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Original Research Article

STRATEGIES FOR NURSING STUDENTS IN ACHIEVING BASIC NURSING COMPETENCIES THROUGH SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING READINESS

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Abstract

Background: Clinical practice learning is designed to prepare nursing students to become professional nurses, students are required to meet competency achievement targets. To comprehensively achieve these targets, students must employ effective learning strategies, one of which is Self-Directed Learning Readiness.

Objectives: To explore the strategies nursing students use to meet basic nursing competencies through Self-Directed Learning Readiness.

Methods: This research used a quasi-experimental design with a one-group pretest-posttest model with total sampling, about 91 respondents of second-semester students from the Diploma 3 Nursing Program who conducted clinical practice. The intervention was carried out during the basic nursing clinical practice, with the approach of the stages in SDLR (plan-implementation-monitoring-evaluation). Respondents were given daily journaling which was filled in every day regarding the plan, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of 58 basic nursing competency achievements. After the basic nursing clinical practice ended, respondents completed the post-test questionnaire. Data analysis was performed using an independent sample t-test.

Results: The results showed that the majority of students achieved excellent scores (91%) in meeting basic nursing clinical practice competencies. The competency assessment covers three main aspects: knowledge, attitude, and psychomotor skills, with average scores of 82, 84.3, and 83, respectively. The results of statistical tests using the Independent T-Test showed that there was a positive effect of SDLR on the Competency Achievements of Basic Nursing Clinical Students with a p-value <0.05.

Conclusion: Students with higher levels of SDLR tend to be more independent in managing time, utilizing various learning resources, and practicing clinical skills. The basic competencies achieved include cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, reflecting their readiness to provide comprehensive nursing care.

Keywords: *Basic Nursing, Competencies, Self-directed Learning Readiness*

INTRODUCTION

According to Law Number 38 of 2014, professional nurses provide healthcare services based on nursing science and skills acquired during their higher education. One of the efforts to foster professionalism in nurses is through nursing clinical practice. Clinical nursing practice involves providing nursing care to patients, allowing students to directly observe patient conditions in the field (Ismonah et al., 2023; Riasari, 2021).

The aim of clinical nursing practice is to develop students' professional attitudes and skills through the application of previously learned knowledge and abilities. Students are given the opportunity to adjust to the role of a nurse in a real clinical healthcare setting, with the goal of delivering proper nursing care using the nursing process, demonstrating professional attitudes and behaviors, and applying skills proficiently (Ismonah et al., 2023; Situmorang, 2022).

The clinical learning process is a core component of healthcare education, making graduate competency standards highly crucial and strategic. Clinical learning is essential in enhancing the teaching and learning process in nursing education, aiming to produce qualified and competent graduates. Students are expected to acquire comprehensive competencies based on the knowledge, skills, and clinical experience they have gained throughout their education (Astuti et al., 2024; Kurnia et al., 2021).

For students to achieve competency targets comprehensively, they need effective learning strategies. One approach is Self-Directed Learning Readiness, which empowers students to actively and purposefully manage, direct, and evaluate their own learning processes (Mandolang, 2021; Riyaningrum, 2020). Self-Directed Learning Readiness refers to an individual's preparedness to take initiative and assume responsibility for their own learning journey. This includes the ability to identify learning needs, plan, manage resources, and evaluate

learning outcomes. Individuals with high SDLR tend to learn independently, use various learning methods and resources, and have strong intrinsic motivation to continue developing without relying heavily on external guidance (Anugrahini et al., 2024; Astuti et al., 2023).

Objective(s): to explore the strategies nursing students use to achieve basic nursing competencies through Self-Directed Learning Readiness.

METHODS

Study Design

This study used a quasi-experimental design with a one-group pretest-posttest model.

Setting

Research Subject

The sampling technique applied was total sampling, involving 91 participants. Participants in this study were second-semester diploma 3 nursing program students who were carrying out the basic nursing clinical practice.

