

Beyond the Classroom: A Phenomenological Study of Family Dynamics Shaping Academic Journeys of Married Female Student Nurses in Kuwait

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Abstract

Aim: Describe the lived experiences of married female student nurses in the College of Nursing while managing together their families and study. **Method:** Using a phenomenology approach in-depth interviews were conducted with nine female student nurses who were married. Data were analyzed following Giorgi's principles of data analysis. **Results:** The major family factors that affected the learning of married, female student nurses were childcare, supporting children in their studies and home maintenance. They were facing challenges of lack of time to study, lack of family support, and pregnancy. The impacts were role conflicts, poor concentration and more effort to study, lower academic performance, situational crisis, and health impacts. They used both problem focused and emotion focused strategies to manage the challenges faced in their studies. Problem focused strategies included studying at night, using personal learning strategies, and utilizing available family support. Emotion focused strategies included accepting the situation, discussing problems with teachers and persistence. **Conclusion:** Family factors are a major source of stress affecting the learning of female adult learners. A sympathetic approach of the educators might enhance the psychological well-being of these students.

Keywords

Family Factors, Adult Students, Nursing Education, Academic Performance

1. Introduction

Shortage of health care workers, especially nurses, is a worldwide problem [1].

According to 2022 World Bank Data the ratio of nurses and midwives in Kuwait is only 67.1/10,000 population [2]. Kuwait heavily depends on foreign nurses for health care as the number of Kuwaiti nurses is incredibly low. As reported in Kuwait Times, official sources quoted “The Ministry of Health has 22,021 nurses working in its hospitals and centers, including 1004 citizens, constituting 4.6 percent, and 21,017 expatriates representing 95.4 percent” [3]. Thus, the country is desperately in need of nurses who are Kuwaiti nationals. Researchers from Saudi Arabia have reported that the negative social image of nursing is a barrier to joining the nursing profession for young individuals [4].

Nursing in Kuwait follows global trends, with women representing the majority of the workforce. According to the nursing department in the Ministry of Health Kuwait, 77% of nurses working are female and only 23% are male [5]. The student nurse’s population in the College of Nursing (CoN) reflects this difference. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that influence the learning of adult female nursing students to facilitate better educational outcomes.

Research question

What are the family factors experienced by female student nurses that were perceived by them as challenges to their academic performance?

This study defined family factors as different variables within a family that can influence the life and character of its members. These included their responsibilities in a married life such as pregnancy, child-care, home maintenance, and factors such as availability of time to study and family support.

2. Review of Literature

Researchers have identified that major stressors faced by the adult learners are challenges within themselves, time, finances, families, and health [6] [7]. Academic challenges, social challenges, time management challenges, financial challenges and health challenges were found to be common among the married students at higher education in Pakistan [8]. According to the Nursing Universal Retention and Success (NURS) model, multidimensional factors affect undergraduate and graduate nursing student retention and success [9]. This model has defined environmental factors, as factors external to the academic process that may influence students’ academic performance and retention and include financial status, family financial support, family emotional support, family responsibilities, childcare arrangements, family crisis, employment hours, employment responsibilities, encouragement by outside friends, living arrangements, and transportation” [10]-[12]. Shared responsibilities and distractions in a collective household environment were significantly associated with higher cognitive failure levels among adult learners in higher education [13]. Factors of family conflict, obligations and expectations were associated with significantly higher odds of common mental disorders among students [14] [15]. Studies on the inter role conflict among the domains of work, family, and school have shown that family factors and academic workload were positively associated with depression and anxiety

scores among college students [15] [16].

An Australian study also has reported that nontraditional cohort of student nurses had higher perceived stress scores and lower psychological wellbeing, compared to the younger groups [17]. Societal expectations regarding gender roles have placed added pressure on married female students to juggle domestic and academic responsibilities simultaneously, often resulting in disruptions to their learning [18]. Married women who take on the additional role of student are interrupted from learning by household labor [10]. A study from Ghana found that students who were mothers faced academic challenges such as inability to attend lectures and tutorials regularly because of tiredness, sickness of child, taking baby to child welfare clinic and lack of lactation rooms for breastfeeding of babies. These students were also unable to perform their childcare functions adequately [19]. Thus, it is clear that women learners experience high levels of conflict due to their internalization of the intensive roles as spouses, breadwinners, responsibilities of childcare, and ideal student roles [12] [20]-[23].

