

## ESP: Analyzing Communicative Needs of Nursing Students in Clinical Setting

Kashifa Khatoon<sup>1\*</sup>, Shafqat Hussain Zaidi<sup>2</sup> & Attia Nasim<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>English Lecturer, Saida Waheed FMH College of Nursing, School of Health Sciences, Shadman Lahore, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup>PhD Scholar, University of Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

<sup>3</sup>Nursing Instructor, Sir Gangaram Hospital, Lahore, Pakistan

**Corresponding Author:** Kashifa Khatoon, E-mail: kashifa\_ktn@hotmail.com

### ARTICLE INFO

Received: July 24, 2019

Accepted: August 27, 2019

Published: September 30, 2019

Volume: 2

Issue: 5

DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2019.2.5.5

### KEYWORDS

*Communicative Needs, Basic Diploma in General Nursing, Post RN BSN.*

### ABSTRACT

The study identifies the communicative needs of Pakistani nursing students and their priorities of needs of Pakistani nursing students? 2. Does speaking skills have high priority for the nursing students in clinical setting? Quantitative research method was used. 120 nursing students have been randomly selected as the sample of the study from six nursing colleges of Lahore. The sample was further classified as undergraduate (diploma) nursing students (n = 60), and graduate (Post RN) students (n = 60). 20 respondents have been selected from each nursing college. Closed ended questionnaire was used as research instrument and developed on a five-point Likert-scale. Its reliability was calculated by Cronbach's Alpha. ANOVA and t-test were used to find out the mean difference of the score of the respondents. The study concludes that speaking skills have priority over others language skills. Diploma and B.Sc. nursing students face similar language difficulties in clinical setting. They face the problem in communication during ward rounds of other health care professionals. Their communicative needs vary from age, class, and clinical experience.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The current study falls in the area of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which Hutchinson and Waters (1987) identify as an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning.

In 1960s ESP practitioners believed their main job was to teach the technical vocabulary of a given field or profession. For instance, if you are teaching nursing students, your task is to teach them the registers of nursing. At the same time, the movements in ESOL (English for speakers of other language) towards learner-centered teaching bridges ESP with the focus on the needs of learners and needs analysis as the foundation of course design. Later, discourse and genre analysis and linguistic corpora began to inform the field (Widdowson: 1981). According to Richards & Schmidt (2010) English for Specific Purposes is "a language teaching course in which the syllabus and objectives of the course are designed according to the specific needs of a certain group of learners" ESP enables the

learners to use English in academic (students of different fields), professional (people of different professions such as doctors, engineers, and nurses), or workplace (clinical for nurses) settings (Saragih, 2014).

Dudley-Evans (2001) argued that "ESP is a materials-led field. Most materials, however, are prepared by individual teachers for particular situations. He further states that teaching of English for specific (ESP) has been seen as a separate activity within English language teaching (ELT). It is believed that for some of its teaching, ESP has developed its methodology, and its research draws from various disciplines in addition to applied linguistics. This is the key distinguishing characteristic of ESP. It sometimes moves away from the established trends in general ELT; it has always been with need analysis and preparing learners to communicate effectively in the tasks prescribed by their field of study or work situation. Hutchinson and Walters (1987) state "Tell me what you need English for, and I will tell you the English that you need" (p.8). The emphasis of ELT is always on the practical outcome. The theory of ESP could be outlined based on the specific nature of the texts that learners need knowledge of or need-related nature of teaching.

The teaching of English for specific (ESP) has been seen as a separate activity within English language teaching (ELT). It is believed that for some of its teaching ESP has developed its own methodology and its research draws on research from various disciplines in addition to applied linguistics. This is the key distinguishing characteristic of ESP. It sometimes moves away from the established trends in general ELT; it has always been with need analysis and preparing learners to communicate effectively in the tasks prescribed by their field of study or work situation. The emphasis of ELT is always on practical outcome. The theory of ESP could be outlined based on specific nature of the texts that learners need knowledge of or need-related nature of teaching.

