

**INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ON CLINICAL PRACTICE
OF NURSING STUDENT IN A TERTIARY INSTITUTION IN BENIN CITY**

BY

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OCTOBER, 2025

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**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF
NURSNG SCIENCE**

OCTOBER, 2025

DECLARATION

This is to declare that this research project titled “**The Influence Of Academic Performance On Clinical Practice Of Nursing Student In a Tertiary Institution In Benin City**” will be carried out by **AJAINO BLESSING ENOVWO** is solely the result of my work except were acknowledged as being derived from other person(s) or sources.

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DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL: FACULTY OF NURSING SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY
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Date:

CERTIFICATION/APPROVAL

This is to declare that this research project titled “**The Influence Of Academic Performance On Clinical Practice Of Nursing Student In a Tertiary Institution In Benin City**” was carried out by **AJAINO BLESSING ENOVWO** with matriculation number **BMS1906801** in the department of Nursing Sciences under the supervision of Mrs .R. Lawal.

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between academic performance and clinical practice is a crucial area of focus in nursing education. Academic performance serves as a foundation for the theoretical knowledge required in clinical practice, while clinical experiences provide opportunities to apply this knowledge in real-world healthcare setting. However, bridging the gap between academic and clinical environments remains a significant challenge for nursing students globally. Several factors influence nursing students' academic performance, including stress, satisfaction with learning environments, and access to educational resources. This study assessed evaluated the influence of academic performance on clinical practice of nursing student in a tertiary institution in Benin City. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted among 253 nursing students from 300-500 level in the University of Benin, using structured questionnaires, and data were analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings revealed that 70.8% of respondents agreed that academic performance significantly impacted clinical practice outcomes. The factors influencing academic performance and clinical practice included access to learning resources (85.9%), faculty support (65.2%), peer collaboration (90.9%), and personal factors like time management and self-discipline (70.0%). Challenges faced by students included inadequate clinical supervision (58.2%), the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-life clinical scenarios (34.5%), and limited exposure to diverse clinical cases (39.2%). The study confirmed a positive relationship between academic performance and clinical competence. The hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the level of impact of academic performance on clinical practice outcomes and the challenges faced by nursing students was not supported, hence indicating a significant relationship ($p=0.03$). Based on these findings, it is recommended that nursing institutions improve clinical supervision, provide more practical opportunities, and enhance resources to support students in applying theoretical knowledge effectively in clinical settings.

Keywords: academic performance, clinical practice, nursing students, factors

influencing performance, challenges in clinical practice, nursing education.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Almighty God

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The relationship between academic performance and clinical practice is a crucial area of focus in nursing education. Academic performance serves as a foundation for the theoretical knowledge required in clinical practice, while clinical experiences provide opportunities to apply this knowledge in real-world healthcare settings (Fooladi et al., 2022). However, bridging the gap between academic and clinical environments remains a significant challenge for nursing students globally. Several factors influence nursing students' academic performance, including stress, satisfaction with learning environments, and access to educational resources. For instance, Oducado and Estoque (2021) highlighted that the shift to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic created new challenges in balancing theoretical and clinical learning. Additionally, Nguyen et al. (2025) demonstrated that assessment methods, such as rubrics, significantly impact students' ability to achieve clinical competence.

Burnout is another critical issue affecting nursing students. Wei et al. (2021) noted that academic burnout negatively impacts students' psychological well-being and academic achievement, which, in turn, influences their clinical performance. Similarly, Hwang and Kim (2022) emphasized the role of clinical practice experiences in exacerbating or alleviating academic burnout. This interplay between academic stressors and clinical demands underscores the importance of fostering resilience and support systems for nursing students.

The link between academic performance and clinical competence is well-documented. Studies such as those by Chewaka Gamtessa (2021) and Getie et al. (2021) have shown that strong academic foundations correlate positively with students' ability to

meet clinical competencies. However, disparities in learning outcomes often arise due to institutional and individual factors, including access to resources, teaching quality, and personal motivation (Terefe et al., 2023).

Moreover, satisfaction with clinical practice plays a significant role in enhancing nursing students' academic performance. Fernández-García et al. (2020) found that students who reported higher satisfaction with their clinical experiences were more likely to perform well academically. This highlights the need for a supportive and well-structured clinical learning environment to ensure the effective translation of theoretical knowledge into practice. In conclusion, academic performance and clinical practice are interdependent components of nursing education. Addressing the factors that influence both domains is essential for preparing competent and confident nursing professionals. This study aims to evaluate the influence of academic performance on the clinical practice of nursing students, contributing to the growing body of knowledge on improving nursing education outcomes.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The effectiveness of nursing education relies heavily on the integration of academic knowledge with clinical practice. Globally, nursing students face challenges in translating theoretical learning into clinical competence, often due to gaps in curriculum design and inadequate support systems (Fooladi et al., 2022). Burnout, stress, and insufficient preparation for clinical practice have been identified as significant barriers to achieving clinical competence. Wei et al. (2021) reported that academic burnout affects over 40% of nursing students, compromising their ability to perform effectively in clinical settings.

In Africa, nursing education is often hindered by limited resources, overcrowded classrooms, and poorly equipped clinical training facilities. Studies have shown that

these challenges contribute to suboptimal clinical performance and dissatisfaction among students. For instance, Getie et al. (2021) found that only 58.3% of nursing students in Ethiopia met the required clinical competencies, highlighting the need for improved integration of academic and practical training. Similarly, Angasu and Bekela (2021) emphasized that institutional factors, such as inadequate supervision during clinical practice, significantly impact students' learning outcomes. In Nigeria, the situation mirrors these challenges, compounded by additional stressors such as academic pressure and socio-economic difficulties. Iruo et al. (2021) observed that anxiety and depression among nursing students in South-South Nigeria were strongly correlated with poor academic and clinical performance. Furthermore, Omorogbe and Ehwareme (2021) noted disparities in clinical satisfaction among nursing students in public and private institutions, with many students expressing dissatisfaction with the quality of clinical experiences provided.

Despite the critical role of nursing education in producing competent healthcare professionals, limited research exists on the relationship between academic performance and clinical practice in Benin City. This gap in knowledge raises concerns about the preparedness of nursing students to meet clinical demands, particularly in a region where healthcare delivery heavily relies on competent practitioners. This study seeks to address this gap by evaluating how academic performance influences the clinical practice of nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin City.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to evaluate the influence of academic performance on clinical practice of nursing student in a tertiary institution in Benin City.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. To assess the impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes of nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin city.
- ii. To assess the levels of the factors influencing the academic performance and clinical practice of nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin city.
- iii. To assess the challenges nursing students face in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice in a tertiary institution in Benin city.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What are the impacts of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes of nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin city.
- ii. What are the levels of the factors influencing the academic performance and clinical practice of nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin city.
- iii. What are the challenges nursing students face in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice in a tertiary institution in Benin city.

1.5 Research Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between level of impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes and the challenges faced by nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin city

1.6 Significance of the study

Nursing Education: The findings of this study will provide valuable insights into the influence of academic performance on clinical practice, contributing to the development of more effective curricula that bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical application. By identifying factors that enhance or hinder clinical competence, the study can inform the design of educational strategies that better prepare nursing students for real-world healthcare settings. Additionally, the

study will highlight the importance of fostering academic excellence to improve clinical outcomes, which is essential for producing competent nursing professionals.

Nursing Practice: This study will contribute to improving the quality of nursing practice by emphasizing the importance of academic performance in shaping clinical proficiency. Understanding how academic achievements influence clinical practice will allow healthcare institutions to identify areas where nursing students may require additional support or training, ensuring that they are well-prepared to deliver high-quality patient care. The findings could also guide clinical educators in developing targeted interventions to enhance the clinical skills of nursing students, leading to better patient outcomes and more effective healthcare delivery.

Nursing Students: For nursing students, this research will provide a deeper understanding of how their academic performance affects their clinical practice. It will help them recognize the importance of maintaining strong academic foundations to excel in clinical settings. The study's findings could also motivate students to seek additional support in areas where they may be struggling academically, thereby improving their clinical competence and overall professional development.

Tertiary Institutions: For tertiary institutions, this study will offer insights into the factors influencing both academic and clinical performance, enabling institutions to refine their teaching methods, assessment tools, and clinical training programs. By aligning academic performance with clinical practice outcomes, institutions can ensure that nursing students are better equipped to meet the demands of the healthcare industry. Additionally, the study could inform policy development on student support services, curriculum design, and faculty development to enhance the overall quality of nursing education.

1.7 Scope of study

This study is delimited to nursing students (300 level to 500 level) of the University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State

1.8 Operational definition of terms

Academic Performance: academic performance pertains to how well nursing students perform in their coursework and theoretical exams.

Clinical Practice: For nursing students, clinical practice is an essential component of their training, where they translate academic learning into tangible healthcare outcomes.

Nursing Students: Nursing students are individuals enrolled in a nursing program at a tertiary institution, working towards obtaining a degree or certification in nursing. These students undergo both academic and clinical training to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to become professional nurses.

Tertiary Institution: refers to the institution where the nursing students are enrolled and where both their academic and clinical training take place.

