
**INFLUENCERS OF MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION SKILL
ACQUISITION AMONG FOURTH YEAR NURSING STUDENTS
PLACED AT MAKUENI LEVEL FIVE HOSPITAL, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

Background of study- Nursing education is an interrelation between theoretical knowledge and practical skills and yields qualified and competent nurses. One of the basic competencies to acquire is medication administration, which is critical in terms of patient safety. Nursing students are faced with problems when making clinical placements. These difficulties do not help them acquire this skill. These factors will be comprehended to improve nursing education and competence. The study aimed at assessing factors influencing the acquisition of medication administration skills acquisition among fourth-year nursing students during clinical placements in Makueni Level five Hospital to ascertain what made them acquire medication administration skills. **Methodology-** A cross-sectional analytical research design was used. qualitative method was applied in data collection. Data was analyzed analyzed using descriptive, inferential and thematic methods. **Results;** pointed out that robust classroom and simulation-based training can promote psychomotor activity and confidence in clinical environments however fear of making mistakes during the administration of medication , anxiety and deficiency of confidence among the student nurses, Inadequate rest and heavy academic work were found to negatively influence acquisition of needed nursing skills. **Conclusion:** The study concluded that students needed study rest schedules to minimize fatigue and concentration during clinical placements. Clear Guidance by the clinical instructors to enhance confidence and accuracy administering medication was necessary.

KEYWORDS: Medication, Skills, Acquisition, administration.

INTRODUCTION

Medication administration is recognized globally as a critical nursing competency. This is because it directly influences patient's safety and treatment outcomes. Studies show that students' competence in this area is below international standards due to the gap between theory and practical training. Inconsistent supervision and inadequate hands-on experience can lead to this (*Baumgartner et al., 2017, Nabolisi et al., 2012*). According to the World Health Organization, (WHO, 2016), proper supervision and evaluation of students during medication administration is essential in preventing medication errors and also ensuring quality patient care

In sub-Saharan Africa, lack of resources in hospitals hinders the acquisition of this core skill, as well as, high patient to nurse ratio and lack of proper mentorship (Gemuhay et al 2019). Studies reveal that the learners are faced with issues such as resource scarcity. There have also been cases of poor clinical teaching and negative staff attitude.

Such gaps are observed in Kenya. County referral hospitals such as the Embu and Thika, conducted a cross-sectional study to establish the extent to which nursing students had mastered important medication administration skills of 70 and above percentage. These are averages of 49 percent to 56 percent (Wachira et al., 2022). The poor teaching resources, insufficiency of the staff, and poor cooperation among the nursing schools and the clinical sites are the institutional factors that are associated with these poor outcomes (Mwangi et al., 2021). Addressing these gaps should involve a better approach to supervision and practical training by the Nursing Council of Kenya (NCK, 2017). None of the published studies have particularly explored how medication administration skills are acquired in Makueni Level Five Hospital. Such difficulties have been reported in other county hospitals in Kenya. They encompassed large patient numbers, employee deficits and poor mentorship (Mutua et al., 2020). The student nurses in institutions like the Umma University are sent in Makueni Hospital to undergo clinical rotations where these issues may present a great challenge in their acquisition and practice of the safe medication administration.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The nursing students can have sufficient theoretical knowledge but, in most cases, they do not have the clinical competence necessary to practice safely and independently, especially on crucial aspects like medication administration. A number of novice nurses state that they do not feel ready to prescribe drugs with confidence in actual clinical practices. This theory and practical imbalance, particularly in medical practices that are risky, such as drug

administration, exposes patients to risks of compromising the effectiveness of the entire healthcare system (Tuitoek, D. et al., 2022).

According to section 2 and 3 of the training file of the students (2014), the Nursing Council of Kenya stipulates mandatory prerequisites in respect of theoretical training/teaching, practical training/teaching, clinical evaluation and internship exercises that should be completed during the nursing training period. They are meant to make sure that the students acquire academic knowledge and clinical skills prior to joining the practice. Nevertheless, even with these vivid requirements, there are still a number of students who are unable to achieve competency in medication administration. This states that there is a discrepancy between what is in policy expectations and the real performance of students. It is due to this that there will be a need to examine the factors that influence the skill acquisition.

Although these are the obvious requirements, there are several factors that have continued to shape whether nursing students can apply the classroom knowledge to practical skills of administering medications. This is based on the student-related issues like confidence and pre-exposure, and the hospital related issues like ineffective supervision, insufficient resources and staff support. Likewise, the institutional factors of inadequate follow-up by nurse teachers or the lack of consistent clinical goals also bring about the problem.

In a bid to fill the gap between knowledge and practice, the research intends to explore the training institution, hospital setting, and other factors associated to the students that influence the learning process of the medication administration skills process during the clinical placement. It is hoped that the results of the findings will be directed at the enhancement of clinical teaching, supervision, and support of students, which will eventually lead to the generation of competent and confident nursing graduates.