Communication in nursing profession regardless of the medium through which it takes place. The emphasis is on the verbal and/or non-verbal language required to deliver the message in a manner that is patient centered, respectful, genuine, and therapeutic. This requires a level of awareness, not just of the specific nature and purpose of the message but most importantly it requires knowledge of one's self. Communication is about interacting with people and, therefore, is at the core of nursing. For nursing care to be effective and therapeutic, the communication skills used by nurses need to be patient centered. This requires a continuing awareness by nurses as individual of their contribution to interaction that they have not just with patients but also with relatives, friends, other health care professionals and health care staff. Nurses often find it difficult to define their role but nonetheless it is clear that nurses spend more time with patients than any health care professionals and coordinate their care by communicating closely with these other professionals. Without attempting to define all aspects of nursing, communication is without doubt an integral part of the nurse's role.

We regard communication in nursing as different from communication in other health care professionals. It is unique, not because of the communication skills required, since any professional working with the public needs to have effective communication skills, but rather because of the focus and emphasis of communication in the professional practice of nursing. Nurses are at the coal-face of the health care services. They spend more time with patient than perhaps any other health care professionals. (Canale: 1983)

The focus of this time is often coordinating, explaining and delivering patient care using therapeutic communication. The emphasis of this time is (or should be) facilitating individual patient's

needs. It is widely recognized that communication is practically unavoidable and is to do with people interacting and developing relationships and working and living together. Therefore, it follows that as nursing is about helping people, the communication of information and feeling between the nurse and the patient and the nurse and other health care professionals is an integral part of how nurses do their job.

The need for effective nurse, patient communication is perhaps obvious. Good communication may boost patient recovery; whereas poor communication can be distressing for both nurse and patient and might even have tragic consequences. There is also evidence to suggest that effective communication between nurse and patient is a critical factor in the patient's perceived quality of care. The fundamental importance of nurse, patient communication suggests the need for effective pre-service and in-service training to equip nurses with the skills to communicate effectively with the range of patients that they will probably encounter. In an effort to inform the content of pre-service and in-service training, it would seem useful to gain a better understanding of the perceptions and experiences of nurses in communicating with patients, especially patients who are unable to speak because of a disability resulting in severe communication impairment.

There is general consensus that effective communication in health care setting is integral to good nursing practice. In recognition of the importance of effective nurse, patient communication, student nurses receive a considerable amount of pre-service training on generic communication skills (Robinson 1991). One might hope that most nurses could apply these generic skills with good effect even when the patient has a disability that renders them unable to speak. Therefore, the study has been designed to identify the communicative needs of nursing students, find out priorities of nursing students regarding language skills to fulfill their communicative needs, identify the problems nursing students face in their communication in clinical setting and explore practical application of nursing English syllabus in clinical setting.

English is dominating at national and international level in all domains of life. New learners of English have got much importance because they are required specific English according to their profession and demands of the markers. The language teaching professionals have developed the courses to fulfill the

needs of the learners. However, students of professional studies are facing problems particularly the students of second/foreign language because the designing of specific course in the ESP context is not fulfilling the needs of the students. One of the most notable points is that the students of second/foreign language are meeting/getting their targets in an international market. (Morse: 1997)

The professional students need to develop English proficiency and the ability in order to execute it in personal and group communication activities in both oral and written forms. The core subject teachers, students often find that the student's ability to produce their own language to communicate in English is fairly feeble and quite incomprehensible. The discontent of their language and style in terms of rhetoric devices and discourse elements are often seen to be omitted and literally ambiguous. (Chomsky: 1965) This study aims at to identify the communicative needs of nursing students in order to suggest some guidelines to improve their spoken and execute the ability (oral communication) to pacify their professional demands. Needs assessment plays a significant role in the process of designing and carrying out any language course, whether English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or general English course.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The research is quantitative in nature therefore; the researchers used simple random technique to select the sample of the study. The population of this study consists of all female nursing students of basic nursing diploma & post RN studying English at the following Nursing schools/ colleges of Lahore city. Saida Waheed FMH College of Nursing (n=20), College of Nursing Allama Iqbal Medical College (n=20), College of Nursing, National Hospital

(n=20), Nursing School of Sir Gangaram Hospital (n=20), Nursing School of Services Hospital (n=20) and University of Lahore (n=20).