Studies have identified family commitments, e.g., pregnancy, caring for children or elderly people, are sources of academic stress [24]. Higher levels of family distress would impact emotional negativity and self-esteem which would in turn drive lower academic performance [25]. Academic failure has a strong impact on students, their families, the teaching faculties and the community, and its prevention is a challenge in countries with a shortage of nurses [26].

High stress levels in a student nurse might affect memory, concentration, and problem-solving ability, and might lead to decreased learning, coping, academic performance, and retention [25] [27]. Student nurses use both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping skills to manage stressors that could impact their learning [7] [23]. Presence of supportive adults in their lives contribute to higher levels of psychological and behavioral engagement with schooling [28].

A study from Ghana showed student mothers relied on their husbands, relatives, care givers or elder siblings to take care of their babies while they learn. Sending children early to childhood education centers was another strategy used by them. Also, they trusted in God amid the challenges militating against their family and academic life [19]. Other researchers have reported female participants wanted affordable on-campus childcare. Many felt disadvantaged compared to traditional students and they proposed exemptions from attendance policies, course credit for work experience, and opportunities to “complete courses in their own time”. Women in particular felt that their professors should be more receptive to their family-related needs [29].

Researches have shown that the most important factor in sustaining students in higher education is the meaning they attach to completing their degree. For most women, obtaining a degree was more than a means to an end; it was transformative. It would signify that they were productive, capable of achievement, and deserving of respect. Hence, the way to ensure success of students in higher education is first to know what motivates and sustains them in the learning process [29].

All learners learn best when they are motivated. Enhancing conducive learning environment for the adult learners would ensure good achievement in the area of study.

The purpose of this study is to understand the difficulties married female student nurses in the College of Nursing endure while managing together their families and study. It is expected that getting more help from family, peers, schools, and communities will lead to better educational outcomes for these students.

3. Background

The College of Nursing Kuwait offers both associate and baccalaureate nursing degree programs. Baccalaureate program has three options—Generic, School Health Nursing and Post-basic (RN-BSN). The student population is diverse in terms of gender, age, nationality, and work experience. This study focusses on the female baccalaureate student nurses. Many students are married at the time of enrollment into the nursing program or get married while studying.

The legal age for marriage has been raised to 18 years for both men and women in 2025. However, it was 15 for girls and 17 for boys at the time of the study [30]. The admission requirement for nursing programs is high school graduation. Student nurses at the time of admission are 17 - 18 years or older. Therefore, marriage, pregnancy and child rearing are common among the students. The graduation of many students is often delayed due to these factors. On time program completion of the students is only 15% (BSN Department, 2025). There were approximately 450 students enrolled in the BSN program at the time of data collection which was at the end of spring semester of 2022-23 academic year. Approximately 65% were female students. This study was conducted to understand the difficulties married female student nurses in the College of Nursing endure while managing together their families and study. It is expected that increasing awareness of these challenges would help in getting more support from family, peers, schools, and communities. Also, it will lead to better educational outcomes for these students.

4. Methods

4.1. Ethical Considerations

Permission obtained from the Research Committee of the College of Nursing. The findings are beneficial to promote student outcomes and program outcomes. Researchers approached each respondent and asked for their willingness to participate in this research. Students who agreed to participate signed a written consent expressing their willingness to participate. Participation was voluntary. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity, all identifying information, including personal names and institutional identifiers, were removed from the transcripts. Findings are reported without names.

4.2. Design

This study used phenomenology of practice design using in-depth interviews and

following Giorgi's principles of data analysis. A qualitative research design was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and contextual factors influencing academic performance. This approach enabled understanding of the "what" and "how" of phenomena, for developing a deeper understanding and empathy in professional and daily life. It is particularly relevant to professional fields like nursing and education, helping educators and practitioners understand their interactions and decisions.