Clinical Competence: Clinical competence refers to the ability of nursing students to apply their theoretical knowledge effectively in clinical settings, demonstrating proficiency in patient care, clinical decision-making, and nursing interventions.

Influence: refers to the effect or impact that academic performance has on the clinical practice outcomes of nursing students. It encompasses how academic achievements or challenges may shape students' ability to perform competently in clinical environments.

Clinical Outcomes: refer to the results or achievements of nursing students' performance during clinical practice, including their ability to meet clinical objectives,

demonstrate skills, and provide quality care to patients. These outcomes are indicators of a student's clinical competence and readiness for professional nursing practice.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter dealt with the review of related literature the review of related literature will be discussed under the following headings: Conceptual Review, Theoretical review and Empirical Review, conceptual framework, application of theory to study and summary of literature review.

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Academic Performance in Nursing Education

Academic performance in nursing education refers to the achievement of students in their academic pursuits, typically assessed through grades, exams, assignments, and other evaluative methods that measure their understanding of theoretical knowledge and practical skills. In nursing education, academic performance is critical as it reflects the students' ability to comprehend complex healthcare concepts and their readiness to apply this knowledge in clinical settings. Nursing students must demonstrate proficiency in various subjects, including anatomy, pharmacology, nursing theory, and patient care techniques, as these form the foundation for safe and effective clinical practice.

The importance of academic performance in nursing education cannot be overstated. High academic performance is often linked to higher levels of clinical competence, which directly impacts patient care outcomes. A nursing student's ability to integrate theoretical knowledge with clinical practice is essential for providing quality healthcare. Academic performance also serves as a predictor of success in professional licensure exams, such as the NCLEX-RN (National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses) in the United States or similar exams in other countries. These exams assess whether nursing graduates have the necessary

knowledge and skills to practice safely and competently in a healthcare setting (Baek & Cho, 2020). In nursing education, academic performance is not only a measure of intellectual capability but also a reflection of a student's motivation, resilience, and ability to manage the challenges inherent in nursing programs. Given the rigorous nature of nursing education, students are often required to balance theoretical learning with clinical practice, and their academic performance plays a vital role in their overall success. Poor academic performance can result in delayed graduation, inability to pass licensure exams, and decreased confidence in clinical practice, which can ultimately affect patient safety and care quality (Terry & Peck, 2020)

2.1.1.1 Measurement of Academic Performance in Nursing Programs

Academic performance in nursing programs is typically measured using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, which assess both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. The most common method of measuring academic performance is through exams and written assessments that test students' understanding of nursing concepts. These assessments can include multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, and essays, which evaluate the depth of knowledge and the ability to apply theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios.

In addition to exams, nursing programs often use practical assessments to measure clinical competence. These assessments may include clinical evaluations, where students are observed while providing patient care under the supervision of clinical instructors. The clinical evaluation process assesses students' ability to apply nursing theory in practice, demonstrating critical thinking, decision-making, and communication skills in real-time healthcare settings (Tuomikoski et al., 2020). These evaluations are essential for determining whether students are adequately prepared to transition from the classroom to the clinical environment.

Another method of assessing academic performance is through the use of rubrics, which provide detailed criteria for evaluating students' performance in both theoretical and practical aspects of nursing education. Rubrics allow instructors to provide more specific feedback on students' strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring that students receive a comprehensive evaluation of their skills and knowledge. Studies have shown that rubric-based assessments are effective in improving the accuracy and consistency of evaluations, as well as providing students with clear expectations for their performance (Nguyen et al., 2025).

Furthermore, nursing programs may use self-assessment tools, peer evaluations, and reflective journals to assess students' learning progress. These methods encourage students to engage in self-reflection and critical thinking about their academic performance and clinical experiences. Self-assessments allow students to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses, set personal learning goals, and track their progress over time, which can enhance their motivation and commitment to learning (Fooladi et al., 2022).

2.1.1.2 Factors Influencing Academic Performance in Nursing Students

Academic performance in nursing students is influenced by a variety of factors, both internal and external, that can either facilitate or hinder their success. These factors include individual characteristics, environmental influences, and institutional support systems.

Individual Characteristics

- i. **Motivation and Commitment:** Motivation is a key determinant of academic performance in nursing students. Motivated students are more likely to engage actively in their studies, seek out additional resources, and persist through

challenges. Motivation can be intrinsic, driven by a personal desire to help others and excel in nursing practice, or extrinsic, driven by the desire to pass exams and obtain a nursing license (Terry & Peck, 2020). High levels of motivation are associated with improved academic outcomes, as motivated students tend to put more effort into their learning and demonstrate greater resilience in the face of academic challenges.

- ii. **Cognitive Ability:** Cognitive ability, including intelligence, memory, and problem-solving skills, plays a significant role in academic performance. Nursing students must be able to grasp complex medical concepts and apply them in clinical settings. Cognitive ability influences how well students can absorb information, retain knowledge, and critically analyze patient situations (Wei et al., 2021). Students with higher cognitive ability are often better equipped to succeed academically in nursing programs.
- iii. **Resilience and Grit:** Resilience and grit are crucial traits for nursing students, as they face numerous challenges throughout their education. Resilience refers to the ability to bounce back from setbacks and continue working toward goals despite difficulties. Grit, on the other hand, involves perseverance and passion for long-term goals. Studies have shown that students with higher levels of resilience and grit tend to perform better academically, as they are better able to cope with stress and maintain focus on their studies (Baek & Cho, 2020).

Environmental Influences

- i. **Social Support:** Social support from family, friends, and peers plays a significant role in academic performance. Nursing students who have strong support networks are more likely to experience lower levels of stress and anxiety, which

can improve their academic performance. Peer support is particularly important, as nursing students often collaborate in study groups and share resources to help each other succeed (Jafarian-Amiri et al., 2020). Family support is also essential, as it provides emotional and financial stability, allowing students to focus on their studies without distractions.

- ii. **Clinical Practice Environment:** The clinical practice environment is another critical factor that influences academic performance. A positive clinical environment, characterized by supportive mentors, adequate resources, and opportunities for hands-on learning, enhances students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings. Conversely, a negative clinical environment, with poor supervision, lack of resources, and high levels of stress, can hinder students' academic performance and clinical learning (Kaliyangile & Ngoma, 2020).

Institutional Support Systems

- i. **Academic Support Services:** Many nursing programs offer academic support services, such as tutoring, study workshops, and writing centers, to help students improve their academic performance. These services provide students with additional resources and guidance to succeed in their coursework. The availability of academic support services has been shown to improve students' academic outcomes, especially for those who may be struggling with specific subjects (Terefe et al., 2023).
- ii. **Curriculum Design:** The design of the nursing curriculum can also impact academic performance. A well-structured curriculum that balances theoretical knowledge with practical skills development is essential for student success. Nursing programs that integrate clinical practice early in the curriculum allow

students to build clinical competence alongside academic knowledge, which can improve their overall performance. Furthermore, the inclusion of evidence-based practices, simulation labs, and interdisciplinary learning opportunities can enhance students' learning experiences and academic outcomes (Amsalu et al., 2020).

- iii. **Online Learning and Technology:** The increasing use of online learning and technology in nursing education has had both positive and negative effects on academic performance. Online learning offers flexibility and accessibility, allowing students to engage with course materials at their own pace. However, it also presents challenges, such as the lack of face-to-face interaction and the need for strong self-discipline. Studies have shown that students who are able to adapt to online learning environments tend to perform well academically, while those who struggle with technology may experience lower academic outcomes (Oducado & Estoque, 2021).

2.1.2 Clinical Practice in Nursing Education

Clinical practice in nursing education refers to the hands-on, practical component of nursing training where students apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world healthcare settings. It is an essential aspect of nursing education, providing students with the opportunity to engage directly with patients, healthcare teams, and clinical environments. Clinical practice is designed to help students develop the skills, competencies, and professional behaviors required for effective nursing practice. It involves a wide range of activities, including patient assessment, care planning, medication administration, and the execution of nursing interventions under the supervision of experienced clinicians (Tuomikoski et al., 2020).

The scope of clinical practice in nursing education extends beyond basic patient care to include a variety of specialized areas such as pediatrics, maternity, mental health, and critical care. These areas provide students with diverse learning experiences, allowing them to gain exposure to different patient populations and healthcare settings. Clinical practice encompasses not only the technical skills required for nursing care but also the interpersonal skills necessary for communication, teamwork, and empathy. By engaging in these practical experiences, nursing students develop a deeper understanding of the complexities of patient care and the healthcare system (Amsalu et al., 2020).

Clinical practice is also a critical avenue for students to develop clinical judgment and critical thinking. Students are expected to assess patients, make decisions based on clinical data, and adapt care plans as necessary. This hands-on learning helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application, ensuring that nursing students are prepared for the challenges they will face in professional practice (Jafarian-Amiri et al., 2020).

2.1.2.1 The Role of Clinical Practice in Nursing Education

Clinical practice plays a central role in nursing education, serving as the bridge between classroom learning and the professional nursing environment. One of the most significant roles of clinical practice is the development of clinical competencies. Nursing students must demonstrate proficiency in a range of clinical skills, including patient assessments, medication administration, wound care, and the management of complex patient conditions. These skills are essential for ensuring patient safety and providing high-quality care (Tuomikoski et al., 2020).

