

## Barriers for Implementing Nursing Theory: based Practices in the Clinicals Among Nursing Students

Suchana Roy Bhowmik<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

**Background and Purpose:** A theoretical perspective allows the nurse to plan and implement care purposefully and proactively. In today's scenario learning and applying nursing theories shouldn't be limited to the classroom but it should be in daily practice. It is observed that there is a gap between theoretical knowledge as taught in the classroom and what the students experience in clinical settings. So, it is found that that even though nursing theory is an integral part of nursing education and practice, nursing students are not able to apply nursing theories in the clinicals. So this study was conducted to assess the barriers for implementing nursing theory based practices in the clinicals among nursing students.

**Methods:** This study adopted quantitative research approach with a cross-sectional research design. Data were collected using Demographic profile and Likert Scale from total of 218 Nursing Students by convenient sampling technique.

**Results:** portrayed that 79.4% of the participants felt moderate and 8.7% felt more barrier for implementing nursing theory-based practices in the clinicals. It also depicted that comparison of barrier in regards to knowledge vs personal interest shows highly significant ( $p = .000^*$ ), personal interest vs role of Institution shows highly significant ( $p = .000^*$ ).

**Implications for Practice:** the results of this study confirmed that majority participants felt moderate and few felt more barrier related to implementing nursing theory based practices in the clinicals. So nurse educators can play an important role in motivating students, Institution can make policies to implement nursing theory in the clinicals by nursing teachers.

**Keywords:** Barrier; Nursing theory; Nursing practice; Nursing students; Knowledge, Personal interest; Role of institution

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### Introduction

Theory is a group of related concepts that propose action that guides practice. Nursing practice theory provides frameworks for nursing interventions and predict outcomes and the impact of nursing practice.<sup>1</sup> Nursing theory provides nurses with a perspective to view client situations, a way to organize the hundreds of data bits encountered in the day-to-day care of clients, and a way to analyse and interpret the information. A theoretical

perspective allows the nurse to plan and implement care purposefully and proactively. When nurses practice purposefully and systematically, they are more efficient, have better control over the outcomes of their care, and are better able to communicate with others.<sup>2</sup>

Current nursing education programs based on nursing models have produced a growing cadre of nurses familiar with formal nursing theory. Nurses believed that theory based practice would help them collect useful data, plan comprehensive care, would result in better care.<sup>3</sup> As nursing theory is a setup of concepts and principles that define the scientific basis of nursing profession. Nursing theories enhance student's understanding of the principles, values and meaning of nursing profession. A study finding depicted that staff believed nursing theory must be linked to the practice settings and many participants in that study reported that they did not

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know the importance of linking theories to practice settings. So, applying nursing theory which can help patients, managers and other healthcare professionals to recognize the unique contribution that nurses make to the healthcare service by giving nurses a sense of identity.<sup>4-5</sup>

Learning and applying nursing theories shouldn't be limited to the classroom. In today's healthcare setup the place for nursing theories should be in daily practice, whether at the patient's bedside or in community health nursing.<sup>6</sup> Even though the students are learned about nursing theories in the classroom settings, they are unable to practice in the clinical settings. Even though the theories are indicators of nursing science, evidence based nursing practice, the application of theories is not seen in practice and education. A study was carried out to determine the barriers of nursing theories in practice by nurse. In the study barriers emerged are dissatisfaction, reluctant in nursing theories and limited learning about theory.<sup>7</sup>

For effective performance in clinical settings by students requires the integration between theory and practice. It is observed that there is a gap between theoretical knowledge as taught in the classroom and what the students experience in clinical settings. Based on this concept a quantitative study was carried out to elicit and explore the barriers of utilizing theoretical knowledge in clinical settings. In this study fifteen nursing and paramedic's students, faculty members and experienced nursing staff participated in the study. Data were collected by semi-structured individual interviews. Result showed that five main categories emerged as barriers of utilizing theoretical knowledge in the clinical settings i.e. non-standard practices in clinical settings; lack of trust in clinical competence; lack of perceived professional support; insufficiencies in teaching and learning process; and differences between doing things in simulated and real clinical situations. So the researcher recommended that by eliminating barriers and transferring theory into practice in a structured manner requires professional support in the workplace, trust and the opportunity for direct experience, using valid and up to date knowledge by clinical staff and bridging the simulated situations with real life scenarios.<sup>8</sup>

The primary purpose of theory in the profession of nursing is to improve practice by positively influence the health and quality of life of patients.<sup>9</sup> So, it is found that that even though nursing theory is an integral part of nursing education and practice, nursing students are not able to apply nursing theories in the clinicals as they face few barriers in the application. By keeping this in mind researcher conducted a

study to assess the barriers for implementing nursing theory based practices in the clinicals among nursing students. The findings will help nursing professionals to find the ways to overcome barriers and improve nursing care by implementing nursing theories in the clinical practice.

