

# The Role of Clinical Instructors in Guiding Nursing Students during Clinical Practice at Gunung Maria Hospital

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## Abstract

Nursing education requires the integration of theory and practice; therefore, clinical mentoring plays an essential role in shaping students' competencies. Clinical Instructors serve as educators, caregivers, and role models who directly influence the success of clinical learning. This study aims to identify and analyze the role of Clinical Instructors in implementing clinical mentoring for students at Gunung Maria Hospital, Tomohon. The study employed an analytical observational design with a cross-sectional approach, involving all Clinical Instructors who met the inclusion criteria through a total sampling technique. The instrument used was a questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability prior to administration. Data were analyzed univariately using frequency distributions. The results indicated that the majority of respondents rated the role of Clinical Instructors as good (75%), while 25% rated it as adequate. Strong performance was particularly evident in educational roles, motivational support, and professional role-modeling for students. However, several limitations were identified, including limited interaction intensity, inconsistent feedback, and restricted mentoring time due to workload demands. In conclusion, the role of Clinical Instructors has generally been implemented effectively and contributes positively to the development of nursing students' competencies, although improvements are still needed in consistency and mentoring strategies. The study recommends continuous training for Clinical Instructors on effective clinical mentoring approaches, institutional policies to optimize the instructor–student ratio, and strengthened collaboration between hospitals and educational institutions to enhance the overall quality of clinical learning.

Keywords: clinical instructor; clinical guidance; nursing education; competency development; role model

## Introduction

Nursing education not only focuses on theoretical mastery but also emphasizes students' ability to integrate knowledge into real clinical practice. Clinical practice serves as a strategic platform for developing students' professional skills, enhancing therapeutic communication, and instilling ethical attitudes in nursing care (Wardani & Arifin, 2021). In this context, the presence of Clinical Instructors (CIs) is crucial, as they function as educators, caregivers, and role models who shape the quality of students' learning experiences.

However, the implementation of clinical mentoring often faces several challenges. High nursing workloads, limited interaction time with students, and the lack of specialized training in clinical pedagogy are major barriers to optimizing the CI role (Sari et al., 2022; Rahmawati & Nurhidayah, 2023). Consequently, the quality of mentoring provided is not always consistent, which affects students' achievement of clinical competencies. Other studies have also indicated that inadequate support and ineffective supervision from CIs can reduce students' learning motivation and

satisfaction during clinical practice (Abou Hashish, 2021).

Various improvement efforts have been undertaken, including preceptorship training, the development of clinical mentoring guidelines, and policies aimed at strengthening the CI role in clinical learning systems (Shang et al., 2024; Nelwati et al., 2024; Magnúsdóttir et al., 2024). Nonetheless, field implementation still shows variation, particularly in terms of CI consistency in providing feedback, managing interactions, and creating a conducive learning environment (Hussain et al., 2022; Lejonqvist et al., 2022). Therefore, empirical studies on the implementation of the CI role within hospital settings are needed to identify the strengths and challenges encountered.

Gunung Maria Hospital Tomohon, as a clinical practice setting for nursing students, plays a vital role in providing a supportive learning environment. This study aims to identify and analyze the role of Clinical Instructors in implementing clinical mentoring at the hospital. The study includes all CIs actively mentoring students, with the expectation that the findings will inform strategies for improving the quality of

clinical mentoring through strengthened collaboration between the hospital and educational institutions.

Empirically, this study reinforces evidence that active CIs can enhance students' confidence, clinical skills, and learning satisfaction (Alemayehu & Abate, 2021; Suarni et al., 2023). Conceptually, the effectiveness of clinical mentoring is influenced by a combination of technical competence, interpersonal communication, and the CI's commitment as a role model (West et al., 2023; Setiawan et al., 2020; Labrague et al., 2021; Tight et al., 2024).

Thus, this study is expected to make a meaningful contribution to strengthening the role of Clinical Instructors as key pillars of clinical nursing education and to supporting the development of professional and competent graduates.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

This study employed an analytical observational design with a cross-sectional approach. This design was selected because it enables the researcher to analyze the role of Clinical Instructors

(CIs) at a specific point in time, making it suitable for describing the actual conditions of students' clinical mentoring.

### **Research Location, Time, and Duration**

The study was carried out at Gunung Maria Hospital Tomohon, which serves as a primary clinical practice site for nursing students. The research activities took place from June to August 2025, with a total duration of three months. Prior to the study, clinical mentoring had already been implemented; however, no systematic evaluation had been conducted regarding the CI role in clinical practice at this hospital. The findings are expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the strengths and challenges associated with the CI role, as well as recommendations for improving the quality of clinical mentoring.

### **Population and Sample**

The study population consisted of all Clinical Instructors actively mentoring students at Gunung Maria Hospital Tomohon. A total sampling technique was employed, resulting in 12 respondents. This technique was chosen because the population size was

relatively small, allowing full representation of all eligible participants.

### **Research Instrument**

The instrument used was a Clinical Instructor role questionnaire comprising 20 statement items addressing the roles of educator, caregiver, and role model. The instrument was developed based on theoretical reviews and previous research (Sari et al., 2022). Validity testing indicated that all items were valid, with correlation coefficient values greater than 0.30 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha yielded a value of 0.874, indicating excellent internal consistency.

### **Data Collection Technique**

Data were collected by distributing questionnaires to respondents along with informed consent forms to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. Each Clinical Instructor was asked to complete the questionnaire independently based on their mentoring experiences.

### **Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed univariately to describe the frequency distribution of CI roles. This analysis was used to classify the CI role categories in clinical

mentoring (good, adequate, or poor), in alignment with the research objectives (Abou Hashish, 2021). Only one main variable was examined in this study—the role of Clinical Instructors in mentoring nursing students. As no additional variables were included, bivariate analysis was not performed.

