

Nursing Students' Readiness, Attitude, and Performance in Face-to-Face Classes

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Abstract. This descriptive-correlational and causal study at Central Mindanao University, grounded in Lev Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory and the Health Belief Model, assessed the readiness, attitude, and academic performance of 115 nursing students in face-to-face classes using universal sampling. Findings indicate a high readiness level and positive attitudes toward face-to-face learning, correlating with moderately good academic performance. Notably, a significant negative correlation exists between readiness and performance, underscoring the importance of student preparedness in enhancing educational outcomes. These insights are crucial for educators and administrators in optimizing teaching strategies and integrating technological support to improve student success. Future research should investigate specific factors influencing academic achievements and develop targeted interventions to enhance learning experiences.

Keywords: Academic performance; Attitude; Nursing education; Readiness, Social learning theory.

1.0 Introduction

The global decline in COVID-19 infections has begun to reshape educational norms, particularly prompting a transition from online to face-to-face learning modalities. This shift, while necessary, has exposed significant challenges and opportunities within the realm of nursing education. For nearly two years, the enforced distancing necessitated by online learning platforms disrupted traditional educational interactions, leading to academic stress, learning saturation, and a decline in student enthusiasm and concentration. The benefits once touted by online learning systems fell short in nurturing the critical interactive and practical skills essential in nursing education.

As infection rates stabilize, educational policies in the Philippines are adapting, with Central Mindanao University following the Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) Memorandum Order No. 01, series of 2022, which allows limited face-to-face classes across various disciplines. This policy shift signifies a crucial phase in educational recovery, aiming to recuperate the academic hours and experiential learning lost to the pandemic (Azzi-Huck & Shmis, 2020). However, the readiness of students to re-engage in physical classrooms remains a pivotal concern. Research by Razzaque and Hamdan (2019) highlights that readiness is not just about logistical preparedness but also involves motivational and emotional aspects crucial for effective learning and academic resilience. Results from Satrianta et al. (2022) add further complexity, indicating varying readiness levels among students, with notable differences between genders. Such disparities necessitate a deeper exploration into the factors contributing to effective transition and readiness among nursing students. These insights are imperative to tailor educational strategies that address both the logistical and psychological needs of students.

This study aimed to assess nursing students' readiness, attitudes, and academic performance at Central Mindanao University as they transition back to face-to-face learning environments. By integrating the theoretical underpinnings of Lev Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory with empirical evidence, this research sought to identify gaps in current educational practices and contribute to developing more effective teaching methodologies that ensured uniform learning preparation across student demographics. Ultimately, this research provided a framework for other institutions to enhance their educational practices in the post-pandemic landscape, ensuring that students are prepared logistically, emotionally, and motivationally equipped to thrive in face-to-face learning settings.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational and causal research design to evaluate nursing students' readiness, attitude, and academic performance. The descriptive component details student characteristics from online to face-to-face learning. Correlational analyses identified relationships between the independent variables (readiness and attitude) and the dependent (academic performance) variables. Causal investigations explored predictors of academic performance through controlled or quasi-experimental methods.

2.2 Research Locale

Research activities occurred at the College of Nursing, Central Mindanao University, Maramag, Bukidnon. Known for its comprehensive nursing education, the college provides well-equipped facilities, including advanced laboratories and extensive library resources.

2.3 Research Participants

The study focused on 115 third-year nursing students transitioning from online to face-to-face instruction. This specific group was chosen because they represent a critical demographic that has experienced significant shifts in learning modalities, providing valuable insights into the impact of these transitions on their academic performance and well-being. Universal sampling was employed in this study, which involves selecting all individuals from the population who meet the inclusion criteria. This approach was chosen due to the relatively small and manageable population size and the importance of obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the experiences of all third-year nursing students in this transition period.

2.4 Research Instruments

Data was collected using a structured "Nursing Student Learning Experience Questionnaire," adapted from Nkewe et al. (2021), which included ten constructs across two parts. Responses were measured on a Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" for readiness and attitude, and academic performance was assessed from "Excellent" to "Very Low." Three expert professors validated the instruments and pilot-tested with 30 students. Reliability coefficients were robust, with a Cronbach's alpha of .939 for readiness and .964 for attitude.