## **Material and Methods:**

### *Design:*

This study adopted quantitative research approach with a cross-sectional research design. The Institutional Review Board provided ethical approval (regd no: ECR/262/Inst/UP/2013/RR-19). Data were collected by convenient sampling technique.

### *Participants:*

Data were collected from total of 218 students by convenient sampling technique from B.Sc. Nursing Second, Third, Fourth year students and M.Sc. Nursing First, Second year Students of tertiary care hospital who met the inclusion criteria.

### *Procedures:*

Participants were approached for informed consent for their participation. The students were approached through mail and personally who were present in the institution. Explained the procedure of the study and informed consent were taken prior to data collection. Tools were collected once it is filled by hand and mail.

### *Measures:*

Data were collected using Demographic profile and Likert Scale to assess barriers for implementing nursing theory based practices which was validated from the experts. Reliability of the Likert scale was 0.767, which was calculated by using Cronbach's Alpha. Demographic profile included age, gender and qualification of the participants. Likert Scale to assess barriers for implementing nursing theory-based practices which had 12 items with three domains i.e. knowledge, personal interest and role of institution.

### *Statistics:*

For analysis descriptive statistics (frequency table, mean and standard deviation) were conducted to describe the demographic data and item analysis for assessing barrier, domains of barrier and to assess overall barrier. Comparison between domains of barriers done by using t test at 0.05 significance. The Fisher's Exact Test and Pearson Chi-Square were also used for data analysis to find out association between demographic profile and overall barrier at 0.05 significance levels using SPSS software.

**Result:**

The result revealed that 57.8% of the participants

were belong to the age group of 22-25 years, 67.4% were female. As per their professional qualification 41.3% were third year B.Sc. nursing students.

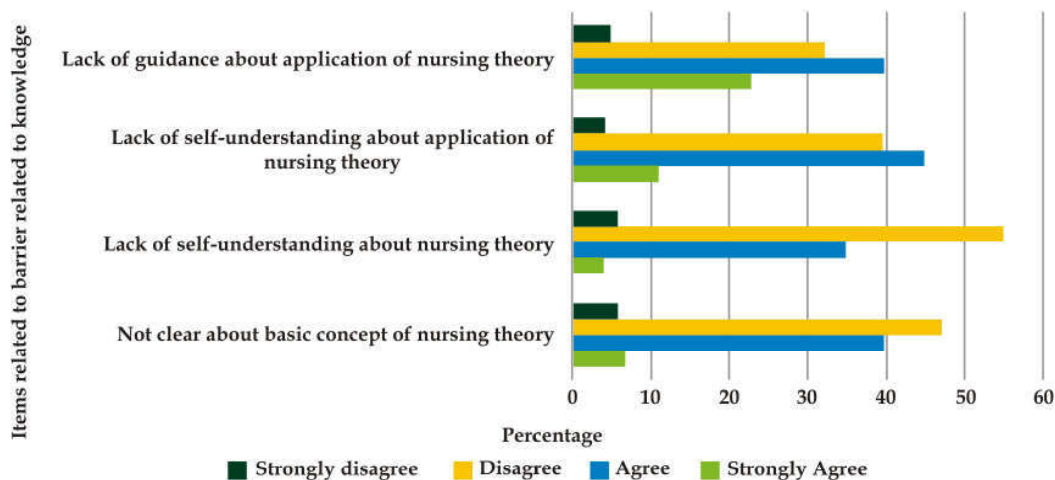


Fig. 1: Barriers related to knowledge regarding nursing theory

Above figure depicts in regards to barrier related to knowledge regarding application of nursing theory is that ; 47.2% disagree and 39.9% also agree that they had no clear idea about basic concept of nursing theory, 55% disagree and 34.9% also agree that they had lack of self understanding about

nursing theory, 45% agree and 39.9% also disagree that they had lack of self-understanding about application of nursing theory, 39.9% agree and 32.1% also disagree that they had lack of guidance about application of nursing theory.