Clinical practice also fosters the development of professional behaviors and attitudes. Through direct interaction with patients, clinical instructors, and other healthcare

professionals, nursing students learn to exhibit professionalism, empathy, and ethical decision-making. The clinical setting provides students with the opportunity to observe and engage in real-world healthcare scenarios, allowing them to understand the importance of maintaining patient confidentiality, respecting patient autonomy, and adhering to ethical principles in nursing practice (Terefe et al., 2023).

Moreover, clinical practice allows nursing students to refine their communication and teamwork skills. In healthcare settings, nurses work as part of multidisciplinary teams, and effective communication is essential for coordinating care, ensuring patient safety, and improving health outcomes. Clinical practice provides students with opportunities to collaborate with physicians, other nurses, and healthcare staff, helping them to develop the interpersonal skills necessary for successful team-based care (Kaliyangile & Ngoma, 2020).

In addition to skill development, clinical practice also helps nursing students build confidence in their abilities. As students progress through their clinical placements, they gain more responsibility and autonomy in patient care, which helps them develop the self-assurance needed to make decisions and provide care independently. This confidence is crucial for the transition from student to professional nurse, as it enables students to navigate the complexities of clinical practice and provide safe, competent care (Baek & Cho, 2020).

2.1.2.1 The Relationship Between Academic Knowledge and Clinical Practice

The relationship between academic knowledge and clinical practice is central to nursing education. Academic knowledge provides the theoretical foundation upon which clinical practice is built. In nursing education, students are taught a wide array of subjects, including anatomy, pharmacology, nursing theory, and ethics, which form the basis for understanding patient care. However, theoretical knowledge alone is

insufficient for effective nursing practice; it must be applied in clinical settings to develop the skills and competencies necessary for patient care (Terry & Peck, 2020).

The integration of academic knowledge with clinical practice is essential for the development of clinical judgment and critical thinking. For example, a nursing student may learn about the pharmacokinetics of a drug in the classroom, but it is only through clinical practice that the student can observe the drug's effects on patients, assess for side effects, and make decisions about medication administration based on patient conditions. This hands-on experience allows students to apply their theoretical knowledge to real-life situations, enhancing their understanding and improving their decision-making skills (Tuomikoski et al., 2020).

Moreover, the relationship between academic knowledge and clinical practice is reciprocal. While academic knowledge informs clinical practice, clinical practice also informs and enhances academic learning. As students encounter real-world patient scenarios during clinical placements, they often have questions or challenges that require them to seek additional information from textbooks, instructors, or evidence-based resources. This process of seeking knowledge to solve clinical problems reinforces academic learning and helps students deepen their understanding of nursing concepts. In turn, the application of academic knowledge in clinical practice helps students to retain and internalize information, as they can see the direct impact of their learning on patient outcomes (Wei et al., 2021).

The integration of academic knowledge with clinical practice is particularly important in the development of clinical competencies. Nursing students must not only understand theoretical concepts but also be able to apply them effectively in practice. For instance, understanding the theoretical principles of infection control is important, but students must also demonstrate the practical application of these principles by

following proper hygiene protocols and using personal protective equipment (PPE) during patient care. The ability to integrate academic knowledge with clinical practice ensures that nursing students are well-prepared to handle the complexities of patient care and provide safe, effective nursing care (Amsalu et al., 2020).

However, challenges exist in the integration of academic knowledge and clinical practice. In some cases, there may be a disconnect between what students learn in the classroom and what they experience in clinical settings. This can be due to various factors, such as the fast-paced nature of clinical environments, lack of adequate supervision, or insufficient opportunities for students to practice certain skills. As a result, some nursing students may struggle to apply their academic knowledge in clinical practice, which can impact their confidence and competence (Fooladi et al., 2022). Additionally, clinical practice can be stressful, and students may encounter situations where they feel unprepared or unsure of how to apply their academic knowledge. This is why it is crucial for nursing programs to ensure that clinical placements are well-structured and that students receive adequate support from clinical instructors. Effective mentoring and guidance from experienced nurses are essential for helping students bridge the gap between academic learning and clinical practice (Jafarian-Amiri et al., 2020).

2.1.3 Influence of Academic Performance on Clinical Practice

2.1.3.1 Concept of Clinical Competence and Its Relationship with Academic Performance

Clinical competence refers to the ability of nursing students to effectively perform essential nursing tasks and responsibilities in a healthcare setting. It encompasses a wide range of skills, including technical abilities such as patient assessment, administering medications, and performing medical procedures, as well as cognitive

and interpersonal skills such as critical thinking, decision-making, and communication. Clinical competence is a critical component of nursing education, as it directly impacts patient care quality and safety. It is essential for ensuring that nursing students are prepared to handle the demands of real-world clinical environments and provide high-quality care to patients (Tuomikoski et al., 2020).

The relationship between academic performance and clinical competence is complex and multifaceted. Academic performance is often considered a predictor of clinical competence, as students who perform well academically tend to have a strong theoretical foundation that supports their clinical practice. For instance, a nursing student who excels in courses related to anatomy, pharmacology, and nursing theory is likely to have a deeper understanding of patient care principles, which can translate into more effective clinical performance (Fooladi et al., 2022). Academic knowledge helps students to make informed decisions, apply evidence-based practices, and understand the underlying pathophysiology of diseases, which are essential for delivering safe and competent care in clinical settings (Amsalu et al., 2020).

However, clinical competence involves more than just academic knowledge. It requires students to integrate theoretical learning with practical experience, which is gained through clinical placements. While academic performance provides the foundation for clinical competence, students must also develop hands-on skills, critical thinking, and professional behaviors through direct patient care experiences (Terefe et al., 2023). Therefore, the relationship between academic performance and clinical competence is not purely linear, as it also depends on other factors such as clinical exposure, mentorship, and personal characteristics like resilience and motivation (Baek & Cho, 2020).

In some cases, students with high academic performance may struggle with clinical competence due to factors such as anxiety, lack of confidence, or limited clinical exposure. Conversely, students who may not excel academically could still demonstrate strong clinical competence if they have the opportunity to gain hands-on experience, receive adequate mentorship, and develop their practical skills in a supportive clinical environment (Terry & Peck, 2020). Thus, while academic performance can influence clinical competence, it is not the sole determinant, and other factors must also be considered when evaluating a student's readiness for clinical practice.

2.1.3.2 How Academic Performance Impacts Clinical Practice Outcomes in Nursing Students

Academic performance plays a significant role in shaping the clinical practice outcomes of nursing students. The ability to perform well in academic settings, particularly in courses that are directly related to clinical skills and patient care, can have a positive impact on students' clinical performance and overall competence. High academic achievement in nursing programs is often associated with a better understanding of clinical concepts, which can lead to improved clinical outcomes. For example, students who excel in courses on pharmacology, pathophysiology, and nursing interventions are more likely to demonstrate proficiency in administering medications, recognizing clinical signs and symptoms, and developing appropriate care plans during their clinical placements (Baek & Cho, 2020).

The connection between academic performance and clinical outcomes is also evident in the development of clinical reasoning and critical thinking skills. Academic courses in nursing often emphasize the importance of evidence-based practice and the application of theoretical knowledge to clinical scenarios. Students who perform well

academically are better equipped to integrate this knowledge into their clinical practice, allowing them to make informed decisions, prioritize patient care, and respond effectively to changes in patients' conditions. As a result, these students are more likely to achieve positive clinical outcomes, such as improved patient safety, better care coordination, and higher patient satisfaction (Wei et al., 2021).

In contrast, students who struggle academically may face challenges in their clinical practice. Poor academic performance can indicate gaps in theoretical knowledge, which can affect students' ability to apply this knowledge effectively in clinical settings. For instance, a student with low academic performance may have difficulty understanding the underlying causes of a patient's condition or recognizing the appropriate interventions, which can lead to suboptimal care. Furthermore, academic challenges can lead to a lack of confidence, anxiety, and stress, which may hinder students' ability to perform well in clinical practice (Jafarian-Amiri et al., 2020). In such cases, students may require additional support, such as tutoring, mentoring, or remedial education, to address their academic deficiencies and improve their clinical performance.

Moreover, the relationship between academic performance and clinical practice outcomes is influenced by factors such as clinical exposure, mentorship, and the quality of the clinical learning environment. For example, students who have more extensive clinical placements and receive guidance from experienced mentors are more likely to develop the practical skills and clinical judgment necessary for effective patient care, regardless of their academic performance (Amsalu et al., 2020). On the other hand, students with limited clinical exposure or inadequate mentorship may struggle to translate their academic knowledge into clinical practice, even if they perform well academically.

The impact of academic performance on clinical practice outcomes is also influenced by individual characteristics such as motivation, resilience, and self-efficacy. Students who are highly motivated and confident in their abilities are more likely to succeed in both academic and clinical settings. These students are more likely to take initiative in their learning, seek out additional resources, and apply their academic knowledge in clinical practice. In contrast, students who lack motivation or experience high levels of stress may struggle to integrate their academic learning with clinical practice, leading to poorer clinical outcomes (Terefe et al., 2023).