2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

Upon receiving approval from the university's Institutional Ethics Committee (2023-09-0934-CON), data was collected by administering the questionnaire directly to participants. This process adhered strictly to ethical standards, ensuring informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality of participant data. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics for initial assessments of readiness and attitude. Pearson's correlation analysis was then applied to explore the relationships between readiness, attitude, and academic performance. GPA and examination scores were analyzed to assess academic performance.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical guidelines approved by the Liceo de Cagayan University Institutional Ethics Committee, ensuring all participants understood the purpose of the research and the use of their data for study purposes only. Ethical standards regarding voluntary participation and data confidentiality were rigorously maintained throughout the research.

3.0 Results and Discussions

3.1 Readiness of Students for Face-To-Face Classes

Table 1 summarizes the results regarding readiness and its sub-variables among the participants. The indicators include Learning Environment, Knowledge Acquisition, Skill Development, and an overall mean readiness score.

Table 1. Result of the readiness and its sub-variables

Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
Learning Environment	3.73	Agree	High
Knowledge Acquisition	3.68	Agree	High
Skill development	4.46	Agree	High
Overall Mean	3.95	Agree	High

The study reveals that nursing students' perceived readiness in various aspects of their education is highly influenced by their learning environment. A mean score of 3.73 indicates that the learning environment is conducive, positively impacting students' academic experiences and outcomes. A mean score of 3.68 indicates a high level of readiness to acquire knowledge, indicating confidence and preparedness for their educational journey. A high mean score of 4.46 indicates a strong consensus among participants about their significant preparedness in skill development, indicating a high level of readiness for both theoretical and practical aspects of their education. A mean score of 3.95 reflects a comprehensive and well-rounded preparedness, contributing to increased student satisfaction, engagement, and potentially improved academic performance.

The findings highlight the importance of a positive learning environment, effective knowledge acquisition, and skill development in nursing education. The study's multifaceted approach to readiness, considering both theoretical and practical aspects, supports the notion that a holistic approach contributes to a high level of overall readiness among nursing students. The results provide quantitative support for the positive perceptions and high readiness levels observed across various dimensions of the nursing education experience. Aiken et al. (2020) and Khatiban and Sangestani (2019) emphasize the importance of a conducive learning environment in nursing education. Aiken et al.'s study found that well-structured, supportive, and inclusive educational settings significantly enhance student satisfaction and academic success. Khatiban and Sangestani's research also highlights the link between knowledge acquisition readiness and clinical decision-making abilities. Both studies emphasize the need for students to be confident and well-prepared for their academic and professional journey.

Practical skill development is crucial for preparing nursing students for the complexities of healthcare. Becker and Doherty (2021) emphasize the importance of practical readiness for future roles in healthcare. The current study's high mean score in Skill Development indicates a strong consensus among students about their preparedness for practical aspects of their education. Oermann et al. (2022) advocate for a balanced approach that addresses theoretical and practical readiness. They suggest holistic education is essential for developing competent and confident nursing professionals. These insights highlight the interconnectedness of the learning environment, knowledge acquisition, skill development, and overall readiness in fostering an effective educational framework that aligns with the multifaceted demands of the nursing profession.

3.2 Attitude of Students Toward Face-To-Face Classes

In terms of Motivation

Students' motivations for face-to-face classes indicate their views on nursing education (Table 2). The highest means, representing the most positive views, emphasize altruism and passion. The comment "I am excited about the prospect of helping others through nursing" (mean: 4.49) shows their passion for patient care and sense of purpose. In addition, "I am driven to improve my nursing knowledge and skills continuously" (mean: 4.43) underlines their commitment to personal and professional growth. The statement "My desire to make a difference in people's lives motivates me in my nursing journey" (mean: 4.34) emphasizes the students' altruism and dedication to effective healthcare. However, the statements with the lowest means, but still in the "Positive Attitude" category, reveal areas that need work. "I find the challenges of nursing education to be motivating" (mean: 3.69) suggests that while students enjoy obstacles, they may not be the main motivators. The low mean of "I am motivated to excel in my nursing studies" (mean: 3.99) suggests that academic aspirations may motivate

them. "My belief that nursing is a profession that aligns with my values" (mean: 4.20) indicates excellent alignment. However, it decreases significantly, requiring deeper study of field membership elements.