Instrument

The instruments used to assess students' nursing competency achievements included daily journals and basic nursing logbooks. Daily journals were used to gather additional information about students' learning activities during basic nursing clinical practice. Students recorded their daily plans, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation regarding their learning activities and nursing competency achievements. Logbooks documented data on students' competency achievements during the basic nursing clinical practice. The competencies were graded based on the following categories: A (80-100), AB (75-79), B (70,74), BC (65-69). The competencies were graded based on the following categories: A (80-100), AB (75-79), B (70-74), and BC (65-69), consisting of 58

targeted competencies that students must achieve. These competencies include Oxygenation Needs, Fluid Needs, Nutritional Needs, Elimination Needs, Self-Care and Activity Needs, Body Temperature Regulation Needs, and Safety and Comfort Needs. These instruments provided a comprehensive view of students' learning processes and competency achievements during basic nursing clinical practice, serving as tools for evaluating the success of the educational program and the development of students' skills.

Additionally, this study employed the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) questionnaire developed by Fisher (Astuti et al., 2024; Nyambe et al., 2016). The SDLRS consists of 40 questions across three subscales: self-management, desire to learn, and self-control. Data were collected through the distribution of the SDLRS questionnaire, resulting in interval-scale data.

Validated the Indonesian version of the SDLRS questionnaire on first-, second-, and third-year medical students at Hasanuddin University's Faculty of Medicine, which uses Problem-Based Learning. The validity test showed a correlation coefficient (r) greater than 0.268, and the reliability test had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.90 (Nyambe et al., 2016). The three assessed aspects include self-management (13 items), desire to learn (12 items), and self-control (15 items), with scores categorized as high (>132), moderate (84-131), and low (<84).

Intervention

Data collection involved several stages. In the pre-intervention stage, the researcher introduced herself, explained the purpose of the study, obtained consent, and administered a pre-test questionnaire. The intervention was carried out during the basic nursing clinical practice, which was three weeks, with the approach of the stages in SDLR (plan-implementation-monitoring-evaluation). Respondents were given daily journaling which was filled in every day

regarding the plan, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of 58 basic nursing competency achievements. After the basic nursing clinical practice ended, respondents completed the post-test questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed using an independent sample t-test with a 95% confidence level.

Ethical Consideration

This study was approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Nursing, University of Jember, with the ethical approval number 257/UN25.1.14/KEPK/2023. The subjects who agreed to participate in the study signed informed consent of their own accord without coercion from any parties. This study does not result in any risk or loss for the respondents. This research pays attention to ethics, namely anonymity, confidentiality, and non-mal efficiency.

RESULTS

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Participant		Total	
	n	%	n	%
Age				
18 years	23	25.2		
19 years	60	66	91	100
20 years	8	8.8		
Gender				
Man	9	9.9		
Woman	82	90.1	91	100

The respondents characteristics table shows that most are 19 years old (66%) and the majority are women (90.1%), with some entering higher education through an invitation pathway. Adolescence is a transitional phase from childhood to adulthood, typically occurring between the ages of 10-19, according to the WHO. Meanwhile, the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 25 of 2014 defines adolescents as individuals aged 10-18.

During this stage, adolescents generally exhibit a high level of curiosity, including a strong desire to explore new experiences, particularly in their education.

Table 2. Assessment of Nursing Students' SDLR Levels

Variable	Assessment Time			
	Pretest		Posttest	
	n	%	n	%
SDLR Levels				
High	9	9.9	78	85.8
Moderate	82	90.1	13	14.2
Low	0	0	0	0

Based on the pre-post test table, it was found that the SDLR level experienced a significant increase after the intervention was carried out on respondents.

