2545) doesn't mean that students were not competent enough in delivering their nursing care. This suggests that they exhibit an acceptable level of proficiency in executing clinical tasks. It is important to help student practice their skills in the laboratory before their clinical placements to build their self-confidence in performing the procedures in the clinical setting.

Clinical Readiness. Table 3A presents a comprehensive evaluation of nursing students' clinical performance, encompassing essential constructs such as clinical competence, critical thinking, communication skills, and patient-centered care. The collective assessment yielded (OWM=3.36; SD=0.0726) a satisfactory level of clinical performance among the respondents.

This combined rating serves as a holistic benchmark, synthesizing the diverse dimensions of clinical proficiency. It is crucial to delve deeper into each construct's specific nuances, exploring the intricacies that contribute to this overall satisfactory rating. This nuanced approach allows for targeted improvements and a more granular understanding of the multifaceted nature of nursing students' clinical competencies. Notably, patient-centered care stands out with a very satisfactory rating, showcasing a high level of proficiency in this crucial aspect of healthcare provision. However, a closer look at individual constructs reveals variations.

Clinical Competence. The Table shows that the respondents' clinical performance was a satisfactory in terms of clinical competence (WM=3.27; SD=0.2545). The finding suggests that nursing students exhibit an acceptable level of proficiency in executing clinical tasks. Overall, clinical competence can be enhanced through targeted interventions such as skill-building exercises and practical training sessions. These focused initiatives can address specific areas of concern and facilitate a more uniform development of clinical skills. Clinical placements

play a crucial role in developing practical skill competencies (Gregersen et al., 2021).

The initial clinical exposure can significantly contribute to anxiety and stress among students. Arkhan (2018) highlighted that the disparity between theory and practice can negatively impact students' learning experiences. It has been suggested that nursing education should place a greater emphasis on elements that affect the learning of students' practical skills. Gaining experience through performing practical skills on real patients is believed to offer a deeper understanding than simulation or laboratory training (Gregersen et al., 2021).

Critical Thinking. The Table shows that the respondents' clinical performance was a satisfactory in terms of critical thinking (WM=3.34; SD=0.2937). This finding implies that nursing students exhibit an acceptable ability to analyze and solve complex clinical scenarios. To further enhance critical thinking skills, it is recommended to encourage activities that stimulate this cognitive process. Incorporating more case studies, problem-solving exercises, and scenarios that require analytical reasoning into the curriculum can foster a deeper engagement with complex clinical situations.

Several factors may influence the satisfactory rating in critical thinking. The curriculum's emphasis on critical thinking and the effectiveness of teaching methodologies play crucial roles. If the curriculum provides ample opportunities for students to engage in thought-provoking exercises and if the teaching methods effectively stimulate analytical reasoning, it contributes positively to the observed rating. However, the study disclosed that there might be variability in how students experienced and engaged in these activities. Thus, customizing teaching methods to suit various learning styles and regularly updating the curriculum to match emerging healthcare challenges can help standardize the development of critical thinking skills among nursing students.

Nurses with strong critical thinking abilities can effectively identify patient issues and take appropriate actions, leading to improved nursing care quality.

Therefore, enhancing nursing students' critical thinking skills in clinical practice is vital (Sapeni et al., 2020). According to Shirazi and Heidari (2019), the need for nurses to learn critical thinking skills is significant as these skills play a crucial role in problem-solving. Nurses lacking these skills may exacerbate issues. They must reflect on their actions and weigh the potential consequences to make accurate and appropriate decisions (Shirazi & Heidari, 2019).

Communication Skills. The Table shows that respondents' clinical performance had a satisfactory rating in terms of communication skills (WM=3.39; SD=0.2757). This finding suggests that nursing students generally demonstrate effective communication, yet there is room for refinement. Targeted training interventions may include role-playing and simulations that emphasized in enhancing communication skills. These activities can provide a structured platform for students to practice and refine their communication techniques, ensuring more precise and patient-centered interactions.

Effective communication is especially crucial in high-stress environments, as found in the nursing profession. According to Meng and Qi (2018), the ability to communicate with patients is the heart of all nursing care. Clear and empathetic communication between nurses and patients is essential for establishing trust, ensuring patient understanding of medical information, and addressing concerns. In stressful healthcare situations, such as medical emergencies or serious diagnoses, nurses with strong communication skills can provide comfort and support to patients (Baby et al., 2018).