Table 2. The attitude of students toward face-to-face classes in terms of motivation

Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
1. I am motivated to excel in my nursing studies.	3.99	Agree	Positive attitude
2. The challenges of nursing education are motivating.	3.69	Agree	Positive attitude
3. My passion for healthcare drives my commitment to my nursing program.	4.15	Agree	Positive attitude
4. I am enthusiastic about the career opportunities that nursing offers.	4.29	Agree	Positive attitude
5. I am driven to improve my nursing knowledge and skills continuously.	4.43	Agree	Positive attitude
6. I am motivated to contribute positively to patient care.	4.45	Agree	Positive attitude
7. Nursing is a profession that aligns with my values.	4.20	Agree	Positive attitude
8. My desire to make a difference in people's lives motivates my nursing journey.	4.34	Agree	Positive attitude
9. I am excited about the prospect of helping others through nursing.	4.49	Agree	Positive attitude
10. My motivation keeps me focused on my long-term nursing goals.	4.26	Agree	Positive attitude
Overall Mean	4.23	Agree	Positive attitude

According to implications and literature, students' favorable attitudes align with the Responsive and Responsible Leadership (RRL) framework. The RRL principles emphasize positive learning environments that encourage engagement and intrinsic motivation, which explains the high ratings for statements about helping others and ongoing progress. The lower scores indicate areas for growth, underlining the need for educators to design experiences that connect obstacles to personal beliefs and demonstrate how nursing skills affect patient care.

Hutchison & Collins (2019) and Cangelosi & Gardner (2016) support the data by emphasizing the positive correlation between intrinsic motivation for helping others and academic success and connecting challenges to personal values. Hodges and Davis (2015) emphasize the importance of pleasant RRL learning settings that boost student confidence and enjoyment. To understand students' perspectives, this analysis highlights strengths and places for improvement. It emphasizes connecting educational experiences with students' intrinsic motivations and personal values, creating a good and effective learning environment in face-to-face sessions.

In terms of Overall Confidence

The analysis in Table 3 reveals student confidence in face-to-face classes, providing valuable insights into their self-perception and readiness for nursing education challenges. The three highest means indicate a strong sense of purpose and self-efficacy in their chosen profession, aligning perfectly with the Responsive and Responsible Leadership (RRL) framework's goals of fostering responsible learners who contribute positively to their communities. While still within the "Positive Attitude" range, the lowest means provide insights into areas where students might benefit from additional support and targeted interventions. For example, "I have confidence in my clinical decision-making and critical thinking skills" (mean: 3.70) suggests that students might feel somewhat apprehensive about applying their knowledge in real-world clinical situations despite their overall confidence.

Table 3. The attitude of students toward face-to-face classes in terms of overall confidence

Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
1. I am confident in my ability to succeed in my nursing program.	4.00	Agree	Positive attitude
2. I have the necessary skills to excel in my nursing coursework.	3.85	Agree	Positive attitude
3. My confidence in my nursing abilities grows with each passing semester.	3.95	Agree	Positive attitude
4. I am well-prepared for the challenges I encounter in clinical practice.	3.78	Agree	Positive attitude
5. I have confidence in my clinical decision-making and critical thinking skills.	3.70	Agree	Positive attitude
6. I am self-assured in my interactions with patients and healthcare professionals.	4.11	Agree	Positive attitude
7. I have confidence in my ability to adapt to evolving healthcare environments.	4.21	Agree	Positive attitude
8. My nursing education has boosted my overall self-confidence.	3.93	Agree	Positive attitude
9. I am confident that I will make a positive impact as a future nurse.	4.23	Agree	Positive attitude
10. Overall, I have a high level of confidence in my nursing capabilities.	3.94	Agree	Positive attitude
Overall Mean	3.97	Agree	Positive attitude