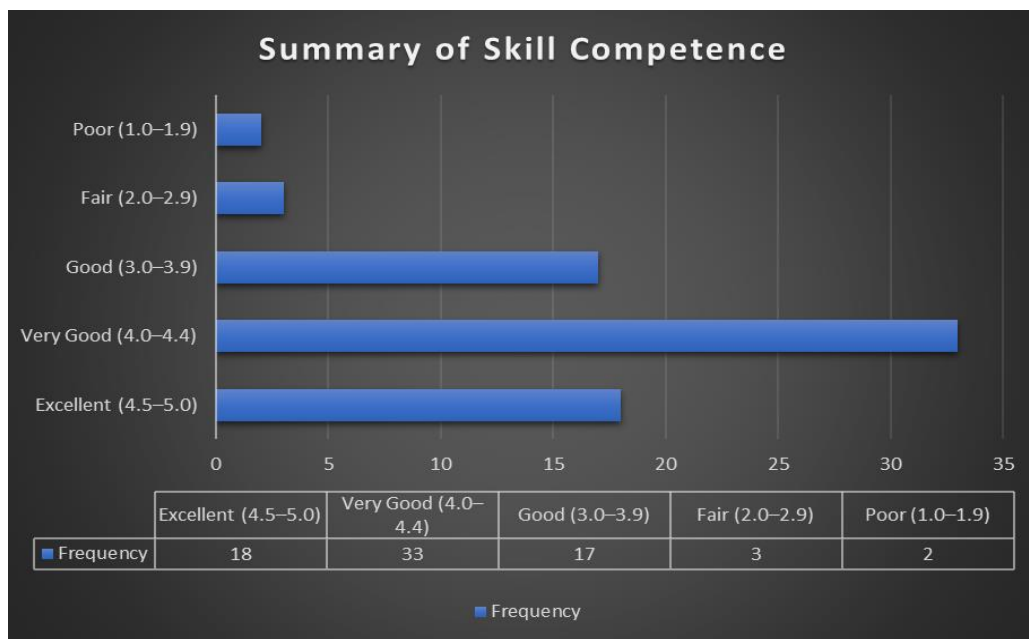
3.0 METHODOLOGY

The research used a descriptive cross-sectional study. The design helped in gathering information in one time among fourth-year nursing students in the context of their implementation of clinical placement at Makueni Level 5 Hospital. a census method was applied to collect data. It was then analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29.0. It was then presented using tables, bar graphs, and pie charts for easy visualization and interpretation of the findings.

RESULTS

Students Competence in Medication Administration Skills.

Nearly half of the respondents (45.2%) demonstrated *very good* overall competence, and about one-quarter (24.7%) achieved *excellent* competence. Only a small minority (6.8%) scored below average. This suggests that the majority of fourth-year nursing students possess adequate medication administration skills, reflecting both their theoretical preparation and clinical exposure.



Instructor Follow-up During Clinical Placement

Most respondents (57.5%) reported that instructors occasionally follow up during clinical placement, while only 23.3% experienced consistent follow-up. This implies a gap in mentorship and evaluation, which may affect student confidence and skill acquisition.

Figure 1.