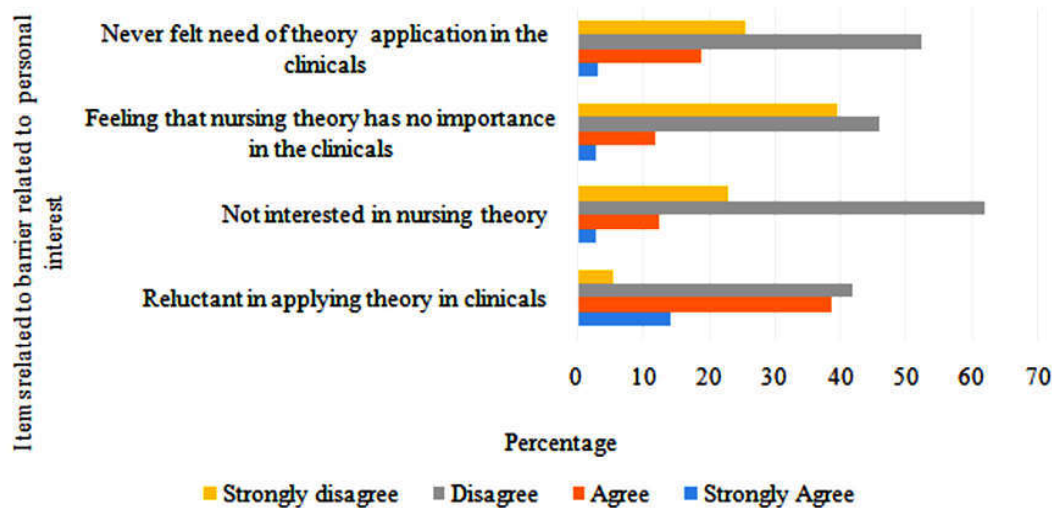


Fig. 2: Barriers related to personal interest about application of nursing theory

Above figure depicts in regards to barrier related to personal interest about application of nursing theory is that; 41.7% disagree and 38.5% also agree that they are reluctant in applying theory in clinicals, 61.9% disagree that they are not interested

in application of nursing theory, 45.9% disagree and 39.4% also strongly disagree that they felt that nursing theory has no importance in the clinicals, 52.3% disagree that they never felt need of theory application in the clinicals.

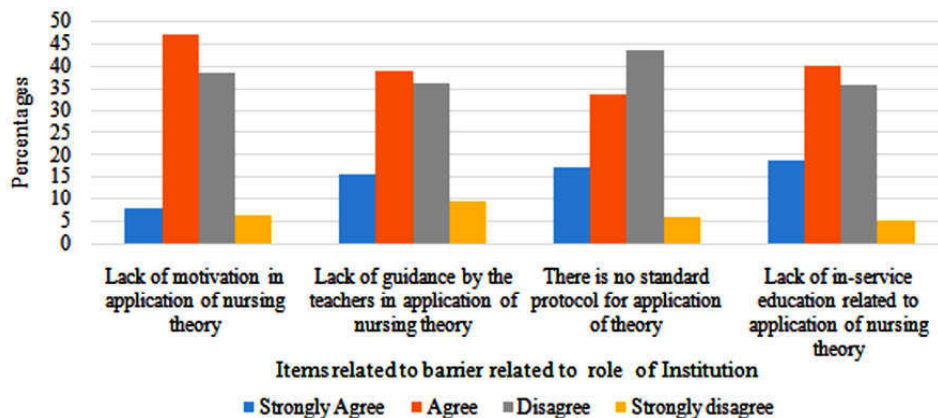


Fig. 3: Barriers related to role of Institution in applying nursing theory in clinicals.

Above figure depicts in regards to barrier related to role of institution in applying nursing theory in clinicals is that; 47.2% agree and 38.5% also disagree that they had lack of motivation in application of nursing theory, 39% agree and as well as 36.2% also disagree that they had lack of guidance by the teachers in application of nursing theory, 43.6% disagree and 33.5% also agree that there is no standard protocol for application of theory, 40.5% agree and 35.8% also disagree that they had lack of in service education related to application of nursing theory.

**Table 2:** Domain wise distribution for barriers for implementing nursing theory in the clinicals n=218

Domain of barrier	Category	Less barrier	Moderate barrier	More barrier
	Scoring key	4-8	8-12	12-16
Knowledge	f	18	146	54
	%	8.3	67.0	24.8
Personal Interest	f	77	126	15
	%	35.3	57.8	6.9
Role of Institution	f	21	113	82
	%	9.6	51.8	37.6

Table 2: Described that 67% felt moderate and 24.8% felt more barrier for implementing nursing theory-based practices in the clinicals related to knowledge regarding nursing theory. It also showed that 57.8% felt moderate barrier for implementing nursing theory-based practices in the clinicals related to personal interest in application of nursing theory. In addition to it also showed that 51.8% of the participants felt moderate and 37.6% felt more barrier for implementing nursing theory based practices in the clinicals related to role of institution in applying nursing theory in clinicals.