Table 3. The Competencies Targets for Basic Nursing Clinical Practice

Competency	Targets
Oxygenation Needs	6
Fluid Needs	12
Nutritional Needs	3
Elimination Needs	2
Self-care and Activity Needs	17
Body Temperature Regulation Needs	3
Safety and Comfort Needs	15
Total	58

In basic nursing clinical practice, student competencies cover several important areas of care, including oxygenation needs, fluid needs, nutrition, elimination, self-care and activity, body temperature regulation, as well as safety and comfort. These competencies encompass various basic clinical skills that nursing students must possess in their practice, and the numbers next to each need refer to the specific number of actions related to each category, with a total target of 58 competencies across 7 basic human needs.

Table 4. Competency Achievement of Basic Nursing Clinical Practice

Grade of Achievement	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
A	83	91
AB	8	0
B	0	0
Total	91	100

Table 5. The competency assessment

Assessment Aspects	Mi n	Ma x	Mea n	Std. Deviatio n
Cognitive	77	86	82	2
Affective	78	88	84.3	2.4
Psychomoto r	73	89	83	2.8

The competency assessment covers three main aspects: knowledge, attitude, and psychomotor skills, with average scores of 82, 84.3, and 83, respectively. These scores indicate a strong level of understanding and skill among the students.

Table 6. Independent t-test

	Mean	SD	P-value	t-
pretest	135.91	17.48	0.000	-4.020
posttest	144.85	11.99		

The results of statistical tests using the Independent T-Test showed that there was a positive effect of SDLR on the Competency Achievements of Basic Nursing Clinical Students with a p-value <0.05.

DISCUSSION

The results show a significant increase in SDLR levels, with those achieving high SDLR levels demonstrating independence in learning, time management skills, and the ability to utilize various learning resources (Baptista et al., 2021). Conversely, students with moderate SDL levels are beginning to recognize their role in learning but need more experience, motivation, and guidance to

improve (Astuti et al., 2023; Rizky et al., 2022). A high level of SDLR can be influenced by gender. Factors such as intellectual abilities and more consistent academic achievement in females contribute to higher SDLR levels in females compared to males (Isnaini et al., 2019; Kurniawan, 2020).

Table 3 shows that, in basic nursing clinical practice, students' competencies span various important areas of care, including oxygenation needs, fluid needs, nutrition, elimination, self-care and activity, body temperature regulation, as well as safety, and comfort. These competencies cover essential skills that nursing students must acquire during their clinical practice. The numbers next to each area indicate the specific number of actions related to each category of care. For example, six competencies are focused on addressing oxygenation needs, where students are expected to assess respiratory function, monitor oxygen saturation, administer oxygen therapy, and perform positioning techniques, among other interventions that support respiratory function (Sukmawati et al., 2023).

Furthermore, nursing students are required to demonstrate competencies in fluid management, with twelve competencies aimed at assessing fluid needs, identifying signs of dehydration or fluid overload, providing appropriate interventions such as intravenous fluid administration, and measuring intake-output balance. Other areas, such as nutritional needs, elimination, and body temperature regulation, also involve key competencies that guide nursing actions. Additionally, students must master competencies related to patient self-care, mobility, and maintaining patient safety and comfort. These categories, with their corresponding competencies, reflect the broad scope of nursing practice and the foundational skills needed to provide comprehensive patient care (Isrofah et al., 2024).

The results of this study indicate that the average score for the cognitive aspect was 82 with a standard deviation of 2, for the

affective aspect 84.3 with a standard deviation of 2.4, and for the psychomotor aspect 83 with a standard deviation of 2.8. This reflects that students demonstrated relatively high and consistent abilities across the three learning domains: Cognitive, Affective, and Psychomotor. The higher scores in the affective domain highlight the critical role of attitude, motivation, and emotional regulation in self-directed learning during basic nursing practice (Karama & Mashudi, 2023).

Theoretically, the cognitive domain focuses on developing critical thinking skills and knowledge acquisition (Ranti Karmila & Dina Fitria Handayani, 2024). This aligns with the findings of the study, which show high cognitive scores, indicating that students were able to understand the material and effectively manage their learning process. The implementation of strategies such as setting specific learning goals (SMART Goals) and metacognitive reflection likely contributed to these achievements.