Overall, academic performance plays a critical role in shaping the clinical practice outcomes of nursing students. Students who perform well academically are more likely to demonstrate strong clinical competence, critical thinking, and decision-making skills, which can lead to improved patient care and better clinical outcomes. However, academic performance is not the sole determinant of clinical success, and other factors such as clinical exposure, mentorship, and personal characteristics also play an important role in shaping students' clinical practice outcomes.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Theory of Experiential Learning (Kolb, 1984)

The Theory of Experiential Learning, developed by David A. Kolb in 1984, posits that learning is a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. According to Kolb, learning is not a passive process but an active one where learners engage with experiences, reflect on them, and apply new insights in future situations. Kolb's model is grounded in the idea that effective learning occurs when individuals cycle through four stages of experiential learning: concrete

experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.

- i. Concrete Experience (CE): This is the initial stage where the learner actively experiences an event or situation.
- ii. Reflective Observation (RO): After the experience, learners reflect on what happened, observing the outcomes of their actions, and thinking critically about the experience.
- iii. Abstract Conceptualization (AC): This stage involves forming theories or concepts based on the reflections. Learners draw conclusions, make generalizations, and relate their experience to existing knowledge.
- iv. Active Experimentation (AE): Finally, learners test the concepts and theories they've developed in new situations. They apply what they've learned in practice, refining their skills and knowledge.

Kolb's Theory of Experiential Learning (1984)

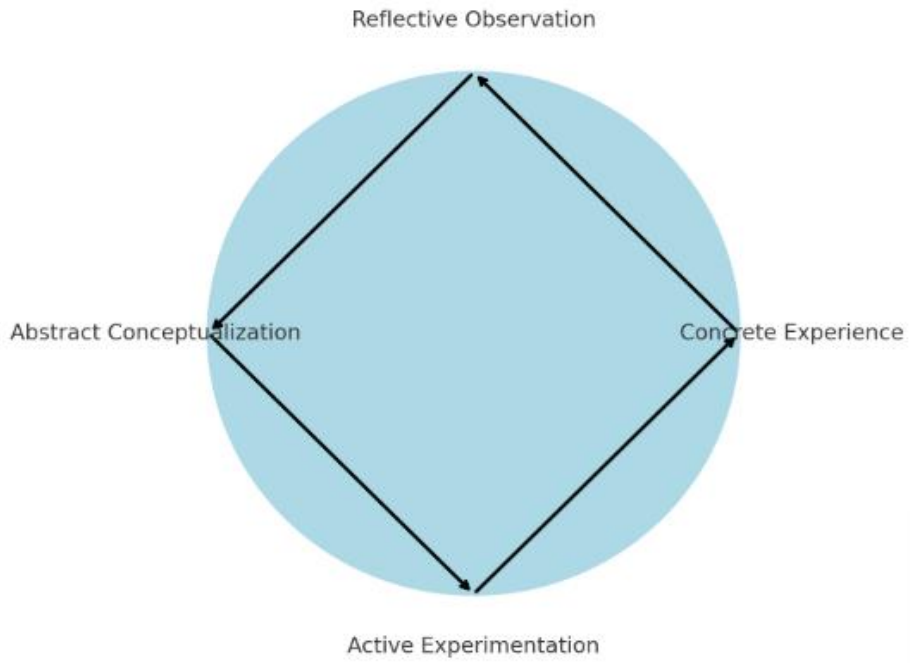


Figure 2.1: Kolb's Theory of Experiential Learning

2.2.2 Application of this theory to the study

The Theory of Experiential Learning by Kolb (1984) is highly applicable to the study of academic performance and clinical practice among nursing students. Kolb's model emphasizes the cyclical process of learning through experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation, which aligns with the nursing education process. In nursing programs, students are expected to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills in clinical settings. Kolb's theory can be used to explore how nursing students' academic performance influences their clinical practice by examining how they engage with both classroom learning and clinical experiences.

Academic performance in nursing is often a reflection of students' ability to conceptualize and apply theoretical knowledge, which is the second and third stages of Kolb's cycle reflective observation and abstract conceptualization (Hwang & Kim, 2022). These stages are critical in clinical practice, as students must reflect on their clinical experiences and integrate them with their academic learning to improve their performance. For example, students who perform well academically are likely to apply their knowledge more effectively in clinical practice, demonstrating higher levels of clinical competence (Terry & Peck, 2020).

Furthermore, Kolb's theory underscores the importance of active experimentation, where students apply their learning in real-world settings, such as clinical practice, to refine their skills (Tuomikoski et al., 2020). This active experimentation phase is crucial for nursing students, as their clinical practice outcomes are often influenced by how well they can translate their academic knowledge into practice (Fooladi et al., 2022). By applying Kolb's experiential learning cycle, this study can investigate how

academic performance shapes clinical competence and outcomes, providing valuable insights into the learning process of nursing students.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Examine the impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes of nursing students

Chewaka Gamtessa (2021) conducted a correlational study to investigate the relationship between academic performance and clinical practice outcomes among nursing students enrolled in the pediatrics and child health nursing course at Mizan-Tepi University, Ethiopia. Using a sample of 150 students, data were collected through structured questionnaires and academic records. Results revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between students' academic grades and their clinical competence scores ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.05$). Students with higher academic performance were more likely to demonstrate better clinical skills, particularly in communication and patient assessment. The study concluded that academic achievement serves as a foundational element influencing clinical proficiency, emphasizing the need for integrated teaching strategies.

Nguyen et al. (2025) conducted a quasi-experimental study comparing rubric-based and traditional assessment methods for evaluating clinical practice among Vietnamese nursing students. The study involved 200 nursing students from two universities, with academic performance data collected and correlated with clinical practice scores. Findings showed that students with higher academic performance achieved significantly better clinical practice outcomes ($p < 0.01$). The study highlighted that strong theoretical knowledge provided students with the confidence and critical thinking skills necessary for effective clinical decision-making. The authors

recommended adopting competency-based assessments to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and clinical application.

In a mixed-methods study, Fooladi et al. (2022) explored factors influencing academic and clinical performance among undergraduate nursing students in Australia. The quantitative phase involved 300 students, while qualitative interviews were conducted with 20 participants. Quantitative findings indicated that academic performance was a significant predictor of clinical practice outcomes ($\beta = 0.48$, $p < 0.001$). The qualitative data revealed that students with strong academic backgrounds were better at applying theoretical concepts to clinical scenarios, particularly in patient care planning and implementation. The study emphasized the need for a balanced curriculum that reinforces the connection between classroom learning and clinical practice.

Getie et al. (2021) conducted a cross-sectional study examining clinical competencies and associated factors among graduating nursing students in Northern Ethiopia. Using a sample of 450 students, data were collected through clinical competency checklists and academic records. The study found that students with higher cumulative grade point averages (CGPAs) were more likely to score above average in clinical competencies (OR = 2.75, 95% CI: 1.85–4.08). Academic performance significantly influenced technical skills, such as medication administration and wound care. The authors recommended implementing mentorship programs to support students struggling academically and clinically.

Baek and Cho (2020) investigated the effect of grit and resilience on the clinical practice adaptation of nursing students in South Korea. The study, involving 250 nursing students, utilized a structural equation modeling approach to examine the interplay between academic performance, resilience, and clinical practice outcomes.

Results showed that academic performance had a direct and significant impact on clinical practice adaptation ($\beta = 0.34, p < 0.01$). Students with higher academic performance exhibited better clinical decision-making and teamwork skills. The study concluded that fostering resilience and grit, alongside academic excellence, is essential for optimal clinical practice outcomes.

2.3.2 Factors influencing the academic performance and clinical practice of nursing students

Hwang and Kim (2022) conducted a cross-sectional study in South Korea to identify factors affecting academic burnout and its impact on the academic performance and clinical practice of nursing students. The study involved 320 participants, and data were collected using validated questionnaires on burnout, academic performance, and clinical practice outcomes. Results showed that academic stress ($\beta = -0.45, p < 0.01$) and lack of time management skills ($\beta = -0.38, p < 0.05$) significantly hindered academic performance. Additionally, students experiencing burnout reported lower clinical competency scores. The study emphasized the need for stress management programs and academic counseling to improve outcomes in both domains.

Fooladi et al. (2022) conducted a mixed-methods study in Australia to explore factors influencing the academic and clinical performance of nursing students. The quantitative phase involved 300 students, while the qualitative phase included 20 in-depth interviews. Findings revealed that personal factors such as time management, motivation, and study habits were significant predictors of academic success ($p < 0.01$). Environmental factors, including clinical supervision quality and workload, also played a critical role in clinical practice outcomes. The study concluded that addressing both personal and institutional challenges is crucial for optimizing academic and clinical performance.

Oducado and Estoque (2021) investigated the impact of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic on the academic performance and clinical practice of nursing students in the Philippines. The study, involving 420 students, found that access to technology ($\beta = 0.31, p < 0.01$) and self-discipline ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.001$) were key factors influencing academic success. Conversely, the lack of hands-on clinical exposure during online learning negatively affected clinical skills development ($p < 0.05$). The authors recommended blended learning approaches to ensure continuity in clinical education during disruptions.