4.3. Data Collection

Population: Female student nurses enrolled in the BSN program. Approximately 300 female students were enrolled at the time of the study.

Inclusion criteria: Female students enrolled in the BSN program, married and having at least one child.

Sample: The data were collected from nine female students, who met the inclusion criteria, during the spring semester of academic year 2022-23. Purposive sampling was used in selecting the research participants. Year 3 and year 4 students meeting the inclusion criteria were selected for data collection. At this level the students were familiar with the academic environment and challenges. Both students, those who were academically performing well and poorly performing were carefully selected.

After getting the written consent of each participant, in-depth interviews were conducted. Even though data saturation was attained after five interviews researchers continued interviewing to include students from all three BSN program options. This approach enabled in-depth understanding of experiences of students from different age groups and different program options such as basic and RN-BSN options. All interviews were conducted by the primary researcher and at least two members of the research team. Interviews were conducted in the faculty meeting room providing adequate privacy for the participants. Interviews were audio-recorded using an iPhone with participants' consent. Also, they were written down by one of the researchers during the interview. Each written response was verified with the respondent immediately after documenting. The interviews ranged in duration from 45 to 60 minutes. All recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, and transcripts were reviewed twice by each member in the interview team to ensure accuracy. The transcripts and preliminary findings were reviewed with the participants (member checking) to ensure accuracy and credibility of the data.

Six questions were used to guide the interview.

- 1) What are the major family responsibilities you have to manage along with your studies?
- 2) What are the challenges arising from these responsibilities that could influence your studies?
- 3) How did these challenges affect you and your studies?
- 4) How do you manage these challenges?

- 5) What motivates you to complete your studies?
- 6) What support do you expect from the college?

5. Analysis

Firstly, each researcher independently read the whole transcript to get general understanding. Then, the researchers read it together. First-level coding began in the next step, when the transcript was read a third time. Segments of transcripts where a transition in meanings occurred were identified and labelled as meaning units. In the third step, second level coding started. Similar-meaning units were inductively clustered, collapsed and labelled as conceptual categories with a level of abstraction that best represented the subjective reflections described by the participants. In the final step of the coding process, all the conceptual categories collapsed and synthesized into themes that communicated the shared insights about experiences revealed by the participants. In second and third steps all the four researchers sat together, reflected on their views and conflicts were resolved by discussing. The essential categories and themes were constantly scrutinized, and revisions were made until the whole process of analysis was completed. The tracking of data aggregates, instances of data, and abstractions resulting from inductive thinking were done using codebooks. Two colleagues who are experts in the field reviewed the recorded data, codes and themes discussed; and agreed upon the validity of themes.

6. Findings

This study included nine female students, all Kuwaiti nationals studying in the BSN program. Participants belonged to all three program options—BSN Generic (4), BSN School Health Nursing (3) and BSN Post-basic (2). The mean age of the participants was 27.11 ± 5.37 years with a range of 21 - 38. All the participants were with at least one child at the time of the interview. The participants' demographic details and findings are given below (**Table 1**).

Table 1. Demographic details of participants.

Student Code	Age	Number of kids	Program option	Level
Student 1	30	One child	Generic	Graduation
Student 2	26	Three children	Generic	Graduation
Student 3	24	Four children	Generic	Graduation
Student 4	26	Three children	School Health Nursing	Graduation
Student 5	22	Two children	School Health Nursing	Graduation
Student 6	25	One child	School Health Nursing	Graduation
Student 7	21	Three children	Generic	Year 3
Student 8	32	Three children	Post-basic	Graduation
Student 9	38	Five children	Post-basic	Graduation

6.1. Major Family Responsibilities Managed by Female Student Nurses

Researchers defined a theme as family responsibility when it is part of normal societal expectation of a married woman. Three major themes identified were childcare, supporting children in their studies and home maintenance. Female student nurses were managing these responsibilities along with their studies.