The overall high level of confidence among students aligns well with the RRL framework's focus on building student self-efficacy and confidence throughout their learning journey. The high scores for statements related to adaptability, communication skills, and future impact highlight the positive influence of nursing education on students' professional self-awareness and readiness for real-world challenges. However, the lower scores for clinical decision-making, confidence growth consistency, and self-perceived academic preparedness suggest potential areas for further support and development. Supporting studies, such as those by Giddens (2019) and Hutchison & Collins (2019), emphasize the importance of developing self-efficacy in nursing students through practical experiences and positive reinforcement. Overall, this analysis contributes to a nuanced understanding of student confidence, offering actionable insights for educators to enhance students' overall readiness and self-assurance in face-to-face nursing education.

3.3 Academic Performance of Students

The analysis in Table 4, focusing on student academic performance, reveals an overall interpretation of "Moderately Good" with an average GPA of 1.8283. It falls within the range of 1.50 to 2.0, indicating that students generally achieve slightly above-average grades. While this suggests a satisfactory academic standing, it also underscores the need for further exploration to enhance academic success.

Table 4. Academic performance of the students

	Mean	SD	Interpretation
General Weighted Average	1.8283	.26772	Moderately Good

The implications of these findings are twofold. Firstly, recognizing the "Moderately Good" performance highlights potential areas for improvement. Understanding the factors contributing to variations in student performance and implementing targeted interventions could help students reach their full potential and achieve higher academic success. Identifying specific challenges or learning gaps through student feedback, assessing teaching methods and course structures for engagement and effectiveness, and investigating external factors affecting students, such as personal or socioeconomic challenges, are crucial steps in addressing these performance variations.

Secondly, further investigation into the distribution of grades within the class is essential. Understanding whether a significant number of students are struggling with low grades or if the performance is evenly distributed within the "Moderately Good" range can help prioritize interventions and allocate resources effectively. This nuanced approach allows educators to tailor support based on the specific needs of students, whether they require additional academic assistance, personalized guidance, or support in overcoming external challenges. In alignment with supporting studies, Tsui and Cheng (2023) emphasize the significance of effective teaching strategies, personalized feedback, and academic support systems in improving student academic performance in nursing programs. Hutchison and Collins (2019) identify intrinsic motivation and supportive learning environments as key factors contributing to higher academic achievement in nursing students. Additionally, Kraiger and Cannon (2020) highlight the impact of clinical experiences on academic performance, suggesting that real-world application can enhance motivation and understanding of theoretical concepts.

3.4 Relationship Between Readiness, Attitude, and Academic Performance

Table 5. Analysis of the relationship between readiness, attitude, and performance

Academic Performance	Pearson correlation (r)	P-value	Interpretation
Readiness			
Learning	-0.750	0.032	Significant
Knowledge	0.081	0.879	Not Significant
Skills	0.096	0.792	Not Significant
Attitude			
Motivation	-0.141	0.698	Not Significant
Enjoyment	0.223	0.502	Not Significant
Overall confidence	0.219	0.377	Not Significant

There is a significant negative correlation ($r = -0.750$, $p = 0.032$) between readiness in learning and academic performance. It indicates that students who are more prepared for learning tend to have better academic performance in face-to-face classes. There are no significant correlations between readiness in knowledge ($r = 0.081$, $p = 0.879$) or skills ($r = 0.096$, $p = 0.792$) and academic performance. It suggests that readiness, specifically in learning, might be more crucial for academic success than knowledge or skills readiness. None of the attitude factors—motivation ($r = -0.141$, $p = 0.698$), enjoyment ($r = 0.223$, $p = 0.502$), and overall confidence ($r = 0.219$, $p = 0.377$)—show significant correlations with academic performance. It implies that students' attitudes towards face-to-face classes, in terms of motivation, enjoyment, and overall confidence, may not directly impact their academic performance.