The researchers selected 120 respondents as the sample of the study from the above-mentioned Nursing schools/ colleges of Lahore city. A survey method was employed in order to obtain data from as many subjects as possible. In order to gather information related to the research questions, the researcher distributed closed ended Questionnaire to 120 nursing students in Lahore. Several statistical procedures were used to analyze the quantitative data. Coding techniques were then employed for analyzing the data, the responses from the participants. The researchers used closed ended questionnaire as an instrument to collect the responses of the samples

The questionnaire consisted of 20 statements and developed on a five-point Likert-scale system ranging from 1 to 5. Each statement is followed by the five options for each question which is closest to the views about that statement. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree. This study simplified and modified the wording of the scales for easy understanding of the scale.

The researchers personally visited every nursing school and college/ University, met the sample and distributed the questionnaire to 20 females nursing students, graduate (n=10) and undergraduate (n=10) for the data collection and the return rate of the questionnaire was 100%

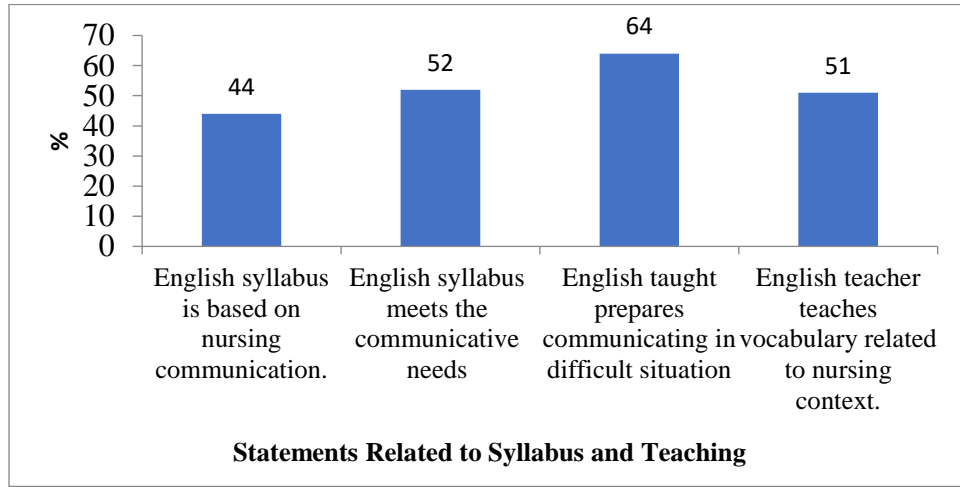
## 3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The observations collected through the questionnaire are given in the bar charts below.

**Table 1:** Syllabus and Teaching

Q.#	Statements	SDA	DA	N	A	SA	%age
1	Our English syllabus is based on nursing communication.	29	48	0	18	4	44
2	Our English syllabus meets the communicative needs of nursing students	13	53	0	32	3	52
10	English taught in the class prepares us communicating in difficult situation at clinical setting.	4	41	3	36	17	64
18	Our English teacher teaches us vocabulary related to nursing context.	23	42	0	30	6	51