Patient-Centered Care. The Table shows that the respondents' clinical performance in terms of patient-centered care (WM=3.44; SD=0.1613) was a very satisfactory. This exceptional rating indicates that nursing students exhibit commendable proficiency in prioritizing patients' needs and preferences. This very satisfactory rating underscores a robust foundation in the holistic provision of healthcare, showcasing an empathetic and patient-focused approach among nursing students. This approach prioritizes the

patient’s role in decision-making and seeks to build a therapeutic relationship between patients and healthcare providers. Patient-centered care promotes patient satisfaction, better health outcomes, enhanced patient trust, reduced healthcare costs and increased healthcare provider satisfaction.

Padilla et al. (2022) emphasized that fostering a culture of patient-centered care throughout healthcare systems is crucial for providing equitable opportunities for populations to achieve and maintain good health. Implementing this approach in clinical practice requires training and awareness among staff. Geldelman et al. (2021) concurred that the successful adoption of patient-centered principles demands shifts in practice, knowledge, attitudes, and policies across the entire healthcare workforce. Incorporating patient-centered care principles into the nursing curriculum through lectures, case studies and role-playing scenarios promote student’s self-confidence during clinical placements.

Moreover, the cultural competence of nursing students, their ability to communicate effectively, and the incorporation of diverse perspectives in the curriculum may also contribute to this high rating. By fostering a comprehensive understanding of patients’ needs, values, and preferences, nursing students are better equipped to deliver care that aligns with the holistic nature of healthcare provision. The very satisfactory rating in patient-centered care not only highlights a current strength among nursing students but also serves as a benchmark for continuous excellence. It is essential to sustain and further enhance this proficiency by integrating ongoing feedback mechanisms, encouraging reflective practices, and promoting a patient-centric mindset throughout the entirety of nursing education. Continuous emphasis on patient-centered care principles ensures that nursing graduates are well-prepared to navigate the complexities of healthcare with empathy, compassion, and a steadfast commitment to prioritizing the well-being of their patients.

Table 3A. Respondents’ Clinical Performance as to Readiness (n=123)

Constructs	WM	StDev	Interpretation
Clinical Competence	3.27	0.2545	Satisfactory
Critical Thinking	3.34	0.2937	Satisfactory
Communication Skills	3.39	0.2757	Satisfactory
Patient-Centered Care	3.44	0.1613	Very Satisfactory
Overall Weighted mean	3.36	0.0726	Satisfactory

Legend: 3.41 – 4.00 Very Satisfactory (VS) 1.81-2.60 Poor (P) 2.61 – 3.40 Satisfactory (S) 1.00-1.80-Very Poor (VP)

RLE Grades. Table 3B presents the respondents’ clinical performance in their Related Learning Experience. The distribution of grades includes Outstanding, Very Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Fair, and Poor. Most respondents received positive assessments of their clinical performance, with 52. Most grades were very satisfactory, and 43.09 percent were deemed satisfactory. The absence of grades in the poor categories indicates a high overall standard of clinical performance among the respondents. This substantial percentage of 52.95 percent in the very satisfactory category indicates a strong level of competence and proficiency in clinical performance. Students in this category likely demonstrated a high

degree of skill application, critical thinking, and adherence to best practices in healthcare settings. Respondents’ grade satisfactorily with 43.09 percent met the expected standards of clinical performance. While not reaching the highest level of achievement, they demonstrated competency in essential nursing skills, effective communication, and the application of theoretical knowledge in practical settings. The absence of grades in the poor categories suggests that none of the respondents fell below a satisfactory level. It indicates a generally high standard of clinical performance, with most students meeting or exceeding expectations.

The distribution of RLE grades reflects a commendable level of clinical competency among the respondents. The prevalence of very satisfactory and satisfactory grades underscores the crucial role of the nursing education program in preparing students for

practical applications in real-world healthcare settings. In the study, the majority of nursing students demonstrated proficiency and effectiveness in their clinical responsibilities, boding well for their future roles in the healthcare field.

Table 3B. Respondents' Clinical Performance as to RLE Grades (n=123)

Clinical Performance as to RLE Grades	Frequency	Percentage
Outstanding	-	-
Very Satisfactory	5	4.07
Satisfactory	65	52.95
Fair	53	43.09
Poor	-	-
Total	123	100.00

Significant Relationship between the Respondents' Stress Management and Level of Stress

Table 4 shows the correlation (r) between various constructs related to stress management and the level of stress experienced by nursing students. Each construct, including patient care responsibilities, clinical environment, clinical instructors and evaluation, interpersonal relationship, emotional and ethical challenges, coping strategies, resilience, emotional regulation, stress reduction activities, and mindfulness, is evaluated for its correlation coefficient (r) and significance level (p).