**Table 3:** Overall barriers for implementing nursing theory-based practices in the clinicals. n=218

Overall barrier	Scoring key	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Less	12-24	26	11.9
Moderate	24-36	173	79.4
More	36-48	19	8.7

Table 3: Portrayed that 79.4% of the participants felt moderate and 8.7% felt more barrier related to overall domains for implementing nursing theory-based practices in the clinicals.

**Table 4:** Comparison of various domains of barrier for implementing nursing theory-based practices in the clinicals.

Domains of barrier	Mean and SD	Mean difference	t value	significance (P- Value)
Knowledge Vs Personal Interest	Knowledge	10.28+2.06	1.945	11.127
	Personal Interest	8.34+2.09		
Knowledge Vs Role of Institution	Knowledge	10.28+2.06	-0.234	-1.471
	Role of Institution	10.52+2.43		
Personal Interest Vs Role of Institution	Personal Interest	8.34+2.09	-2.179	-11.583
	Role of Institution	10.52+2.43		

\*p-value < 0.05; 95% Confidence Interval; t-test

Table 4: explained the comparison of various domains of barrier for implementing nursing theory based practices in the clinicals. In regards to knowledge vs personal interest of the participants about nursing theory, the mean of knowledge is more (10.28+2.06) than personal interest (8.34+2.09), which shows highly significant (p= .000\*). It also shows that in regard to knowledge vs role of

Institution, the mean of role of Institution is more (10.52+2.43) than knowledge about nursing theory (10.28+2.06), which is not significant. In regards to personal interest vs role of Institution of the participants about nursing theory, the mean of role of Institution is more (10.52+2.43) than personal interest (8.34+2.09) , which shows highly significant (p= .000\*).

**Table 5:** Association overall of barrier for implementing nursing theory based practices in the clinicals with the demographic profile.

Demographic profile	Category	Overall barrier			test value	significance (p- Value)
		Less	Moderate	Severe		
Age in years	18-22	5	46	1	7.689	.211#
	22-25	15	99	12		
	25-29	5	24	5		
	29 and above	1	4	1		
Gender	Female	10	126	11	13.021	.001\$
	Male	16	47	8		
Qualification	M.Sc.Nursing First year	1	11	2	15.479	.011#
	M.Sc.Nursing Second year	1	12	1		
	B.Sc.Nursing Second year	8	51	7		
	B.Sc.Nursing Third year	11	22	1		
	B.Sc.Nursing Fourth year	5	77	8		

\*p-value < 0.05; 95% Confidence Interval; #: Fisher's Exact Test; \$: Pearson Chi-Square

Table 5: Explained the association of overall of barrier for implementing nursing theory based practices in the clinicals with the demographic profile. In regards to age of the participants there is no significant association between age and overall barrier in nursing theory application in the clinicals. It also shows that in regard to gender of the participants there is significant association (p=.001) between gender and overall barrier in nursing theory application in the clinicals. It also shows that in regard to qualification of the participants there is significant association (p=.011) between qualification and overall barrier in nursing theory application in the clinicals.

reports from others study related to assessing barriers and facilitators for implementation of nursing process among nurses and identifying and overcoming barrier implementation.<sup>10-11</sup> Howsoever in this study, it revealed that even though students have knowledge, but due to lack of personal interest and role of institution in implementing nursing theory, they face barrier in implementing nursing theory based practices in the clinicals. Another research also emerged with barriers i.e. utilizing theoretical knowledge, lack of trust and perceived professional support; insufficiencies in teaching and learning process and differences between theory in lab and real clinical situations.<sup>8</sup>

**Discussion:**

The results of this study have several important implications for nursing care in this growing world. Analysis of the results of this study confirmed

**Conclusion:**

The results of this study confirmed that majority participants felt moderate and few felt more barrier related to implementing nursing theory based

practices in the clinicals. It also confirmed that they had more knowledge about nursing theory than personal interest and role of institution in implementing nursing theory. So nurse educators can play an important role in motivating students to apply nursing theory in the clinicals while taking patient care. Institution also may play major role in making policies to implement nursing theory in the clinicals by nursing teachers. By applying nursing theory patient care will enhance with scientific base and future outcomes of patient care will improve.

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**Conflict of Interest:** Authors declare no conflict of interests.

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