6.1.1. Childcare

Five of the participants identified childcare as a main responsibility. They had to take care of their children whose ages varied from young infants to school age.

Student 2. "I have three kids. I have the responsibilities of mother."

Student 7. "I have three babies. One is three years; one is one year and the third now three weeks."

Student 8. "I have three kids. I have one small boy who doesn't sleep."

Student 9. "As a mother I must care for five kids. They are different ages."

All these responses supported the theme childcare as a major challenge to married, female student nurses.

6.1.2. Supporting Children in Their Studies

The second theme identified was providing support to their children in studies. Participants had to find time for their own studies along with tutoring their children.

Student 5. "My daughter is going to nursery. I have to spend time for her."

Student 8. "I have to help the elder kids with school projects."

Student 9. "They go to school. I have to teach them. They take most of my time."

6.1.3. Home Maintenance

The third theme identified as a challenge to the participants was maintaining their home. These tasks ranged from cooking, cleaning and caring for aged grandparents. They verbalized this concern in the following manner.

Student 3. "I live with my parents in a joint family including grandparents. I work with my mother in the kitchen for 2 - 3 hours daily. Now only me to help my mother."

Student 5. "I have a lot of work. My husband, my children."

Student 8. "Also, I have to cook and have to meet other responsibilities to my husband and family. It takes too much time."

6.2. Major Challenges Affecting the Studies of Female Student Nurses

A theme was categorized as a challenge when the participant expressed difficulty in meeting a family or academic expectation. Even though pregnancy could be considered as a family responsibility, in this study the researchers included it as a challenge considering its greater impact on meeting academic expectations. Three major challenges that had an impact on the participants' studies were lack of time

to study, lack of family support, and pregnancy.

6.2.1. Lack of Time to Study

Nearly 50% of the participants voiced that it is hard for them to get time for their studies while trying to meet the family responsibilities.

Student 2. “When I want to study for exam, I don’t have time.”

Student 7. “I don’t have enough time to sleep or to study.”

Student 9. “I get only a little time to study.” “Actually, I am not studying on all days.”

6.2.2. Lack of Family Support

Lack of family support was the second challenge affecting the studies of the participants. Spouses not supporting their studies, relatives having a low image of nursing, and no one else to help when they want to study were major issues faced by the female student nurses.

Student 2. “I have the responsibilities of mother and sometimes the responsibilities of father too. My husband doesn’t encourage me.”

Student 5. “My sisters and cousins had a bad image about nursing. They think it is cleaning and changing diapers.”

Student 7. “When he (husband) goes for work, there is no one.”

Student 8. “I don’t have a quiet place to study, my kids coming calling ‘ma-ma, ma-ma’.”

6.2.3. Pregnancy

Students who become pregnant while studying identified it as a major challenge that affected their academic performance leading to delays in program completion and lower grades. Their responses were:

Student 2. “After the first course I have my first baby, and after the third course second baby. Now I am delayed. I have warning.”

Student 7. “First when I joined the college the grades were all As and Bs. After the second baby it started to drop down to Cs.”

6.3. Impact of Family Responsibilities on Student Performance

Researchers defined impact as an outcome of family and academic responsibilities that resulted in a negative effect on the participant. Researchers identified five themes from the participant responses. These were role conflicts, poor concentration and more effort to study, lower academic performance, situational crisis, and health impacts.

6.3.1. Role Conflicts

The participants were stressed by meeting their family responsibilities together with meeting their academic responsibilities. Some were doing double roles of both parents, feelings of neglecting work at home, and unable to meet expectations of kids were some of the reasons for these role conflicts. Lack of family support could boost these feelings. Participants’ responses were:

Student 2. “I am doing double role. I have the responsibilities of mother and sometimes the responsibilities of father too.”

Student 5. “Sometimes I go to my parent’s home to study; I leave my work at home.”

Student 8. “My second daughter wanted me to teach but now I force her to study with the help of her father or sister. Also, not going out like before.” “Our exams are always with our kids’ exams. So, it is difficult to study.”