The study revealed a highly significant relationship between the respondents' stress management in terms of stress reduction activities and level of stress in terms of patient care responsibilities ($r= 0.24$; $p= 0.00^{**}$). Thus, the Null Hypothesis was rejected. This finding highlights the importance of stress reduction activities in influencing the stress levels experienced by nursing students. This finding underscores the significant role that stress reduction activities play in influencing the stress levels experienced by nursing students. The demanding nature of nursing education, coupled with the challenges inherent in clinical practice, often exposes students to elevated levels of stress. Recognizing the importance of stress reduction activities becomes crucial in fostering a supportive and conducive learning environment.

Engaging in stress reduction activities is instrumental in mitigating the adverse effects of stress on the overall well-being of nursing students (Aloufi et al., 2021). Such activities may include mindfulness practices, relaxation techniques, physical exercises, and effective time management strategies. By incorporating these activities into the students' routine, educational institutions can contribute to creating a more resilient and mentally healthier student body. Moreover, the finding suggests that integrating stress reduction activities into the curriculum or offering dedicated resources for students to access these activities can be beneficial. This proactive approach acknowledges the unique stressors faced by nursing students and emphasizes the importance of holistic support for their academic and personal well-being. It aligns with the understanding that managing stress is not only essential for individual students but also contributes to maintaining a positive and conducive learning environment within the nursing education setting.

However, constructs such as coping strategies, resilience, emotional regulation, and mindfulness, showed no significant relationship with the level of stress experienced by the respondents (all p-values > 0.05). It may be that the respondents very good stress management counteracts their level of stress. The non-significant relationship between stress management constructs and stress levels aligns with previous findings by Li and Hasson (2020) and Chaabane et al.

(2021). Similarly, Hamaideh et al. (2020) reported non-significant relationships between resilience and stress levels among nursing students, suggesting that other factors might contribute to stress experiences beyond individual stress management constructs.

The findings of the study suggest the need for nursing education programs to emphasize cultivating positive interpersonal relationships among students. Enhancing communication skills, teamwork, and peer support networks could significantly reduce stress levels among nursing students. Additionally, while stress management techniques play a role, their direct impact on stress levels might be more nuanced, warranting further exploration and holistic approaches to stress reduction in nursing education. Cornine (2020) claimed that the anxiety of nursing students during clinical rotations affects their academic performance and interpersonal interactions; however, various

faculty-led and student-led interventions may reduce student anxiety in the clinical setting (Cornine, 2020).

Labrague et al. (2018) found that enhancing nursing students' positive coping skills may enable them to manage various stressors during their education effectively, thereby optimizing their learning. Applying evidence-based strategies such as stress management counseling, counseling programs, peer and family support systems, and policymaking to support nursing students could help prevent stress recurrence and minimize its impact. Nursing students encounter stress during clinical training and use different coping strategies to address it. Thus, nursing staff need to mentor students during clinical practice and create a more supportive clinical environment (Bhurtun et al., 2019).

Table 4. Significant Relationship Between the Respondents' Stress Management and Level of Stress

Variables	Patient Care Responsibilities	Clinical Environment	Clinical Instructors and Evaluation	Interpersonal Relationship	Emotional and Ethical Challenges
Coping Strategies	r= 0.09 p= 0.30 Ho: Accept	r = 0.06 p= 0.48 Ho: Accept	r= 0.07 p= 0.44 Ho: Accept	r = 0.08 p= 0.33 Ho: Accept	r= 0.00 p= 0.92 Ho: Accept
Resilience	r= 0.14 p= 0.11 Ho: Accept	r= -0.05 p= 0.57 Ho: Accept	r= -0.03 p= 0.73 Ho: Accept	r= -0.07 p= 0.85 Ho: Accept	r= -0.10 p= 0.24 Ho: Accept
Emotional Regulation	r= 0.00 p= 0.94 Ho: Accept	r= -0.03 p= 0.68 Ho: Accept	r= 0.03 p= 0.73 Ho: Accept	r= -0.03 p= 0.68 Ho: Accept	r= -0.01 p= 0.90 Ho: Accept
Stress Reduction Activities	r= 0.24 p= 0.00** Ho: Reject	r= -0.03 p= 0.71 Ho: Accept	r= 0.09 p= 0.31 Ho: Accept	r= 0.05 p= 0.54 Ho: Accept	r= 0.01 p= 0.84 Ho: Accept
Mindfulness	r= 0.16 p= 0.06 Ho: Accept	r= -0.02 p= 0.78 Ho: Accept	r= 0.12 p= 0.16 Ho: Accept	r= 0.02 p= 0.77 Ho: Accept	r= -0.10 p= 0.25 Ho: Accept

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between the respondents' stress management and level of stress.