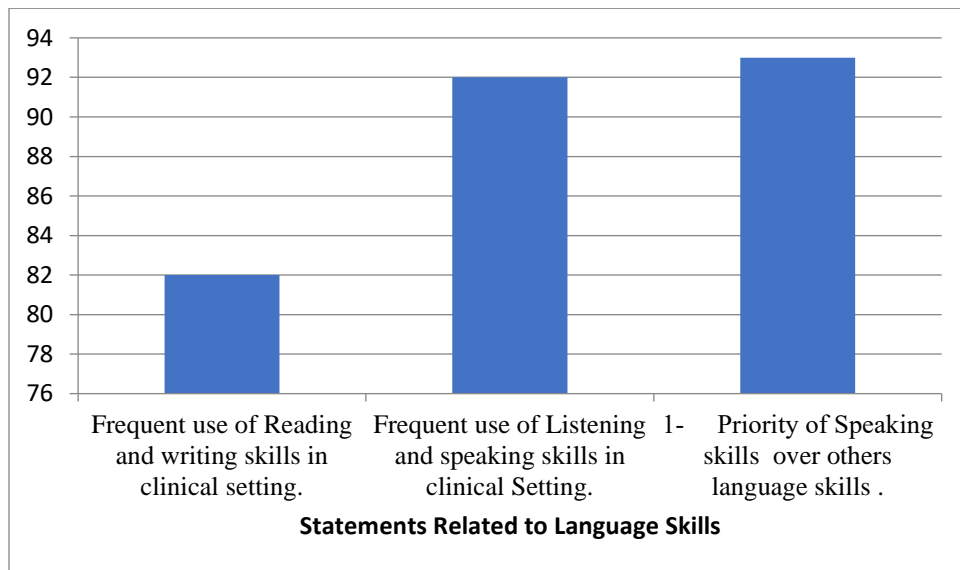
**Table1.1:** Statements Related to Syllabus and Teaching



**Table 2:** Language Skills

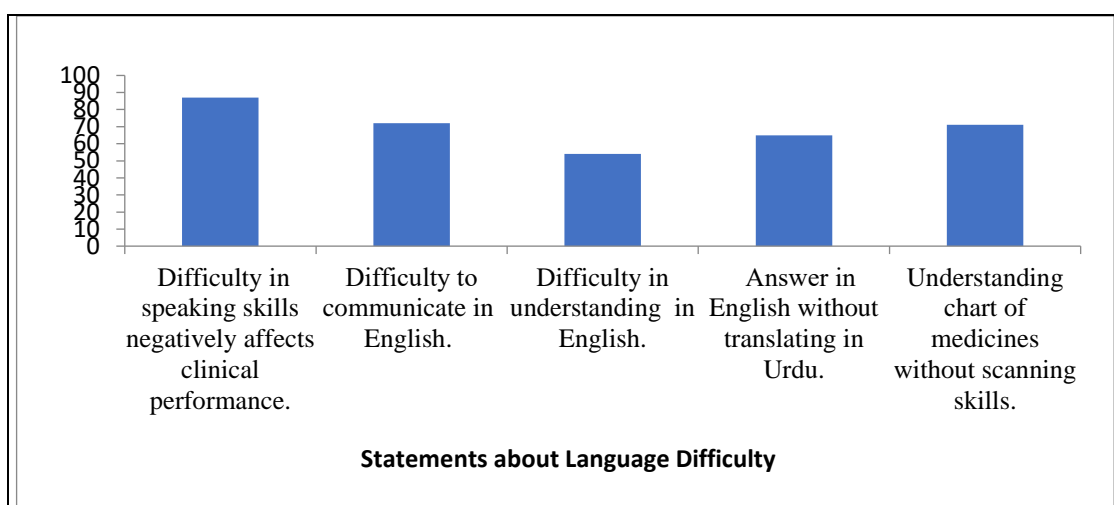
Q.#	Statements	SDA	DA	N	A	SA	%
3	Reading and writing skills are frequently used in clinical setting.	3	5	1	63	28	82
4	Listening and speaking skills are frequently used in clinical Setting.	0	0	0	38	62	92
5	Speaking skills have priority over others language skills in clinical context.	1	0	0	34	65	93