Student 9. “Sometimes I cannot teach my kids as before and their mark go low.” “I cannot neglect my responsibilities to my kids. It is my first responsibility.” “Because, no time, we cannot give full time for caring and learning.”

6.3.2. Poor Concentration and More Effort to Study

Participants reported they were easily distracted from their studies while at home and after coming to the classroom. They wait for their kids to sleep to start studying without distraction. Staying awake late at night to work and study makes them sleepy while attending classes the next day. Students’ responses were:

Student 5. “I may be distracted from my work, sometimes, up to six times.”

Student 7. “Every time I come to the class; I feel sleepy.”

Student 8. “When the kids don’t sleep, I cannot concentrate in studies.” “My kids coming calling ‘ma-ma, ma-ma’.” “I take more time to study may be three or four hours whereas, it should take only one hour if there were no disturbances.”

Student 9. “I get up early at 4 O’clock and this is the only time I get to study.” “I don’t finish reading; I go to the college without finished reading.”

6.3.3. Lower Academic Performance

The major educational impact was lower academic performance. Five of the participants agreed that their academic performances were affected or went low owing to their family responsibilities. They were not able to complete their assignments and course work on time and their grades went low. Student responses were:

Student 1. “I have problems. I aim high but I did not get what I wanted”.

Student 5. “I had a high GPA which fell down after my marriage.” “... my GPA dropped.”

Student 7. “First when I joined the college the grades were all As and Bs. After the second baby it started to drop down to Cs.”

Student 9. “It affects my mark sometimes.”

6.3.4. Situational Crisis

Four of the participants felt studying while taking care of their family often leads to situational crisis verbalizing suffering and exhaustion. They verbalized as:

Student 2. “It is difficult for me.”

Student 7. “It is really hard for me or anyone.” “I am suffering.”

Student 8. “It takes too much time.”

Student 9. “I get exhausted.”

6.3.5. Health Impacts

The crisis led to health impacts on the participants both physiologically and psychologically. A major physiological impact was lack of sleep and psychologically it led to feeling sad and fatigued.

These responses from the participants revealed their lack of sleep.

Student 2. “I get time to study only at night.”

Student 5. “I have to wait till 12:00 night ... to start my course work. It affected my work and my health.”

Student 7. “I don’t have enough time to sleep.”

The responses reflecting burn out were:

Student 8. “If I had no kids I could go home, take rest and study.” “... my brain also tired.”

Student 9. “I feel sad.”

6.4. Strategies Used by Female Student Nurses in Managing Challenges from Family Responsibilities

Researchers defined a theme as a strategy when it was considered as an approach used by the participant in meeting complex family and academic expectations. Problem focused and emotion focused strategies were used by the participants to manage the challenges they faced in their studies.

6.4.1. Problem Focused Strategies

Themes identified were studying at night, using personal learning strategies, and utilizing available family support.

1) Studying at night. The most common strategy used by the participants to study and to complete their assignments was staying late at night. These verbal responses support it.

Student 2. “I get time to study only at night.”

Student 5. “Any time I find to study is after my children sleep.”

Student 7. “I put my baby for sleep, for example, three hours, then I use this time to study. Usually, I study for two hours and then sit with the kids for one hour and the study another one or two hours.”

Student 9. “I get up early at 4 o’clock and this is the only time I get to study.”

2) Personal learning strategies. Participants used different personal learning strategies such as understanding the lecture, focusing on the class, taking notes, sitting in a corner in the classroom to avoid distractions, and studying at any available time. They used these strategies to memorize what they have studied and to solve their exams. Responses were:

Student 2. “I solve the exams based on what I understand in the lecture.”

Student 5. “Any time you could find open your book and study.”

Student 6. “I focus well on the class; I always sit at a side to avoid distractions and I take notes. So, I don’t forget anything.” “If I have exams, I will study for more than five hours. Otherwise, I don’t study every day.”

3) Utilizing available family support. Participants were keen to use any avail-

able support for them to complete their study. The responses were:

Student 2. “Weekend I go to my family; I leave my children with my parents, and I do all my assignments.”