Legend: 0.00-0.01**Highly Significant 0.02-0.05*Significant above 0.05Not Significant

Significant Relationship between the Respondents' Stress Management and their Clinical Performance

Stress Management and Readiness. This Table shows the correlation (r) between various stress management constructs and nursing students' clinical performance. Stress management in terms of coping strategies, resilience, emotional regulation, stress reduction activities and mindfulness. Clinical performance in terms of clinical competence, critical thinking, communication skills and patient-centered care.

The finding indicates that the p-values are higher than 0.05, leading to the acceptance of the Null Hypothesis. The absence of significant relationships between stress management and clinical performance constructs can be attributed to the multifaceted nature of nursing education and clinical practice. Clinical competence encompasses a broad spectrum of skills and knowledge that may not be solely influenced by stress management. The broad scope of clinical competence might reduce the noticeable influence of stress management on this construct.

Factors beyond stress management, such as educational methodologies, clinical exposure, and individual aptitude, play a significant role in influencing critical thinking and communication skills. Stress management, therefore, emerges as just one component in the intricate interplay of these determinants. Numerous factors influence patient-centered care, and the subjective nature of evaluating patient-centeredness may contribute to the lack of a clear correlation with stress management. The variety of coping strategies used by nursing students and the differing levels of individual resilience may explain the lack of a consistent correlation between stress management and overall clinical performance. The

intricate and multifaceted relationships between these variables highlight the need for a holistic understanding of the determinants of clinical performance beyond the scope of stress management alone.

Kassymova (2018) suggested that incorporating stress management techniques, such as yoga and Japanese finger stress relief, can benefit both students and teachers, even during classes. The study highlighted the need to provide students with effective stress management methods while they are learning. Stress can be managed through the introduction of stress management courses and participation in extracurricular physical and mental activities. Joompathong et al. (2022) found that stress management programs effectively reduced stress and enhanced the occupational performance of nursing students. Persistent stress from various sources can negatively impact students' health, leading to psychological distress and psychosomatic illness. The perception of stress and the ability to cope with it largely depend on the coping strategies employed by students (Nebhinani et al., 2020).

The lack of significant relationships suggests that stress management and clinical performance in nursing students are complex and influenced by numerous factors. The nuanced nature of nursing education and clinical practice demands a comprehensive understanding of the determinants of clinical performance that extends beyond the realm of stress management. Further research and exploration of these relationships, considering the dynamic interplay of various factors, are warranted to achieve a more thorough understanding of these intricate dynamics.

Table 5A. Significant Relationship Between the Respondents' Stress Management and their Clinical Performance

Variables	Clinical Competence	Critical Thinking	Communication Skills	Patient-Centered Care
Coping Strategies	$r = -0.05$ $p = 0.55$ Ho: Accept	$r = -0.08$ $p = 0.36$ Ho: Accept	$r = 0.13$ $p = 0.13$ Ho: Accept	$r = 0.11$ $p = 0.20$ Ho: Accept
Resilience	$r = 0.00$ $p = 0.94$	$r = -0.08$ $p = 0.35$	$r = 0.06$ $p = 0.44$	$p = 0.08$ Ho: Accept

Emotional Regulation	Ho: Accept r= -0.11 p= 0.20 Ho: Accept	Ho: Accept r= 0.12 p= 0.18 Ho: Accept	Ho: Accept r= -0.06 p= 0.48 Ho: Accept	r= -0.08 p= 0.35 Ho: Accept
Stress Reduction Activities	r= -0.07 p= 0.41 Ho: Accept	r= 0.05 p= 0.55 Ho: Accept	r= -0.00 p= 0.93 Ho: Accept	r= 0.12 p= 0.18 Ho: Accept
Mindfulness	r= -0.04 p= 0.65 Ho: Accept	r= -0.08 p= 0.35 Ho: Accept	r= 0.00 p= 0.93 Ho: Accept	r= -0.11 p= 0.19 Ho: Accept

Ho2A: There is no significant relationship between the respondents' stress management and clinical performance as to readiness.

Legend: 0.00-0.01**Highly Significant 0.02-0.05*Significant above 0.05Not Significant

Stress Management and RLE Grades. The Table shows the correlation coefficient (r) between the respondents' stress management in terms of coping strategies, resilience, emotional regulation, stress reduction activities and mindfulness and clinical performance as to RLE grades. The finding suggests that there was no significant relationship between the respondents' stress management constructs (coping strategies, resilience, emotional regulation, stress reduction activities, and mindfulness) and their clinical performance as measured by RLE grades. All p-values are greater than the significance level of 0.05, leading to the acceptance of the Null Hypothesis.

