



# Nursing Students' Confidence Level In Relation To Absenteeism And Its Impact On Clinical Skill Performance

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## Abstract

**Background:** Confidence in clinical skills is a crucial determinant of nursing students' learning, attendance, and professional competence. Absenteeism during clinical postings may negatively influence confidence and clinical skill performance, ultimately affecting quality of patient care. Objective is to evaluate the relationship between absenteeism and confidence level and to assess the impact of absenteeism on clinical skill performance. A quantitative descriptive correlational cross-sectional study was conducted among 100 third- and fourth-year B.Sc. Nursing students selected through stratified random sampling from a selected Nursing College. Data were collected using a demographic and absenteeism data sheet, a confidence scale, and clinical skill performance records. Descriptive and inferential statistics were applied, including Pearson's correlation and chi-square tests. The mean confidence level score was  $57.35 \pm 16.42$ , absenteeism rate was  $40.10 \pm 13.06\%$ , and clinical skill performance score was  $30.10 \pm 7.75$ . A very strong negative correlation was found between confidence level and absenteeism ( $r = -0.885$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), absenteeism and clinical skill performance ( $r = -0.787$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and a very strong positive correlation between confidence level and clinical skill performance ( $r = 0.914$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Residence showed a significant association with confidence level ( $p < 0.05$ ). The study confirms that higher confidence levels are associated with lower absenteeism and better clinical skill performance. Confidence-building and attendance-enhancing strategies are essential to improve nursing students' clinical competence.

**Keywords:** Nursing students, confidence level, absenteeism, clinical skill performance, self-efficacy.

## I. Introduction

Clinical competence is the cornerstone of effective nursing practice. Nursing education emphasizes the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for safe and efficient patient care. Among these, **confidence** plays a pivotal role in enabling students to translate theoretical knowledge into clinical practice<sup>(4,5)</sup>. Lack of confidence often results in anxiety, avoidance behaviours, and absenteeism during clinical postings.

Absenteeism among nursing students remains a persistent challenge in nursing education, leading to reduced clinical exposure, poor skill acquisition, and compromised professional readiness<sup>(1,2,6)</sup>. Understanding the interrelationship between confidence level, absenteeism, and clinical skill performance is essential for nurse educators to design effective educational interventions. This study aims to assess these variables and their relationships among nursing students in a selected nursing college.

## Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the level of absenteeism among nursing students.
2. To determine the confidence level of nursing students in performing clinical skills.
3. To evaluate the relationship between absenteeism and confidence level.
4. To assess the impact of absenteeism on clinical skill performance.

## Hypotheses

H<sub>1</sub>: There will be a significant relationship between nursing students' confidence level and absenteeism.

H<sub>2</sub>: There will be a significant relationship between absenteeism and clinical skill performance.

H<sub>3</sub>: There will be a significant relationship between nursing students' confidence level and clinical skill performance.

H<sub>4</sub>: There will be a significant association between selected demographic variables and confidence level.

## II. Review of literature

A study "dispositional tendency to avoid failure in achievement settings and adversely affect students in educational activities". The aim of the study is to measure Fear of failure (FoF) among for medical students in King Saud University. The sample consists of 455 medical students. By using sampling method, 277 were men, 117 from second year, 121 from the third year and the remaining from fourth year under graduates' medical students, to view the FOF between men and women, academic levels and grade point averages (GPA). A higher GPA (> 4.9) by 24 students, 175 students had 4.5 – 4.9 and remaining 256 students had < 4.5 GPA value. The results showed that mean of FOF was – 0.3117, Higher levels of Fear of failure were seen in those who had GPA below 3.5 and a GPA greater than 4.9. Also, it was high in students who are not interested in studying medicine (p=0.041). The study concluded that overall level of FoF was low among medical students.

A study in Medical sciences university in Iran on the comparison of professional confidence in nursing students and clinical nurses. Samples of nursing students are 230 clinical nurses are 192 were selected and participated in the study. Data were collected through the nurse's professional confidence scale consisting of 35 questions. The study showed professional confident score of clinical nurses with work experience of 10 to 20 years was significantly higher than those with less than 10 years [ mean difference = - 4.25, p= 0.019]. Also, the mean score of professional confidence in the nursing students in fourth and fifth academic semester [mean difference =12.25, p<0.001] higher than that in the students in third academic semester [mean difference = 10.09, p<0.001]. The study concludes clinical nurses experiences a higher level of professional confidence during the middle years of work and nursing students in the middle years of studying.