Gripshi et al. (2022) conducted a descriptive study in Albania to examine challenges affecting the academic performance of nursing students. Using a sample of 200 students, the study identified socioeconomic status ($\beta = 0.29, p < 0.05$), parental support ($\beta = 0.35, p < 0.01$), and access to educational resources ($\beta = 0.40, p < 0.001$) as significant determinants of academic success. Clinical practice outcomes were influenced by the availability of clinical mentors and the quality of hospital infrastructure. The study highlighted the importance of addressing socioeconomic disparities to enhance academic and clinical outcomes.

Saadatu et al. (2024) conducted a study in Bauchi State, Nigeria, to investigate factors influencing academic performance among nursing students. The study utilized a cross-sectional design with 350 participants. Results showed that inadequate learning resources ($\beta = -0.41, p < 0.01$), large class sizes ($\beta = -0.38, p < 0.05$), and lack of clinical exposure ($\beta = -0.33, p < 0.05$) were significant barriers to academic and clinical success. Students who received regular feedback from instructors performed better in both academic and clinical settings. The study recommended improving resource allocation and enhancing instructor-student interactions to boost performance.

2.3.3 Challenges nursing students face in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice

Jafarian-Amiri et al. (2020) conducted a study in Iran to explore the challenges nursing students encounter in bridging theoretical knowledge with clinical practice. The qualitative study involved 25 nursing students and 10 clinical instructors. Thematic analysis revealed three main challenges: gaps in theoretical content (45%), insufficient clinical exposure (30%), and poor supervision during practice (25%). Students reported difficulty applying classroom-taught concepts to real-life patient care due to limited opportunities for hands-on learning. The study recommended revising curricula to integrate more practical components and enhancing clinical supervision.

Nachinab and Armstrong (2022) investigated barriers to effective clinical education in Northern Ghana. Using a mixed-methods approach, they surveyed 180 nursing students and conducted focus group discussions with 15 participants. Key challenges identified included overcrowded clinical settings ($\beta = -0.38, p < 0.05$), lack of access to clinical resources ($\beta = -0.42, p < 0.01$), and inconsistent feedback from clinical instructors ($\beta = -0.29, p < 0.05$). The study emphasized the need for smaller student-to-instructor ratios and better resource allocation to improve the transition from theory to practice.

Baek & Cho (2020) examined how grit and resilience influence the ability of nursing students in South Korea to adapt theoretical knowledge to clinical practice. The study, involving 250 students, used validated scales to measure grit, resilience, and clinical adaptation. Findings indicated that students with higher resilience scores ($\beta = 0.47, p < 0.001$) were better able to apply academic knowledge in clinical settings, despite

challenges such as high workload and emotional stress. The authors suggested implementing resilience-building programs to enhance clinical competence.

Terefe et al. (2023) conducted a cross-sectional study in Ethiopia to assess clinical competency among nursing students and the challenges they face. The study included 300 students from three universities. Results showed that lack of confidence ($\beta = -0.35, p < 0.05$), inadequate mentorship ($\beta = -0.40, p < 0.01$), and mismatches between academic curriculum and clinical demands ($\beta = -0.33, p < 0.05$) were significant barriers to applying theoretical knowledge. Students suggested the inclusion of simulation-based learning to bridge the gap between classroom teaching and clinical requirements.

Fernández-García et al. (2020) explored nursing students' satisfaction with clinical practice in Spain and the challenges they encountered. Using a sample of 210 students, the study found that inconsistent alignment between theoretical content and clinical scenarios (32%) and inadequate preparation for real-world tasks (28%) were significant obstacles. Students also reported feeling unprepared to handle complex cases due to limited exposure during their training. The study recommended integrating simulation exercises and case-based learning into the curriculum to address these gaps.

Omorogbe & Ehwarieme (2021) examined the satisfaction with clinical experience among nursing undergraduates in selected public and private tertiary institutions in Ovia North East LGA of Edo State, Nigeria. The researchers used a descriptive survey design involving 250 nursing students. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS. Results revealed significant challenges in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice due to limited clinical supervision, inadequate resources, and a lack of alignment between theoretical content and clinical

scenarios. The findings emphasize the need for improved mentorship and practical resources to bridge the gap between academic learning and clinical application.

Iruo et al. (2021) explored the correlations between anxiety, depression, and academic achievements among new students in a nursing program in South–South Nigeria. Using a cross-sectional design, the study involved 200 participants and employed standardized psychological scales for data collection. Results indicated that high levels of anxiety and depression hindered students' ability to effectively apply theoretical knowledge during clinical rotations. The study highlights the psychological burden nursing students face and its impact on clinical performance, underscoring the importance of mental health interventions.

In Northern Ghana, Nachinab & Armstrong (2022) investigated how clinical nursing education can be improved from the perspectives of key informants. Using qualitative interviews with nursing educators and students, the study identified poor infrastructure, inadequate teaching aids, and limited opportunities for hands-on practice as major barriers to integrating academic knowledge into clinical practice. The study concludes that addressing these challenges is critical for enhancing clinical competence and aligning academic content with practical needs.

Kaliyangile & Ngoma (2020) conducted a study at Rusangu University in Zambia, assessed factors influencing student nurses' clinical learning during their clinical practice. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 150 nursing students. Findings revealed that inadequate clinical placements, lack of supervision, and insufficient integration of academic concepts into clinical practice were significant challenges. The study calls for better collaboration between academic institutions and clinical sites to ensure seamless learning experiences.

2.4 Summary of literature review

The literature review explored the relationship between academic performance and clinical practice in nursing education, emphasizing their interdependence. Conceptually, academic performance was defined as the evaluation of students' theoretical knowledge and skills, while clinical practice was described as the practical application of learned concepts in real-world healthcare settings. Both are integral to producing competent nurses, as academic excellence lays the foundation for clinical competence. The theoretical framework, based on Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, highlighted the importance of active participation, reflection, and experiential learning in nursing education. This theory underscores the significance of integrating theoretical knowledge with hands-on practice to enhance students' learning outcomes and clinical competence. Empirical evidence revealed that academic performance significantly influences clinical practice outcomes. Studies demonstrated that students with strong academic backgrounds tend to excel in clinical settings, while poor academic performance often correlates with challenges in applying knowledge. Various factors, including personal, institutional, and external influences, were found to affect both academic performance and clinical practice. These include motivation, teaching methods, resource availability, and mentorship. Challenges in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice were highlighted, including limited supervision, inadequate resources, and misalignment between theoretical content and practical scenarios. Studies conducted in Nigeria and other regions emphasized the need for improved infrastructure, mentorship, and mental health support to address these issues.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter was discussed under the following: Research design, research setting, target population, sample and sampling technique, instrument for data collection validity and reliability of instrument method of data collection and ethical Consideration.

3.1 Research Design

The research employed a cross-sectional study design evaluate the influence of academic performance on clinical practice of nursing student in a tertiary institution in Benin City. Cross -sectional studies are observational studies that analyze data from a population at a single point in time (Wang & Cheng, 2020).

3.2 Research setting

This study was carried out in the Department of Nursing Science in the University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State. The Department of Nursing Science functions within the School of Basic Medical Sciences that comprises of other departments including; Anatomy department, Physiology department, physiotherapy, Medical Biochemistry, Radiology and Medical Laboratory sciences department. The nursing department was established in 2009 with different units such as mental health nursing, medico-surgical nursing, community health nursing, and maternal & child health nursing. The department comprises of students from 100 level to 500 level.

3.3 Target Population

The target population for the study were undergraduate nursing student who had started clinical posting (ranging from 300 level-500 level) of the Department of Nursing Science in University of Benin. The total number of students in 300 - 500 level are 544 (Nursing Department, 2025), as outlined below:

Table 3.1 Number of nursing student in each academic level

LEVEL	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
300 Level	194
400 Level	183
500 Level	167
Total	544

Source: Department of Nursing Science (2025).

3.4 Sample Size Determination

The sample size will be calculated as indicated below:

Using Taro Yamane's Formula

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

N= Population under study

E= Constant 0.05%) margin error

$$n = \frac{544}{1 + 544(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{544}{1 + 544(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{544}{1 + 1.36}$$

$$n = \frac{544}{2.36}$$

n=230

230 + attrition rate of 10% which is 23

Therefore, the sample size will be 253.

Table 3.2: Distribution of sample size across all levels

Academic level	Determination of sample size in each level	Sample size per level
300	$194/544 \times 253 =$	90
400	$183/544 \times 253 =$	85
500	$167/544 \times 253 =$	78
TOTAL		253

3.5 Sampling Techniques

The stratified sampling technique was used for this study. Stratified sampling is a probability sampling technique where the population is divided into homogeneous subgroups or "strata" based on shared characteristics (Rahman et al., 2022). The Department of Nursing Science University of Benin has an hierarchical arrangement of the students into levels corresponding to their year of study (1001-5001) hence this sampling technique is best fit to be used.

3.6 Instrument for data collections

The instrument design for data collection for this research was a self-constructed questionnaire. The questionnaire will be carefully constructed to give a depth understanding of the topic and the relevant to the study. The questionnaire contained 23 questions with four sections (A, B C, D).

Section A: Socio-demographic with 5 items

Section B: To examine the impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes comprises of 6 items with likert scale.

Section C: To identify the factors influencing the academic performance and clinical practice with 6 items with likert scale.