**Table 2.1** Statements Related to Language Skills



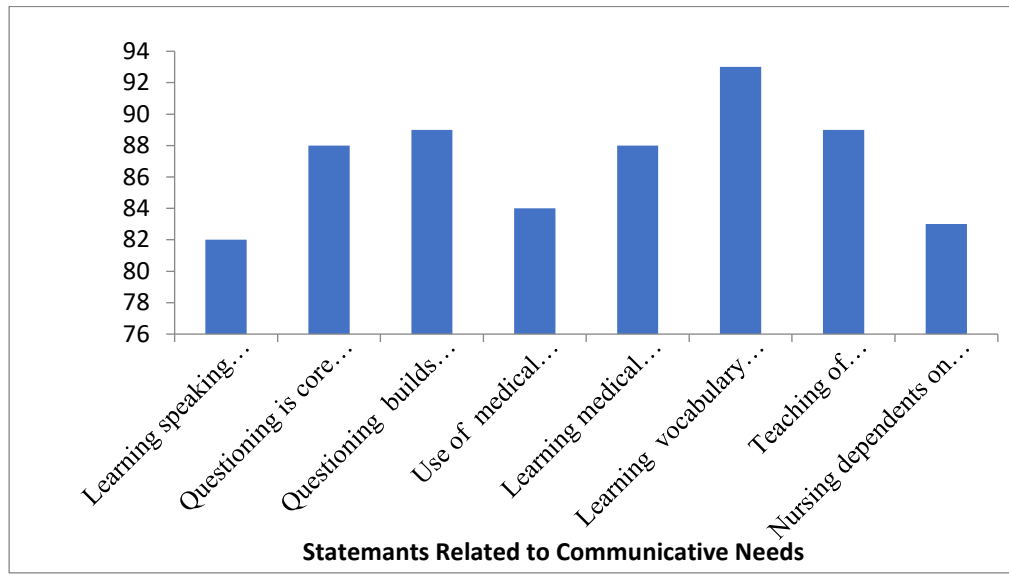
**Table 3:** Language Difficulty

Q.#	Statements	SDA	DA	N	A	SA	%
7	Difficulty in speaking skills negatively affects my clinical performance.	1	7	0	42	51	87
11	I find difficulty to communicate in English to the doctors during my ward round.	7	19	0	55	19	72
12	I feel difficulty in understanding what others say in English.	18	43	1	30	8	54
15	I can easily answer in English without translating in Urdu.	7	34	3	42	14	65
16	I can understand chart of particular medicines without scanning skills.	7	24	0	48	21	71

**Table 3.1:** Statements about Language Difficulty**Table 4:** Communicative Needs

Q.#	Statements	SDA	DA	N	A	SA	%
6	I need to learn speaking skills before learning reading and writing skills.	2	9	0	56	33	82
8	Questioning is core communication skill I need to learn.	2	2	0	47	50	88
9	Questioning helps to build rapport between the nurse and the doctor.	0	1	2	48	49	89
13	I can use medical terminology in spoken form.	0	8	1	58	33	84
14	I want to learn medical vocabulary in spoken form.	0	6	1	43	50	88
17	It is important to learn vocabulary used in clinical setting.	0	1	1	32	67	93
19	Professional English should be taught instead of General English in nursing classes.	0	7	0	37	57	89
20	Nursing is highly dependent on accurate verbal communication.	4	13	3	24	57	83