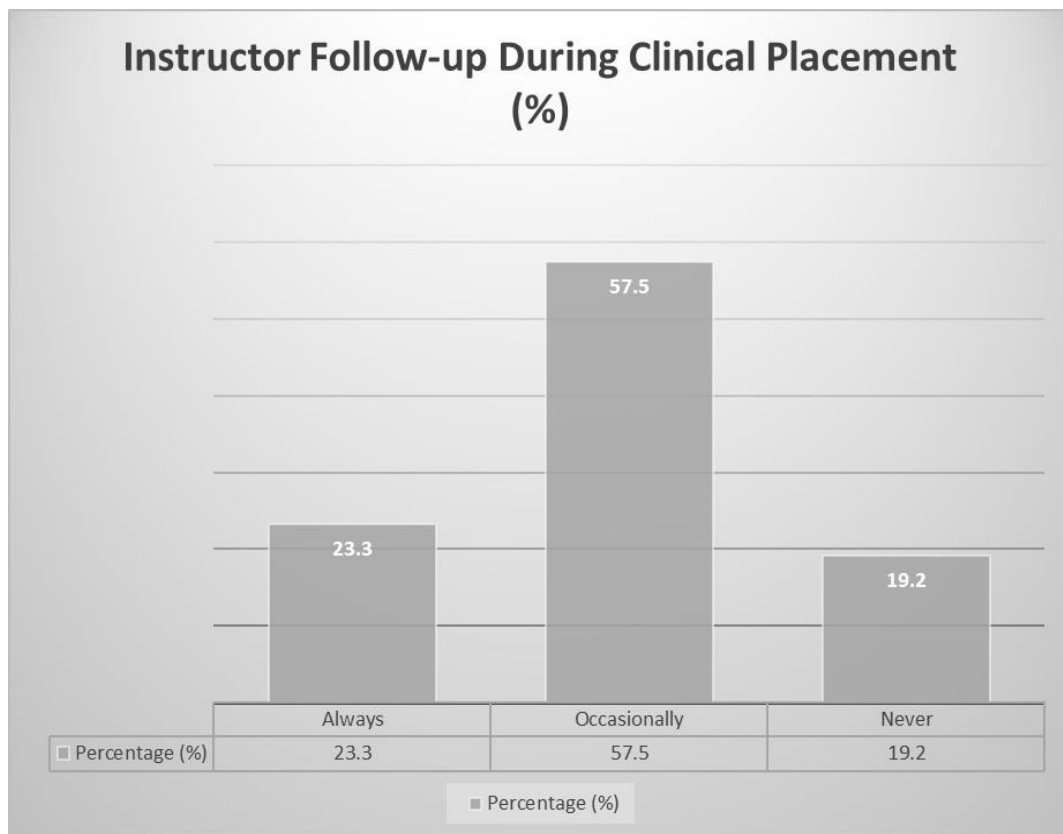


Figure 2: Instructor follow-up during Clinical Placements.

Availability of a Functional Skills Laboratory

Nearly all respondents (97.3%) confirmed the presence of a skills laboratory in their training institution. This indicates institutional commitment to providing practical learning environments where students can rehearse clinical procedures before performing them on real patients.

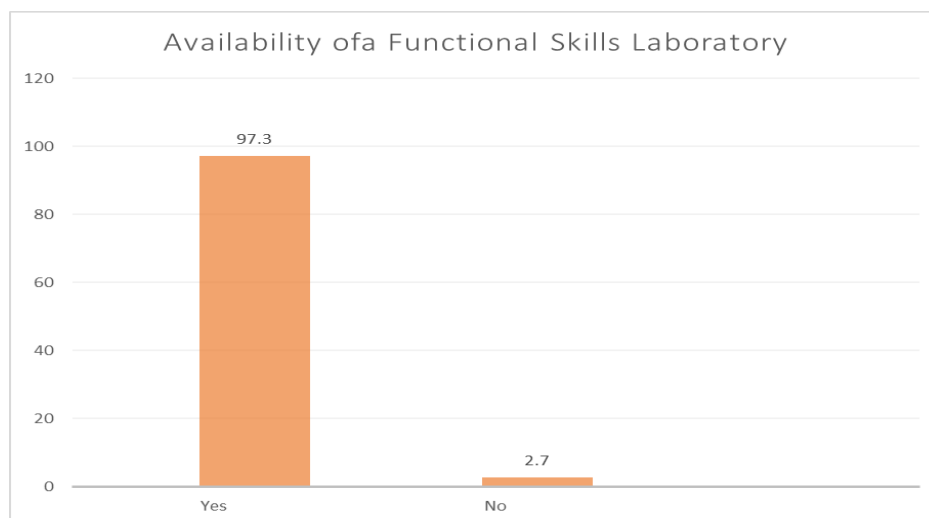


Figure 3: Availability of a functional Skills Laboratory.

CONCLUSION

Factors associated with students, including the fear of errors, inadequate rest, and large amounts of academic work have negative impacts on the learning process, whereas there is also the positive impact of confidence and advantages of communication skills..Hospital factors such as supervision and workload among the staff also play an important role in determining how the students will be able to practice or exercise the skills of medication administration.. Competence is positively affected by the institutional issues, especially the availability of skill laboratories equipped with the necessary equipment and sufficient theoretical training; yet, the lack of regular instructor follow-up leads to the detrimental effects.

On the whole, medication administration skills acquisition among nursing students within Makueni Level 5 Hospital is decent, yet the issue can be enhanced by the regular use of mentorship, patient participation and focus on the documentation and accuracy of doses.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS.

Makueni Medical training college should put in place study and rest schedules so that fatigue is minimized during clinical placements. Students should get explanations and guidance by the clinical instructors to enhance confidence and accuracy during administering medication. The institution instructors should carry out simulation practices and peer learning in order to develop procedural competences. Training Institutions (Hospitals) in collaboration with government of Kenya should come up with heroic recommendations supervision guideline and Intensify the supervision structure through posting of specific nurse mentors to help students. Also minimize student workloads and improve positive learning conditions that promote mastery of skills. Make instructor follow-ups in clinical placements more frequent to offer instructors regular feedback. Enforce a hands-on training in dosage calculation, documentation, pharmacology through simulation and refresher courses. The training institutions should modernize and constantly improve quality laboratories with resources and modern equipment.

Carry out research aimed at Measuring the effects of monitoring of medication administration competency of the students including the role of patient attitudes and hospital culture in learning among students.

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