Section D: To assess the challenges nursing students face in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice with 6 items with likert scale.

3.7 Validity of Instrument

The instrument was tested for validity using face and content validity method which ensure that the instrument supplied answers to the research questions in the study. They were scrutinized by the project supervisor and corrections were effected before administering the instrument to respondents.

3.8 Reliability of Instrument

To determine the reliability of the instrument, Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 29) was used. This method involved the administration of the same instrument which is 10% of students under similar condition in the department of physiotherapy. Scores from repeated testing was compared reliability coefficient was then be generated. The reliability index was be calculated to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The reliability coefficient was calculated by Cronbach Alpha Reliability with a value of 0.82 and was deemed reliable.

3.9 Method of data collection

The questionnaires were administered to the research participants on a daily basis after a careful explanation of the topic, and the questionnaires was retrieved on the spot. In addition, informed consent were obtained from all respondents that participated in the study. This process continued until the desired sample size was obtained.

3.10 Method of Data Analysis

The data obtained was analyzed with the aid of Statistical package for social sciences now known as Statistical product and service solutions (SPSS) version 29 and findings was presented using tables, frequency distribution, mean, standard deviation, simple percentage and charts. Interpretation were made from the analyzed data and hypotheses was tested using Chi-square test.

3.11 Ethical Consideration

The following ethical considerations will be observed in the research study:

- **Permission:** A letter seeking permission to conduct the study was delivered to the research and ethics committee of the setting selected for the study. In addition, informed consent was obtained from the respondents that participated in the study. Finally, anonymity and confidentiality was maintained all through the study.
- **Informed consent:** An informed consent were obtained from the subjects before administering the questionnaires.
- **Respect and Confidentiality:** The entire subjects used for the study were treated with respect and dignity irrespective of their age, status and tribes. All information that were provided through the gathered questionnaires were treated with confidentiality. All these was emphasized in order to ensure accurate, reliable and quality information.
- **Avoidance of plagiarism:** No copying of another person's idea, text or other creative work and presenting it as one's own, especially without permission.
- **Principle of voluntary participation:** Respondents were not forced in filling the questionnaires.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter is concerned with the analysis, result presentation, result interpretation and also summary of result findings. The objective of the study was to evaluate the influence of academic performance on clinical practice of nursing student in a tertiary institution in Benin City. A total of 253 questionnaires were distributed to nursing students in the University of Benin, 230 were properly filled and valid for data analysis, giving a response rate of 91%.

Table 4.1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Variable	Frequency (n = 230)	Percentage (%)
Age		
Below 18	4	1.7
19-22	69	30.0
23-25	127	55.2
25 and above	30	13.0
Ethnicity		
Edo	77	33.5
Yoruba	37	16.1
Igbo	48	20.9
Others	68	29.6
Marital Status		
Single	218	94.8
Married	12	5.2
Widowed	0	0
Level		
300	73	31.7
400	79	34.4
500	78	33.9
Grade		
Second Class Lower	27	11.7
Second Class Upper	114	49.6

First Class	89	38.7
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Table 4.1 shows the socio-demographic data of the 230 respondents reveal that the majority (55.2%) were aged between 23 and 25 years, followed by 30% aged 19–22 years, 13% aged 25 and above, and only 1.7% below 18. In terms of ethnicity, 33.5% were Edo, 29.6% from other ethnic groups, 20.9% Igbo, and 16.1% Yoruba. Most respondents were single (94.8%), while only 5.2% were married and none were widowed. Regarding academic level, students were fairly evenly distributed: 34.4% were in 400 level, 33.9% in 500 level, and 31.7% in 300 level. Academic performance showed that nearly half (49.6%) had Second Class Upper grades, 38.7% had First Class, and 11.7% were in the Second Class Lower category.

Answering research question

Research question 1: What is the level of impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes of nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin city?

Table 4.2: Level of impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes (n=230)

ITEMS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean ±SD	Remark
My academic performance has significantly enhanced my ability to perform clinical procedures effectively.	99 (43.0)	52 (22.6)	43 (18.7)	36 (15.7)	4.2±3.1	Impactful
Theoretical knowledge gained from academic courses directly improves my decision-making in clinical settings.	91 (39.6)	64 (27.8)	31 (13.5)	44 (19.1)	4.1±3.1	Impactful
Poor academic performance can negatively impact clinical competence and patient care outcomes.	91 (39.6)	100 (43.5)	23 (10.0)	16 (7.0)	4.5±3.3	Impactful
Academic performance has a significant influence on my confidence during clinical practice.	96 (41.7)	61 (26.5)	34 (14.8)	39 (17.0)	4.2±3.1	Impactful

The depth of my academic knowledge affects how I handle real-life scenarios during clinical practice.	78 (33.9)	88 (38.3)	42 (18.3)	22 (9.6)	4.3±3.1	Impactful
There is a strong correlation between my academic grades and my overall clinical performance.	93 (40.4)	66 (28.7)	24 (10.4)	47 (20.4)	4.2±3.1	Impactful
Grand Mean					4.3	

Mean cut-off mark = 2.5

Table 4.2 indicates that academic performance has a notable influence on clinical practice outcomes, as reflected by the high mean scores across all items. The statement, "Poor academic performance can negatively impact clinical competence and patient care outcomes," had the highest mean (4.5), indicating strong agreement among respondents. This is followed by "The depth of my academic knowledge affects how I handle real-life scenarios during clinical practice" (4.3) and "There is a strong correlation between my academic grades and my overall clinical performance" (4.2). Other items, such as academic performance enhancing the ability to perform clinical procedures effectively (4.2), influencing confidence during clinical practice (4.2), and improving decision-making through theoretical knowledge (4.1), also scored well above the cut-off mean of 2.5. The grand mean of 4.3 confirms that academic performance is perceived as significantly impactful on clinical practice among the respondents.

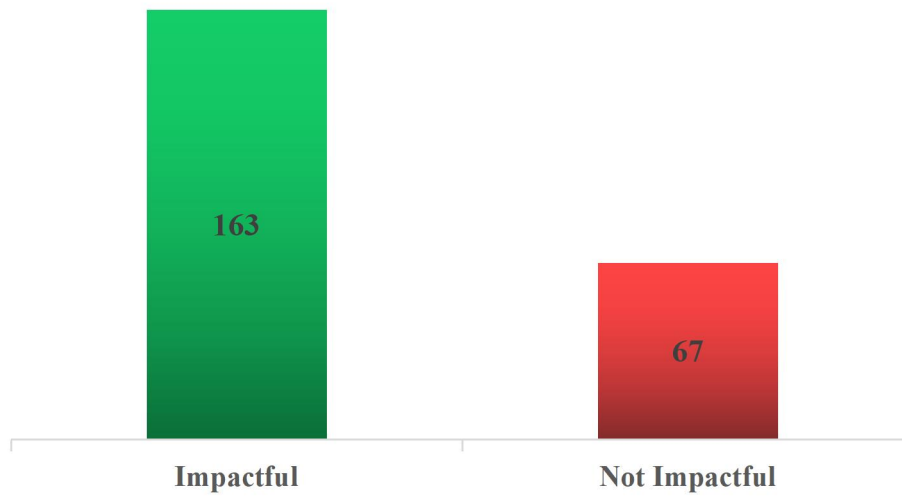


Figure 4.1 Bar-Chart showing the composite score for the level of impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes of nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin city?

Figure 4.1 shows that 163 (70.8%) of the respondents agreed with the level of impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes of nursing students, while 67(29.1%) of the respondent were in disagreement.

Research question 2: What are the levels of the factors influencing the academic performance and clinical practice of nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin city?

Table 4.3: Factors influencing the academic performance and clinical practice of nursing students (n=230)

ITEMS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean \pm SD	Remark
Access to adequate learning resources influences my academic performance and clinical competence.	111 (48.3)	87 (37.8)	21 (9.1)	11 (4.8)	4.7 \pm 3.4	Factors
Support from faculty members and mentors significantly affects my ability to excel academically and clinically.	61 (26.5)	89 (38.7)	39 (17.0)	41 (17.8)	3.9 \pm 2.9	Factor

High levels of stress and workload negatively impact my academic performance and clinical practice.	77 (33.5)	79 (34.3)	47 (20.4)	27 (11.7)	4.2±3.1	Factor
Peer collaboration and group study sessions enhance my understanding of academic and clinical concepts.	143 (62.2)	66 (28.7)	12 (5.2)	9 (3.9)	5.0±3.7	Factor
The availability of practical clinical opportunities influences my ability to apply theoretical knowledge effectively	92 (40.0)	67 (29.1)	27 (11.7)	44 (19.1)	4.2±3.1	Factor
Personal factors such as time management and self-discipline play a critical role in my academic and clinical success.	90 (39.1)	71 (30.9)	36 (15.7)	33 (14.3)	4.2±3.1	Factor
Grand Mean					4.3	

Mean cut-off mark = 2.5

Table 4.3 shows key factors influencing the academic performance and clinical practice of nursing students, as indicated by high mean scores. The highest mean score (5.0) was recorded for the statement that peer collaboration and group study sessions enhance understanding of academic and clinical concepts. This was closely followed by access to adequate learning resources, which had a mean of 4.7, indicating its strong influence on academic performance and clinical competence. Statements concerning the negative impact of stress and workload, the availability of practical clinical opportunities, and the role of personal factors such as time management and self-discipline each had mean scores of 4.2. Support from faculty members and mentors had a slightly lower, yet significant, mean of 3.9. With a grand mean of 4.3 well above the cut-off mark of 2.5 it is evident that multiple academic,

institutional, and personal factors play a critical role in shaping both academic outcomes and clinical effectiveness among nursing students.