**Table 4.1:** Statements Related to Communicative Needs

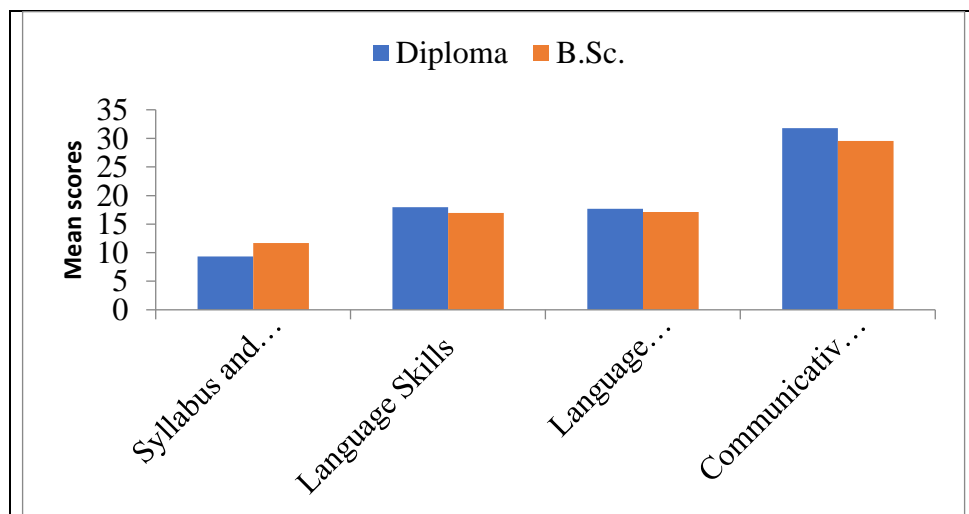


**Table.5:** Class wise comparison of mean difference of communicative needs of nursing students.

	Diploma		B.ScN		t	df	P
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Syllabus and Teaching	9.35	2.44	11.70	3.26	4.47	118	<.001
Language Skills	17.97	1.18	16.93	1.59	4.04	118	<.001
Language Difficulties	17.65	2.18	17.12	2.64	1.21	118	.231
Communicative Needs	31.77	2.27	29.57	3.03	4.50	118	<.001

P<.05 mean significant difference

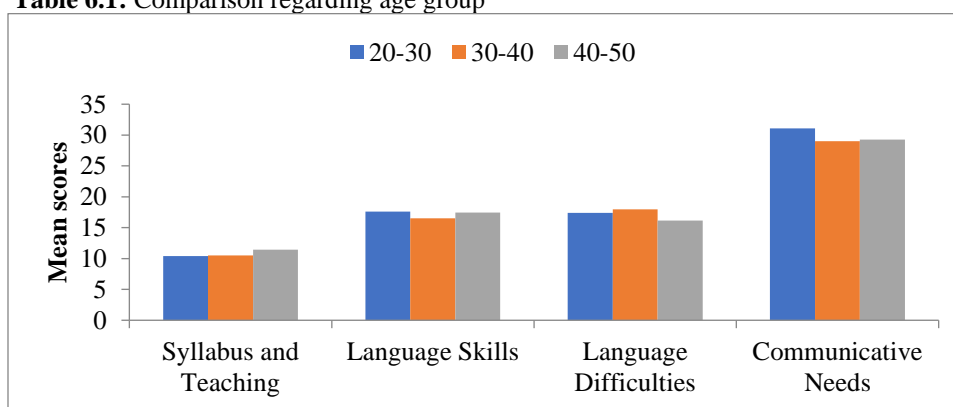
**Table 5.1:** Class wise Comparison



**Table 6:** Comparison of mean difference of communicative needs of nursing Students regarding their age groups

Class	Age(years)						F	P
	20-30		30-40		40-50			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Syllabus and Teaching	10.40	3.03	10.50	3.12	11.43	3.60	0.37	0.692
Language Skills	17.61	1.45	16.50	1.59	17.43	1.13	4.01	0.021*
Language Difficulties	17.40	2.50	17.94	2.08	16.14	2.12	1.33	0.269
Communicative Needs	31.06	2.86	29.00	2.73	29.29	1.98	4.62	0.012*