## III. Research Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative research approach with a descriptive correlational cross-sectional design. It was conducted in a selected nursing college and its affiliated clinical areas. The study population comprised third- and fourth-year B.Sc. Nursing students, and a sample of 100 students was selected using stratified random sampling. Third- and fourth-year B.Sc. Nursing students who were

actively attending the programme were included in the study, while students on long-term leave during the data collection period were excluded.

Confidence levels were measured using a standardized confidence assessment scale that has been widely used in nursing education research <sup>(7,8)</sup>. Absenteeism data were obtained from students' daily attendance records over a three-month period and calculated as a percentage <sup>1,2</sup>. Clinical skill performance was assessed using OSCE-based clinical records, a validated and accepted method for evaluating clinical competence among nursing students <sup>7,8</sup>.

### Data Collection Tools

Section A: Demographic data sheet (Age, Gender, Year of study and Residence)

Section B: Absenteeism (%) = Number of days absent / Total working days × 100

Absenteeism (%)	Interpretation
≤ 10%	Low absenteeism
11–20%	Moderate absenteeism
> 20%	High absenteeism

Section C: Confidence Assessment Scale for Nursing Students (score range: 1–125)

Rating	Description
1	Not confident at all
2	Slightly confident
3	Moderately confident
4	Confident
5	Very confident

This scale is designed to assess the level of self-confidence among nursing students in performing clinical, communication, decision-making, and professional nursing roles during clinical practice.

### Scoring and Interpretation

Each item is scored from 1 to 5.

Total Score Range: 25–125.

Interpretation:

Score Range	Confidence Level
25–50	Low Confidence
51–75	Moderate Confidence
76–100	High Confidence
101–125	Very High Confidence

Section D: Clinical skill performance record- OSCE (score range: 0–50)

### Data Collection Procedure

Ethical clearance and institutional permission were obtained prior to data collection. Students were informed about the purpose of the study, and written consent was obtained. Absenteeism data were collected from attendance records, confidence levels were assessed using a standardized scale, and clinical skill performance scores were obtained from academic records.

## Statistical Analysis

**Descriptive statistics:** Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation

**Inferential statistics:**

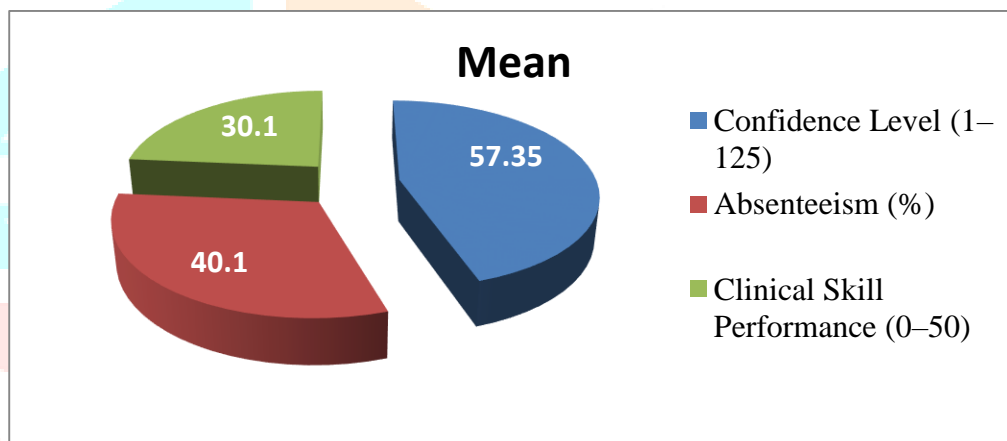
- Pearson's correlation coefficient
- Chi-square test

**Level of significance:**  $p < 0.05$

## IV. Results

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Study Variables**

Variable	Mean	Median	SD
Confidence Level (1–125)	57.35	60.00	16.42
Absenteeism (%)	40.10	40.00	13.06
Clinical Skill Performance (0–50)	30.10	30.00	7.75