This analytical approach is consistent with the descriptive nature of the research, which focuses on presenting the frequency distribution and percentage of respondents' assessments of the Clinical Instructor role. Descriptive studies typically do not require bivariate analysis because their primary aim is to provide a detailed depiction of a phenomenon or the characteristics of a single variable (Putri & Astuti, 2022).

### **Expected Outcomes**

This study is expected to provide an empirical overview of the CI role at Gunung Maria Hospital Tomohon, identify challenges in the implementation of clinical mentoring, and propose recommendations to support improvements in the quality of students' clinical learning.

## Results

**Table 1.** Demographic Data

Demographic Data		n	%
Gender	Male	3	25
	Female	9	75
	Total	12	100
Age	30-35 years	5	41.7
	36-40 years	2	16.7
	41-45 years	4	33.3
	46-50 years	1	8.3
	Total	12	100
Education	Bachelor's degree	12	100
	Total	12	100
Work experience	1-5 years	1	8.3
	6-10 years	1	8.3
	11-15 years	4	33.3
	16-20 years	1	8.3
	21-25 years	3	25
	26-30 years	2	16.7
	Total	12	100

Based on Table 1, the results show that most respondents were female (75%), while only 25% were male. This indicates that the Clinical Instructor (CI) profession at Gunung Maria Hospital Tomohon is still predominantly occupied by women. Most respondents were in the 30–35 age group (41.7%), followed by those aged 41–45 years (33.3%), 36–40 years (16.7%), and a smaller proportion aged 46–50 years (8.3%). This distribution suggests that the majority of CIs are in early to middle adulthood, an age range typically associated with productivity and sufficient clinical experience to supervise students effectively.

All respondents (100%) held a bachelor's degree with backgrounds in nursing, midwifery, or pharmacy. This aligns with competency standards that require Clinical Instructors to have at least an undergraduate degree to provide professional clinical mentoring. Respondents with 11–15 years of work experience constituted the largest proportion (33.3%), followed by those with 21–25 years (25%). A number of respondents also had long-term experience, such as 26–30 years (16.7%), while those with 1–5 years and 6–10 years of experience each represented only 8.3%. This indicates that most CIs possess moderate to extensive work experience, which serves as a valuable asset in delivering effective clinical mentoring.

**Table 2.** The Role of Clinical Instructors in Students' Clinical Mentoring

Categories of the Clinical Instructor Role	n	%
Good	9	75
Fair	3	25
Poor	0	0
Total	12	100

Based on Table 2, the findings show that most respondents (75%) rated the role of the Clinical Instructor in the implementation of clinical mentoring as good, while 25% rated it as adequate.

This indicates that, overall, the role of the Clinical Instructor is perceived positively by students.



**Figure 1.** Illustrates the data collection process carried out in the clinical setting at Gunung Maria Hospital Tomohon

## Discussion

The results of the analysis of the Clinical Instructor (CI) role in student clinical mentoring at Gunung Maria Hospital Tomohon show that most respondents (70.0%) rated the CI role in the implementation of clinical mentoring as good, while 24.0% rated it as adequate and only 6.0% rated it as poor. These findings indicate that the CI role in providing clinical mentoring has been carried out effectively, particularly in the

educational, facilitative, and role-modeling aspects for nursing students.

A strong CI role in clinical mentoring is essential, as it enhances students' understanding of theory applied in practice while also fostering confidence and learning motivation. This is in line with the study by Hussain et al. (2022), which found that active CIs who serve as educators, motivators, and facilitators can improve students' clinical skills and reduce their anxiety when encountering real patients.

Furthermore, Alemayehu and Abate (2021) emphasized that students who receive intensive mentoring from CIs are better able to develop therapeutic communication skills, empathy, and clinical decision-making abilities. This demonstrates that CIs function not only as supervisors but also as role models for nursing professionalism.

The findings of this study are further supported by Suarni et al. (2023), who reported that an optimal CI role can create a conducive clinical learning environment. Such an environment positively influences students' satisfaction with clinical learning and supports the achievement of expected competencies.

However, the 24.0% of respondents who rated the CI role as adequate and the 6.0% who rated it as poor indicate that there are still aspects requiring improvement. Factors contributing to this may include limited CI time for mentoring, large student-to-instructor ratios, and inconsistencies in providing feedback. Abou Hashish (2021) also noted that insufficient support and supervision from CIs can reduce students' learning motivation and lead to dissatisfaction with clinical learning.

In conclusion, although the majority of students rated the CI role as good, the findings of this study highlight the need for continuous strengthening of CI performance. CIs are expected not only to be present administratively but also to fully embody their roles as educators, caregivers, and professional role models in clinical practice.

## **Conclusion**

The role of Clinical Instructors (CIs) at Gunung Maria Hospital Tomohon is largely categorized as good. This indicates that the clinical mentoring provided aligns with students' learning needs, although challenges related to workload and limited time still persist.

The CI role has a positive impact on students' skills, confidence, and overall satisfaction. It is recommended that educational institutions provide continuous training for CIs on clinical mentoring methods, therapeutic communication, and strategies for delivering effective feedback. The hospital is expected to support these efforts through policies that ensure balanced workloads, and CIs are encouraged to improve the consistency of their mentoring. Future research is recommended to include additional variables, such as institutional support and student satisfaction.

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### Conflict of Interests Statement

The author declares that although this study was funded by the Ratna Miriam Foundation, there is no conflict of interest, as the foundation had no involvement in the research design, data collection, analysis, or interpretation of the study findings.

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