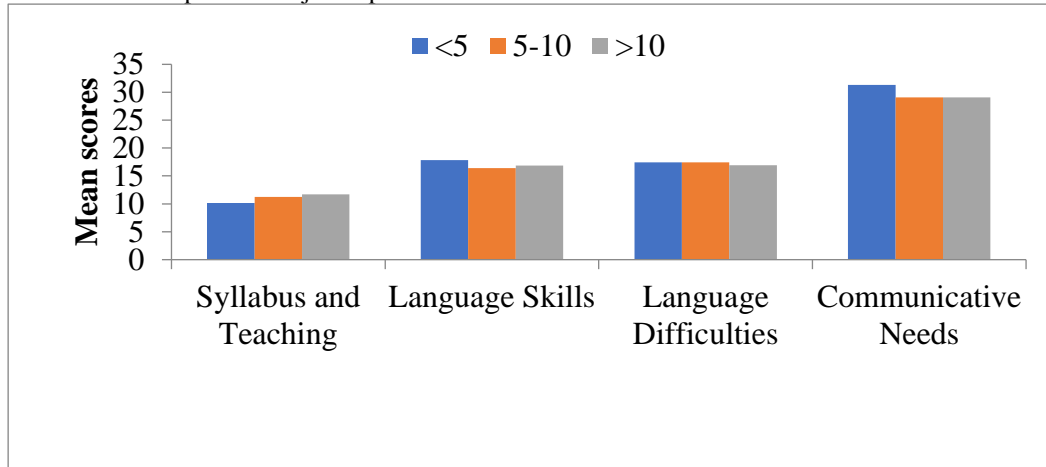
\*P&lt;.05

**Table 6.1:** Comparison regarding age group**Table7:** Comparison of mean difference in communicative needs of nursing Students regarding their Job Experience.

	Job Experience						F	P
	<5		5-10		>10			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Syllabus and Teaching	10.15	2.93	11.27	3.22	11.69	3.73	2.21	0.114
Language Skills	17.81	1.28	16.41	1.79	16.85	1.28	10.37	<.001
Language Difficulties	17.44	2.51	17.45	2.09	16.92	2.56	0.26	0.772
Communicative Needs	31.33	2.59	29.05	3.57	29.08	1.61	8.68	<.001

\*P&lt;.05

**Table 7.1:** Comparison on job experience



The results show that majority of the students’ face the problems in communication that is vary from age, level and their experience. The results show that majority of students respond to learn the reading and writing before speaking.

**4. CONCLUSION**

English communication skills are major components for nursing students and the nursing colleges must ensure the communicative needs of the nursing students. Speaking skills have priority over others language skills in clinical context. Diploma and B.Sc. nursing students have different use of language skills in clinical setting. Thus, we can say use of language skills among nursing students varies from age to age, class to class, experience to experience and college to college. Job experience of nursing students also affects the use and priority of Language skills of the nursing students in clinical settings. It is concluded that difficulty in speaking skills negatively affects the clinical performance of nursing students and they face difficulty to communicate in English to the doctors during their ward round.

It is concluded both the classes Diploma and B.Sc. nursing students face similar language difficulties in clinical settings. Thus, all nursing students face similar Language difficulties irrespective of their age, Class, job experience and college.

Nursing students need to learn speaking skills before learning reading and writing skills. They want to learn medical vocabulary in spoken form, they also want to learn the vocabulary used in clinical setting. It is concluded that nursing students need to learn professional English instead of general English in nursing classes.

Diploma and B.Sc. nursing students have different communicative needs used in clinical settings. Thus, we can say age and job experience affect communicative needs of the nursing students. Thus, we can say communicative needs of nursing students vary from age to age, class to class, experience to experience and college to college.

Communication skills in nursing play a vital role in research and improve nursing quality of health care in clinical setting. It develops the confidence of the nursing students in building rapport among others health care professionals. Students may face difficulty in communicating with different health care professionals like doctors during clinical practice. Therefore, a major component on communication skills is required to add up in the syllabus of the nursing students.

**5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Keeping in view the findings of the study, the researchers suggest the following recommendations to address, and meet the communicative needs of nursing students.

- English syllabus for nursing students should be designed to meet their communicative needs.
- Clinical contextual based vocabulary should be taught to the nursing students to meet their communicative needs.
- English teachers must expose variety of medical vocabulary used in spoken and written form to develop nursing students’ automaticity.
- Clinical contextual based speaking skill should be taught to nursing students in



- order to fulfil their communicative needs.
- Role-plays should be used to teach speaking skills so that nursing students may not face difficulty in communicating in English with the doctors during ward rounds.
  - Maximum opportunities of speaking skills should be given to the nursing students since it has a high priority over other language skills.
  - Skimming and scanning skills should be taught to nursing students to read the chart of the particular medicines.
  - Questioning skills should be taught to the nursing students as it helps to build rapport between the nurse and the doctor.
  - As nursing students want to learn professional English, therefore, it should be taught to the nursing students instead of General English in nursing classes.

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