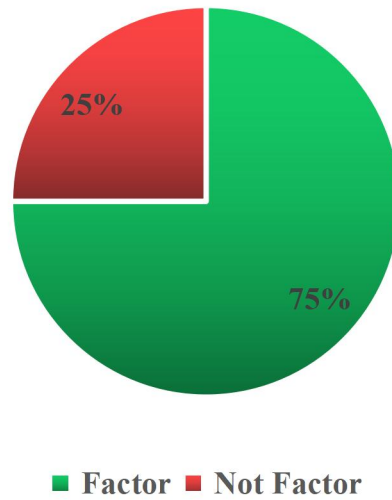


Figure 4.2 Pie-Chart shown composite score for factors influencing the academic performance and clinical practice of nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin city.

Figure 4.2 shows that 75.0 %(172) of the respondents agreed with the factors as influential to their academic performance and clinical practice, while 25.0%(58) of the respondents were in disagreement to the factors as influential.

Research question 3: What are the challenges nursing students face in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice in a tertiary institution in Benin city?

Table 4.4: Challenges nursing students face in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice (n=230)

ITEMS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean ±SD	Remark
Inadequate clinical supervision makes it difficult to apply academic knowledge effectively.	58 (25.2)	76 (33.0)	63 (27.4)	33 (14.3)	3.9±2.8	Challenges

The gap between theoretical knowledge and real-life clinical scenarios is challenging to bridge.	46	27	98	59	3.3±2.4	Challenges
	(20.0)	(11.7)	(42.6)	(25.7)		
Limited exposure to diverse clinical cases affects my ability to apply academic knowledge.	59	31	84	56	3.5±2.6	Challenges
	(25.7)	(13.5)	(36.5)	(24.3)		
Time constraints during clinical rotations hinder the proper application of academic learning.	42	59	57	72	3.3±2.5	Challenges
	(18.3)	(25.7)	(24.8)	(31.3)		
Fear of making mistakes in clinical settings limits my confidence in applying theoretical concepts.	78	43	41	68	3.7±2.8	Challenges
	(33.9)	(18.7)	(17.8)	(29.6)		
Inadequate resources or facilities in clinical settings create barriers to applying academic knowledge.	48	71	44	67	3.5±2.6	Challenges
	(20.9)	(30.9)	(19.1)	(29.1)		
	Grand Mean				3.5	

Mean cut-off mark = 2.5

Table 4.4 shows the challenges nursing students face in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice. The highest mean score (3.9) was observed for the challenge of inadequate clinical supervision, indicating that students find it difficult to apply academic learning effectively without proper guidance. This was followed by fear of making mistakes in clinical settings (mean = 3.7), which suggests a significant impact on students' confidence. Limited exposure to diverse clinical cases and inadequate clinical resources both had mean scores of 3.5, indicating moderate challenges. The

gap between theoretical knowledge and real-life clinical scenarios, as well as time constraints during rotations, each had a mean score of 3.3, showing that these issues also hinder effective application of knowledge. With a grand mean of 3.5 above the cut-off mark of 2.5 the findings suggest that nursing students face several notable barriers when attempting to translate academic knowledge into clinical practice.

Table 4.5: Composite score for challenges nursing students face in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice

Challenges	Mean Score	Average Score (%)	Decision
Challenge	>= 2.5	106 (46.1)	Challenge
Not a Challenge	< 2.5	124 (53.9)	Not a Challenge
Grade Total	3.5		Not a Challenges

Table 4.5 shows a composite summary of the challenges nursing students face in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice. Although the overall mean score was 3.5 above the 2.5 threshold that indicates a challenge the classification based on average scores shows that 53.9% of respondents rated the issues as not a challenge, while 46.1% considered them as challenges. Despite the general perception leaning slightly toward these issues not being major obstacles, the mean score suggests that, on average, students still experience a moderate level of difficulty in applying theoretical knowledge in clinical settings.

Hypothesis

Decision rule: If the p-value is less than 0.05 the null hypothesis (H_0) will be rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) will be accepted. If it is otherwise, the null hypothesis will be accepted and the alternative will be rejected.

There is no significant relationship between level of impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes and the challenges faced by the nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin city.

Table 4.6 showing significant relationship between level of impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes and the challenges faced by the nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin city.

Level of Impact	Level of Challenge		Test Statistics (χ^2)	df	P value	Decision
	Challenge	Not Challenge				
Impactful	98 (42.6)	22 (9.6)	0.364 ^a	1	0.03	Rejected
Not Impactful	47 (20.4)	63 (27.4)				

Table 4.6 presents the relationship between the level of impact of academic performance on clinical practice outcomes and the challenges faced by nursing students. The chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 0.364$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.03$) shows a statistically significant relationship at the 0.05 level. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating that the perceived impact of academic performance is significantly associated with the challenges students face in applying academic knowledge during clinical practice. Specifically, a higher proportion of students who found academic performance impactful also reported facing challenges.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter discusses the major findings of the research compared with the literature reviewed, the implication for nursing, summary, conclusion, Recommendations and Suggestions for further Studies.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

The socio-demographic data indicate that most respondents were aged 23–25 (55.2%) and predominantly single (94.8%), reflecting the typical profile of full-time undergraduate nursing students, as observed by Fooladi et al. (2022) and Gamtessa (2021). Ethnic diversity was evident, with Edo (33.5%) being the largest group. Academic standing was notably strong, with 49.6% in Second Class Upper and 38.7% in First Class, aligning with findings by Getie et al. (2021) and Baek and Cho (2020), who linked high academic performance to improved clinical outcomes. The even distribution across academic levels suggests balanced representation in the study.

Impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes of nursing students

The findings of this study reveal that the majority of respondents (70.8%) agreed that academic performance significantly impacts clinical practice outcomes among nursing students. This is consistent with the findings of Gamtessa (2021), who reported a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.05$) between academic grades and clinical competence, particularly in communication and patient assessment. Item-by-item analysis shows that academic performance enhances the ability to perform clinical procedures, improves clinical decision-making, increases confidence, and strengthens the application of theoretical knowledge in real-life scenarios. These findings align

with Nguyen et al. (2025), who found that students with strong academic backgrounds achieved better clinical outcomes due to improved critical thinking. Similarly, Fooladi et al. (2022) reported that academic success predicted stronger clinical performance, especially in patient care planning. The grand mean of 4.3 indicates a high level of agreement among respondents, reinforcing the conclusion that academic performance is a significant determinant of clinical effectiveness, as also supported by Getie et al. (2021) and Baek and Cho (2020).

Level of the Factors influencing the academic performance and clinical practice of nursing students

The findings in this study reveal that 75.0% of respondents agreed that the listed factors significantly influence their academic performance and clinical practice, with a high grand mean of 4.3. Access to adequate learning resources and peer collaboration were identified as the most impactful. These findings are consistent with studies such as Ali et al. (2020) and Getie et al. (2021), which reported that access to resources and peer learning environments enhance academic understanding and clinical competence. Support from faculty also emerged as significant, aligning with Gamtessa (2021) and Oyetunde and Nkwonta (2022), who noted that mentorship and instructor availability directly influence academic success and confidence in practice. Furthermore, the influence of stress and workload corresponds with findings from Baek and Cho (2020) and Nguyen et al. (2025), who highlighted stress as a key barrier to performance in both academic and clinical settings. Notably, the role of personal discipline and time management supports Afolayan et al. (2021), who identified self-motivation and time use as predictors of success among Nigerian nursing students. The availability of clinical opportunities (mean = 4.2) also affirms

Nguyen et al. (2025) and Chakrabarti et al. (2021), who stressed that hands-on practice is essential for translating theory into effective care.

Challenges nursing students face in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice

The findings indicate that 46.1% of respondents acknowledged challenges in applying academic knowledge to clinical settings, with a grand mean of 3.5, exceeding the 2.5 benchmark. Among the challenges identified was inadequate clinical supervision, which aligns with Awuah-Peasah et al. (2021) and Oyetunde and Nkwonta (2022), who emphasized the critical role of effective preceptorship in facilitating learning transfer. Fear of making mistakes also featured prominently, echoing the observations of Baek and Cho (2020) and Nguyen et al. (2025) that psychological stress and lack of confidence hinder clinical application of theoretical knowledge. Similarly, limited clinical exposure and inadequate clinical facilities mirror findings from Chakrabarti et al. (2021) and Getie et al. (2021), which identified poor infrastructure and case variety as major barriers in sub-Saharan contexts. Although time constraints and the theory-practice gap were less pronounced, they still represent notable challenges, consistent with Ali et al. (2020) who reported similar struggles among nursing students in applying classroom learning due to curricular and scheduling limitations. Overall, these findings corroborate prior empirical evidence, underscoring persistent systemic and individual barriers that limit the translation of academic knowledge into effective clinical practice among nursing students.