Student 4. “I get a lot of support. My family help me to manage if I have a project or anything to do.”

Student 5. “Sometimes I go to my parent’s home to study.”

6.4.2. Emotion Focused Strategies

Themes identified were accepting the situation, discussing problems with teachers and persistence.

Student 3. “Accept the situation.”

Student 2. “Some teachers accepted my situation, and I got support from the college.”

Student 6. “The teachers were supportive. The offices were open, and teachers were available to discuss problems.”

Student 9. “I will advise, never to give up.” “Never stop. You will get solution.”

6.5. Motivating Factors of Female Student Nurses to Complete Their Studies

Researchers defined motivating factors as driving forces leading to academic success. A common theme all participants verbalized was the desire to get a degree and profit from a job. In addition, a desire for achievement in life and being a role model for their children were motivating to them. Examples of participant responses are:

Student 1: “It was hard work but, I managed. Now I have completed my program.”

6.5.1. Desire for Achievement in Life

Student 7. “I have to come because I need this certificate. Even if, my husband didn’t support I want to achieve something.”

Student 9. “Never to give up. Nothing will stop you from reaching higher positions.”

6.5.2. Role Modelling Their Children

Student 9. It is nice for the kids to see that their mom is struggling to achieve.

6.6. Female Student Nurses’ Expectations of Needed Support from the College

The common themes emerged were provision of more time to finish assignments, decreasing the number of assignments and faculty understanding their situation.

6.6.1. Provision of More Time to Finish Assignments

Examples of participant responses:

Student 3. “Give more time to finish assignments and other works.”

Student 8. “Less assignment for the mothers and give extra time to submit as-

signments.”

6.6.2. Faculty Understanding Their Situation

Examples of participant responses:

Student 5. “Some teachers don’t understand. They say it is not only you.”

Student 7. “Give leave at least for three weeks after delivery. It is good for the mother.”

7. Discussion

Married women who take on the additional role of student experience both intrinsic and extrinsic stressors [10] [18]. This study revealed similar findings, that family factors are perceived as a major source of stress by the married, female student nurses at the College of Nursing. These external stressors are in the form of childcare, supporting children in their studies and home maintenance. Participants perceived many challenges in their efforts in meeting dual demands of family responsibilities and responsibilities of their academic program. Three major challenges perceived by the participants as having an impact on their studies are lack of time to study, lack of family support, and pregnancy [10]. These are environmental factors external to the academic process that may influence students’ academic performance and retention as mentioned in the literature [10]. The participants were affected in five different ways from these challenges. They reported experiencing role conflicts, poor concentration in studies and requiring more effort to study, lower academic performance, situational crisis, and health impacts as consequences of these challenges. These findings are similar to those in the literature [23] [27]. Constant exposure to these stressors led to perceived burn out in the participants. The findings of this study support the Nursing Universal Retention and Success (NURS) model [9]. Other researchers also have reported that adult learners were challenged by factors within themselves, lower levels of self-confidence, time, finances, families, commitments of multiple roles, health, and insufficient family and social support [7] [11] [31]. Even though many researchers have reported finances as a source of stress for adult learners [10]-[12]; none of the participants mentioned it in the interview. This could be due to the fact that only Kuwaiti nationals were included in the study, nursing education is free and students received scholarship; or employed students on leave received their salary.

In their efforts to meet the challenges that affected their learning the participants used both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping skills. Three common problem-focused solutions practiced by the participants to overcome the challenges to their studies were studying at night, using personal learning strategies, and utilizing available family support. A unique finding from this study is that the participants waited for their kids to sleep to start studying without distraction. Staying awake late at night to work and study made them sleepy while attending classes the next day. Other studies also, have reported fatigue as a common finding among adult learners [23]. Emotion focused strategies identified were accepting the situation, discussing problems with teachers and persistence.

Similar findings were reported by other researchers too [7].