In the affective domain, the highest scores among the three domains emphasize the importance of intrinsic motivation, positive attitudes, and commitment to learning in supporting successful self-directed learning. The theory highlights that the ability to manage emotions and maintain motivation is a crucial factor in SDLR (Herawati & Rocmah, n.d.), which is evident in these results.

Meanwhile, in the psychomotor domain, although there was greater variation in scores (standard deviation of 2.8), the average score remained high (83). This indicates that practical exercises, the use of technology, and skill evaluation through logbooks effectively helped students develop technical abilities. These findings support the theory that the psychomotor domain plays a vital role in practice-based learning, such as nursing (Sirait & Sidabutar, 2023).

The integration of research findings with theory demonstrates that a holistic approach encompassing these three domains is highly relevant in supporting students' self-

directed learning. Improvements in each domain ensure that students not only understand theoretical knowledge (cognitive) but also maintain strong attitudes and motivation (affective) and can effectively apply practical skills (psychomotor). This equips them to face the challenges of the professional world, which demands technical competence, emotional stability, and critical thinking skills.

In terms of clinical competency achievement, 91% of students demonstrated excellent performance, with 83 students receiving an A grade and 8 receiving an AB grade. Success in clinical learning is influenced by various factors, including preparedness for knowledge, mental readiness, emotional control, and a supportive learning environment (Muntamah, 2017). Students who engage in clinical practice and take on the role of a nurse develop a sense of motivation to carry out their duties effectively (Astuti et al., 2023). Table 4 shows that the competencies assessed during the clinical practice include Oxygenation Needs (6), Fluid Needs (12), Nutritional Needs (3), Elimination Needs (2), Self-care and Activity Needs (17), Body Temperature Regulation Needs (3), and Safety and Comfort Needs (15). These competencies ensure that nursing students are equipped with the necessary skills to address critical patient care needs and provide holistic nursing interventions that support patient well-being and comfort.

CONCLUSION

This study showed that Self-Directed Learning Readiness (SDLR) has a significant role in the achievement of basic competencies of nursing students, especially in clinical practice. Most students showed a significant increase in SDLR levels after the intervention, with the majority of respondents achieving high levels of SDLR.

Students with higher levels of SDLR tend to be more independent in managing time, utilizing various learning resources, and

practicing clinical skills. The basic competencies achieved include cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, reflecting their readiness to provide comprehensive nursing care.

Factors such as intrinsic motivation, a supportive learning environment, and self-reflection ability also contribute to the success of achieving these competencies. Therefore, the SDLR development strategy can be an effective approach to improving the quality of nursing education and preparing students for future nursing professional challenges.

SUGGESTIONS

Nursing students are encouraged to cultivate Self-Directed Learning Readiness by developing structured self-study plans, using a variety of learning resources, and actively participating in clinical practice. Regular self-reflection on progress and seeking feedback from instructors or mentors are essential to identify areas for improvement and strengthen skills. Furthermore, a supportive learning environment, combined with strong self-motivation, is vital for successfully achieving core nursing competency objectives. SDLR-based learning approaches should continue to be developed, with support from lecturers and educational institutions to create a learning environment that encourages student independence and motivation. In addition, continuous evaluation of the implementation of SDLR strategies needs to be done to ensure optimal learning outcomes.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTEREST

The authors declared no competing interests in the production of this manuscript.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Anggia Astuti: Preparing research proposals, leading research, conducting research permits, cross-sectoral approach, collecting research data, presenting results reports, and compiling articles.

Zainal Abidin: Responsible for data analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the results, and contributed to writing and editing the manuscript.

Dodi Wijaya: Collecting data, assisting in the preparation of proposals, conducting data processing, assisting in compiling research reports, and helping to prepare published articles.

Rizeki Dwi Fibriansari: Collecting data, assisting in the preparation of proposals, conducting data processing, assisting in compiling research reports, and helping to prepare published articles.

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