5.2 Implication to Nursing

The findings from this study highlight several critical implications for nursing education and practice. The strong relationship between academic performance and

clinical outcomes emphasizes the need for nursing programs to ensure that theoretical knowledge is effectively integrated with practical skills. This integration can enhance students' clinical decision-making abilities and overall competence, ensuring they are better prepared for real-world challenges. Moreover, the challenges identified, such as inadequate clinical supervision and limited exposure to diverse clinical cases, point to the necessity for improved mentorship programs and enhanced clinical placements. By providing more hands-on experiences in varied clinical settings, students will be better equipped to apply their academic learning in practice, improving their clinical proficiency. The study also underscores the importance of addressing personal factors such as time management, stress, and resilience. These factors significantly impact students' ability to succeed both academically and clinically, highlighting the need for support systems that promote mental well-being and academic success. Finally, the issue of inadequate resources and facilities in clinical settings creates barriers to applying academic knowledge effectively. Nursing schools and healthcare institutions must work together to ensure that students have access to the necessary tools and environments that support high-quality clinical practice.

5.3 Limitation of the Study

This study is limited by its cross-sectional design, which only captures a snapshot of nursing students' experiences at a single point in time, preventing the assessment of changes over time. The sample is also restricted to nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin City, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other regions or institutions. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce bias, as respondents might overstate or understate their experiences. The study did not explore factors such as socio-economic background or the specific types of clinical settings,

which may further influence the students' ability to apply academic knowledge. Furthermore, the study did not account for the varying levels of clinical exposure across different clinical rotations, which could impact students' experiences and performance.

5.4 Summary of the Study

This study aimed to assess the impact of academic performance on the clinical practice outcomes of nursing students in a tertiary institution in Benin City. It also identified factors influencing academic and clinical performance, as well as the challenges nursing students face in applying academic knowledge to clinical practice. The study found that a significant proportion of respondents believed their academic performance positively influenced their clinical skills, particularly in areas such as decision-making, confidence, and patient care. The availability of learning resources, support from faculty, peer collaboration, and time management were identified as key factors influencing both academic and clinical success. However, challenges such as inadequate clinical supervision, the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-life scenarios, and limited clinical exposure were also prominent, with many students reporting difficulties in bridging the gap between classroom learning and clinical application. The study revealed that these challenges, along with time constraints and fear of mistakes, hindered students' ability to effectively apply academic knowledge in clinical settings. The findings emphasize the need for improved clinical supervision, better integration of theoretical knowledge with practical experiences, and enhanced support systems to optimize nursing students' learning and clinical outcomes. The limitations of the study include its cross-sectional design, sample size, and reliance on self-reported data.

5.5 Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the relationship between academic performance and clinical practice outcomes among nursing students. It highlights the significant role that strong academic knowledge plays in enhancing clinical skills, particularly in decision-making, confidence, and overall clinical competence. Factors such as access to learning resources, faculty support, and peer collaboration were found to be crucial in promoting both academic success and clinical proficiency. However, challenges such as inadequate clinical supervision, the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, and limited clinical exposure were identified as barriers that hindered the effective application of academic knowledge in clinical settings. The study underscores the need for educational institutions to foster a more integrated approach, ensuring that theoretical learning is directly aligned with clinical practice. This can be achieved through improved mentorship, enhanced clinical placements, and a curriculum that emphasizes hands-on experience. Additionally, addressing student-related factors such as time management and stress management can further enhance both academic and clinical performance. The findings also suggest that institutions should focus on providing adequate resources and better clinical training environments to bridge the gap between academic learning and real-life practice. Ultimately, the study calls for a comprehensive approach to nursing education that emphasizes the synergy between academic learning and clinical practice, creating a more effective and confident nursing workforce.

5.6 Recommendations

- i. Enhance Clinical Supervision: Institutions should improve mentorship and supervision to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and clinical practice.

- ii. Provide Adequate Clinical Exposure: Increase opportunities for diverse clinical cases to enhance students' ability to apply academic knowledge in real-world settings.
- iii. Integrate Peer Collaboration: Foster group study sessions and peer collaboration to enhance understanding and application of academic concepts in clinical practice.
- iv. Address Student Stress and Time Management: Implement programs focused on stress management and time management skills to support academic and clinical performance.
- v. Improve Resource Availability: Ensure access to adequate learning materials and clinical facilities to facilitate effective application of academic knowledge.

5.7 Suggestions for Further Studies

Further studies could explore the impact of specific clinical placement models on the application of academic knowledge in clinical practice. Investigating the role of mental health support programs in improving clinical performance among nursing students could provide valuable insights. Additionally, research could focus on the effectiveness of innovative teaching methods, such as simulation-based learning, in enhancing clinical competencies. Expanding the study to include multiple institutions could provide a broader perspective on factors influencing academic and clinical performance across different settings.

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APPENDIX I
QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

I am a student of Department of Nursing Sciences, University Of Benin, I am currently carrying out a research to evaluate **Influence Of Academic Performance On Clinical Practice Of Nursing Student In a Tertiary Institution In Benin City.**

I humbly solicit for your co-operation to fill this questionnaire please, note that your name and address is not required as this will maintain optimum confidentiality.

Thanks for your co-operation.

Instruction; read carefully, tick { } where necessary and fill the gaps as appropriate

SECTION A; (SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA)

1. Age: Below 18 19-22 23-25 25 and above
2. Ethnicity: Edo Yoruba Igbo others
3. Marital status: Single Married Divorced
4. Level: 300 400 500
5. Grade: Second Class Lower Second Class Upper First Class

SECTION B: IMPACT OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ON THE CLINICAL PRACTICE OUTCOMES OF NURSING STUDENTS

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by ticking one of the options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD)

	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1	My academic performance has significantly enhanced my ability to perform clinical procedures effectively.				
2	Theoretical knowledge gained from academic courses directly improves my decision-making in clinical settings.				
3	Poor academic performance can negatively impact clinical competence and patient care outcomes.				

4	Academic performance has a significant influence on my confidence during clinical practice.				
5	The depth of my academic knowledge affects how I handle real-life scenarios during clinical practice.				
6	There is a strong correlation between my academic grades and my overall clinical performance.				

SECTION C: FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND CLINICAL PRACTICE OF NURSING STUDENTS

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by ticking one of the options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD)

	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1	Access to adequate learning resources influences my academic performance and clinical competence.				
2	Support from faculty members and mentors significantly affects my ability to excel academically and clinically.				
3	High levels of stress and workload negatively impact my academic performance and clinical practice.				
4	Peer collaboration and group study sessions enhance my understanding of academic and clinical concepts.				
5	The availability of practical clinical opportunities influences my ability to apply theoretical knowledge effectively				
6	Personal factors such as time management and self-discipline play a critical role in my academic and clinical success.				

SECTION D: CHALLENGES NURSING STUDENTS FACE IN APPLYING ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE TO CLINICAL PRACTICE

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by ticking one of the options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD)

	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1	Inadequate clinical supervision makes it difficult to apply academic knowledge effectively.				
2	The gap between theoretical knowledge and real-life clinical scenarios is challenging to bridge.				
3	Limited exposure to diverse clinical cases affects my ability to apply academic knowledge.				
4	Time constraints during clinical rotations hinder the proper application of academic learning.				
5	Fear of making mistakes in clinical settings limits my confidence in applying theoretical concepts.				
6	Inadequate resources or facilities in clinical settings create barriers to applying academic knowledge.				

APPENDIX II

RELIABILITY TEST

RELIABILITY OF INSTRUMENT ON INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ON CLINICAL PRACTICE OF NURSING STUDENT IN A TERTIARY INSTITUTION IN BENIN CITY

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.82	.79	18



RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
COLLEGE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, NIGERIA.



Chairman: Prof. F. A Imarhiagbe
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P.M.B 1154, BENIN CITY

Our Ref: CMS/REC/01/VOL.2/765

Date: 22nd April, 2025

Re: THE INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ON CLINICAL PRACTICE OF NURSING STUDENT IN TERTIARY INSTITUTION IN BENIN CITY.

Name of Principal Investigator: **AJAINO BLESSING ENOVWO,**
Department Of Nursing Science,
School of Basic Medical Sciences,
University Of Benin,
Benin City.

REC Approval No: CMS/REC/2024/765

This is to inform you that the research described in the submitted proposal, the Informed Consent Forms and other participant information materials have been reviewed and approved by the College Research Ethics Committee, University of Benin.

This approval dates from **21st April, 2025 to 20th April, 2026**. In multi-year research, Endeavour to submit your annual report to the REC early in order to obtain renewal of your approval and avoid disruption of your research.

The National Code of Health Research Ethics requires you to comply with all institutional guidelines, rules and regulations and with the tenets of the code including ensuring that all adverse events are reported promptly to the REC. No, changes are permitted in the research without prior approval by REC except in circumstances outlined in the code. REC reserves the right to conduct compliance visit to your research site without prior notice. Thank you.

PROF. F.A IMARHIAGBE
Chairman, REC

Promoting best ethical & scientific standard for research in Nigeria