The significant negative correlation between readiness in learning and academic performance highlights the importance of students being adequately prepared for learning activities in face-to-face classes. Educators should focus on strategies to enhance students' readiness for learning, which could positively influence their academic outcomes. The lack of significant correlations between attitude factors (motivation, enjoyment, and overall confidence) and academic performance suggests that while a positive attitude is desirable, it might not directly translate to better educational outcomes in face-to-face classes. It challenges the common assumption that positive attitudes always lead to better performance. Smith et al. (2018) conducted a similar study investigating the relationship between student readiness, attitude, and academic performance in traditional classroom settings. Their findings align with the current study's results, emphasizing the significance of readiness in learning for academic success. Johnson and Lee (2019) explored the impact of student attitude on academic performance in various learning environments. While their study included online learning contexts, the results regarding the lack of direct correlation between attitude factors and academic performance resonate with the findings of this study in face-to-face classes.

The study provides critical insights into nursing students' readiness, attitudes, and academic performance, leading to targeted recommendations for enhancing educational practices across multiple levels. For the university and its educators, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration is crucial; integrating diverse professional insights and academic disciplines can create a more holistic educational environment, benefitting student learning and development comprehensively. Additionally, there is a significant emphasis on integrating advanced educational technologies, such as Adaptive Learning Platforms (like Khan Academy and ALEKS) and Learning Management Systems (such as Canvas and Moodle), which can personalize the learning experience, track progress, and provide necessary support, thereby enhancing the overall educational process. Educators are also encouraged to recognize and address the diverse readiness levels among students by employing varied instructional methods and creating personalized learning plans, which can lead to more effective learning outcomes.

For nursing schools, there is a call to delve deeper into the factors influencing academic performance through comprehensive student feedback analysis. This will allow for the development of tailored interventions that address individual students' challenges and strengths. It can also aid in curriculum planning and the modification process. Moreover, expanding student support services like academic advising, counseling, and mentorship programs is recommended to provide a more supportive and empowering learning environment. Clinical instructors are advised to adopt comprehensive teaching frameworks that consider students' socioeconomic backgrounds, personal challenges, and varied learning styles. This includes implementing flexible assessment methods, such as project-based assessments and alternative ways of demonstrating skills and knowledge, to better align with diverse student readiness levels.

The study highlights the importance of self-awareness and self-adjustment for nursing students. By understanding their readiness, attitudes, and performance levels, students can identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement, thereby optimizing their learning strategies and overall educational experience. Future researchers are encouraged to identify specific factors contributing to academic success and explore new models that accurately capture students' complex experiences. It involves developing innovative interventions based on the latest educational theories and practices, aiming to continuously adapt and enhance educational methodologies. Future studies could explore the specific factors contributing to readiness and how these can be optimized to enhance student performance. Implementing longitudinal research could assess how changes in

readiness and attitude impact academic performance over time, especially as educational strategies evolve. Comparing these findings with those of other institutions or educational settings could provide broader insights into the generalizability of the results and the effectiveness of specific educational interventions across diverse contexts. Based on the identified importance of readiness, future work could develop and test specific interventions to enhance student readiness, particularly focusing on the practical application of skills and knowledge in clinical settings.

4.0 Conclusions

This study has effectively mapped the landscape of readiness, attitude, and academic performance among nursing students at Central Mindanao University as they transition back to face-to-face learning environments. The findings reveal a high level of readiness among students, which varies across different dimensions, such as the learning environment, knowledge acquisition, and skill development. This diversity in readiness levels highlights the heterogeneous nature of student preparedness, emphasizing the need for tailored educational interventions. Students demonstrated a consistently positive attitude towards face-to-face classes, reflecting in dimensions such as motivation, enjoyment, and overall confidence. This positive attitude is crucial as it sets a supportive backdrop for academic endeavors and personal growth within the educational setting. Students' academic performance was moderately good, indicating a generally satisfactory but improvable academic standing. The study identified a significant relationship between readiness, particularly in learning, and academic performance, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. This considerable correlation underscores the critical impact of readiness on educational outcomes and advocates for enhanced preparatory measures and resources to bolster student readiness.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

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7.0 Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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