The lack of significant relationships between the two variables in the study might have included a diverse group of respondents with varying stress management approaches, leading to a wide range of responses that could cancel each other out. Factors outside the scope of the study, such as personal life events, workload, or external stressors, could have influenced the respondents' stress management and clinical performance, introducing variability that masks potential relationships. Moreover, stress management and clinical performance are intricate constructs influenced by multifaceted interactions. The study might not have captured all relevant variables or their interactions, leading to non-significant relationship between the two variables.

Although the data did not reveal a significant link between assessed stress management constructs and clinical performance, it is important to consider these findings within the study's limitations. Further research with improved methodologies and larger sample sizes could offer more insight into the complex relationship between stress management and clinical performance in healthcare settings.

According to Sanad (2019), stress and anxiety among nursing students are longstanding issues. Numerous studies from as early as the 1970s have explored these challenges within the clinical learning environment. Stress can hinder nursing students' ability to meet clinical requirements, engage with patients, and achieve learning outcomes. It can lead to adverse effects such as poor performance, increased burnout, and diminished personal well-being (Ahmed et al., 2019).

In clinical learning, a positive environment, trainer support, direct communication with students, extended clinical learning experiences, peer relationships, and patient interaction are all key factors (Arkan et al., 2018). A recent study by Nebhinani et al. (2020) also identified the attitudes of other professionals toward nursing, lack of free time, and fear of mistakes as leading causes of distress among students.

Table 5B. Significant Relationship between the Respondents' Stress Management and Their Clinical Performance as To RLE Grades

Variables	r value	p value	Decision
Coping Strategies and RLE Grades	0.009	0.924	Accept Ho
Resilience and RLE Grades	0.060	0.510	Accept Ho
Emotional Regulation and RLE Grades	-0.000	0.997	Accept Ho
Stress Reduction Activities and RLE Grades	0.073	0.422	Accept Ho
Mindfulness and RLE Grades	0.005	0.953	Accept Ho

Ho2B: There is no significant relationship between the respondents' stress management and clinical performance as to RLE Grades

Legend: 0.00-0.01**Highly Significant 0.02-0.05*Significant above 0.05Not Significant

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The respondents exhibited commendable stress management across all constructs, as evidenced by their overall very good weighted mean. They confronted elevated stress levels encompassing diverse aspects of clinical responsibilities. They also encountered a notably high level of stress in terms of patient care responsibilities and high level of stress in terms of clinical environment, clinical instructors and evaluation, interpersonal relationships, and emotional and ethical challenges, highlighting the multifaceted nature of stressors faced by nursing students in their educational and clinical journey. Moreover, they exhibited a satisfactory level of clinical performance readiness, as evidenced by positive evaluations in terms of grades, and a majority achieved satisfactory ratings, indicating a commendable level of competence and proficiency in their clinical performance. Their stress reduction activities showed a positive impact in managing patient care responsibilities. Though stress management is important for overall well-being, it may not directly impact clinical performance outcomes in nursing students.

Based on the findings, the following are recommended:

1. Nursing students, continue to actively engage in and further develop effective stress management practices. This proactive approach can contribute to maintaining overall well-being and resilience throughout their nursing education journey.
2. The institution may undertake targeted interventions and support mechanisms may be implemented to address the diverse stressors

encountered across various professional responsibility constructs. Initiatives such as stress management workshops, counseling services, mentorship programs, and creating a supportive learning environment can play a pivotal role in enhancing the well-being and effective performance of nursing students, thereby improving the overall quality of their educational experience.

3. The dean and program head may support the students' clinical skills and proficiency through targeted interventions such as regular feedback sessions, simulation-based training, and opportunities for hands-on practice. Additionally, fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional development can empower nursing students to strive for excellence in their clinical endeavors, ultimately contributing to their overall growth and success in the field of nursing.
4. The institution may prioritize and encourage the incorporation of these activities into daily routines and academic programs. Introducing strategies such as mindfulness exercises, relaxation methods, physical activities, and time management skills workshops can effectively provide students with the resources they need to manage stress effectively. Moreover, offering opportunities for peer support groups and counseling services can increase the availability and impact of stress management strategies, thereby promoting a healthier and more resilient learning atmosphere for nursing students.
5. Future researchers investigate the gap of this study and further explore the other factors that has not been reflected. Future exploration can open

more opportunities to foster a productive learning environment where students can showcase their skills and build their confidence and mitigate stressors.

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