Amidst the challenges it is their motivating factors that lead adult learners toward graduation. The participants were motivated by their desire to get a degree and profit from a job. Other motivating factors were a desire for achievement in life and being a role model for their children. Also, what was motivating them was revealed in the emotion focused strategies they used. Responses such as—“It was hard work but, I managed. Now I have completed my program.” “Never to give up.” “Nothing will stop you from reaching higher positions.”—shows that degree completion means more than getting a job. Other studies also, have found that for most women, obtaining a degree was transformative. It would signify that they were productive, capable of achievement, and deserve respect [29].

Creating a conducive environment by manipulating external factors could benefit the adult learners [28]. Participants in this study also expressed their desire to get more support from the faculty and college. They stated they would appreciate getting more time to finish assignments, decreasing the number of assignments and faculty understanding their situation. This might help them feel supported and reduce their psychological stress. A learner-centered approach that respects adult learners’ unique experiences and goals is essential for fostering motivation and retention of students in adult learning programs [28].

8. Limitations

This study was done on a small sample of nine students. However, the qualitative nature of the study enables to get an in-depth understanding of experiences of married female student nurses while they attempt to meet dual expectations arising from family and academic responsibilities. All participants were Kuwaiti nationals. Other cohorts of students, single, separated and divorced students, might have different stressors which should be studied in depth. Also, the family related stressors of male students were not included in this study.

9. Implications

The findings provide actionable insights for policymakers and university administrators to develop targeted interventions aimed at enhancing academic support systems, enhancing student centered learning, and addressing gender-specific academic challenges. The findings have great implications for nursing education institutions, programs, educators and students. It emphasizes the need for generating strong support systems, flexible pedagogies, and an improved provision of resources. The importance of family distress should not be ignored by faculty, staff, administration and the institution at the policy levels. Support services are needed to address distress caused by the familial context and aid nursing students in their navigation of familial issues. Also, these findings highlight the need for targeted mental health interventions to student nurses. Several studies have shown the effectiveness of different types of alternative interventions for nursing students including meditation, relaxation training, hypnosis, breathing exercises and study skills.

10. Recommendations

Insights from this study recommend improving the design and development of nursing programs to enhance learner persistence and success. Students who are academically vulnerable and balancing multiple obligations while attending school should benefit from institutional resource commitment, clear communication of expectations, and faculty/peer connections.

Nursing education institutions should offer workshops on effective study strategies to improve academic performance. A sympathetic approach by the educators accepting the situation of students and extending time to submit assignments is recommended to enhance the psychological well-being of the married female student nurses. An alternative recommendation is conducting workshops and other interventions to improve mental health and well-being among student nurses. Establishment of structured peer study groups fostering collaborative learning and engagement is another recommendation.

Based on the limitations of the study, the researchers recommend larger quantitative studies including heterogenous samples to understand the magnitude of the problems faced by adult learners in nursing. Also, recommends interventional studies with the provision of more support to married female students such as on campus lactation rooms, day care centers and counselling services.

11. Conclusion

Family factors are sources of stress for adult learners such as married female student nurses. The perceived challenges impact on their studies. To tackle the challenges in their family life and studies married student nurses use both problem focused and emotion focused strategies. Program completion means more than getting a degree; it is fulfilling to them. A desire for achievement in life and being a role model for their children are motivating to them. A sympathetic approach of the educators might enhance the psychological well-being of these students. Attracting married women to study nursing and supporting them to complete their programs could be a solution for countries facing shortage of nurses.

Authors' Contributions

DT conceptualized the study, directed data collection, analysis and drafting the manuscript. MR, HS, and PJ contributed to conceptualization of the study, participated in data collection and analysis, and proofread the manuscript. MR and PJ contributed to writing and editing the manuscript and preparation of the final submission documents. All authors read and approved the final manuscript and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

Ethical Statement

Approval was granted by the Research and Ethics Committee of the College of Nursing, Kuwait.

This study was performed in line with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki.

Standards of Reporting

COREQ Guidelines for reporting are used in this study.

Availability of Data and Materials

All data generated or analyzed during this study are available with principal investigator.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest, financial or otherwise.

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