**Fig. 1.** The results indicate considerable variability in confidence level and absenteeism among students.

**Table 2: Correlation Between Study Variables**

Variables	r value	p value	Interpretation
Confidence level & absenteeism	-0.885	<0.001	Very strong negative correlation
Absenteeism & clinical skill performance	-0.787	<0.001	Very strong negative correlation
Confidence level & clinical skill performance	0.914	<0.001	Very strong positive correlation

These findings demonstrate that **clinical skill performance increases as confidence level increases and absenteeism decreases.**

Table 3: Association Between Confidence Level and Demographic Variables

Demographic variables	Frequency	Confidence Score			Chi-square	P-value	df	Inference
		25-50	50-75	75-100				
<b>Age</b> 18-20 21-23 24-26	60 23 17	13 7 7	36 14 6	11 2 4	4.99	0.28	2	P>0.05 No association
<b>Gender</b> Male Female	27 73	6 21	15 41	6 11	0.90	0.63	1	P>0.05 No association
<b>Year of study</b> 3rd year 4th year	50 50	14 13	26 30	10 7	0.85	0.65	1	P>0.05 No association
<b>Residence</b> Hostel Dayscholar	68 32	27 0	39 17	2 15	37.48	0.00	1	P<0.05 Association Exists

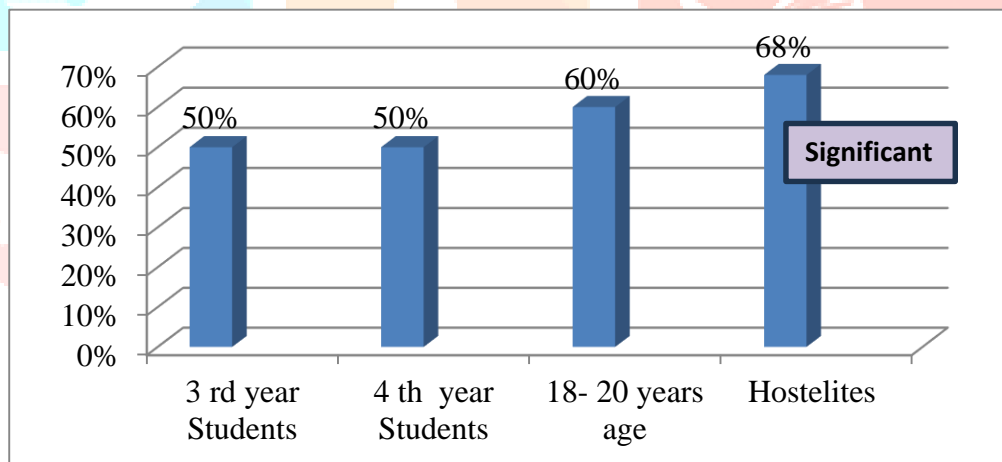


Fig. 2 : Association percentage Distribution

**Interpretation:**

- Majority of students (60%) were aged 18-20 years.
- Female students (73%) were as male (27%).
- 3rd years (50%) and 4th year (50%).
- Most students lived in hostels (68%).

A significant association was found between **residence** and confidence level ( $\chi^2 = 37.48$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). No significant association was observed with age, gender, or year of study.

## V. Discussion

The findings of the present study reveal a strong relationship between confidence level, absenteeism, and clinical skill performance among nursing students. Students with higher confidence exhibited lower absenteeism and better clinical performance<sup>1,3,6</sup>. Absenteeism was found to have a detrimental impact on clinical skill acquisition, highlighting the importance of consistent clinical exposure<sup>1,7</sup>. The significant association between residence and confidence level suggests that environmental and living conditions may influence students' psychological readiness and learning behaviour<sup>(10)</sup>.

## VI. Conclusion

The study concludes that confidence level plays a critical role in determining nursing students' attendance and clinical skill performance. Higher confidence is associated with reduced absenteeism and improved clinical competence. Addressing confidence issues and absenteeism early in nursing education can significantly enhance students' professional readiness<sup>(9)</sup>.

## Recommendations

- Implement regular confidence-building programs such as simulation-based learning
- Strengthen attendance monitoring and student support systems.
- Encourage effective faculty–student interaction to improve engagement.
- Identify at-risk students early and provide academic and psychological support.

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