

Assertiveness Level Among Undergraduate and Postgraduate Nursing Students

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ABSTRACT

Assertiveness is a healthy way of communicating with others and an important social skill to enhance their well-being. One of the qualities that nursing students are expected to develop is assertiveness, which is the expression of self-esteem that has an impact on people professionally and socially. It enhances honesty and dedication in the nursing practice. The objective of this study was to assess the assertiveness level among nursing students. The Non-experimental-descriptive cross-sectional design was used. A Non-probability simple random sampling technique (Lottery Method) was used to collect the data from undergraduate and postgraduate nursing students who were currently studying at a Nursing college in Bhubaneswar. The sample size was 120. Data collection was done by using a self-structured demographic profile and Rathus assertiveness inventory. The Study results show that 51.66% of students had high Assertiveness as their score was between 15 to + 90 and 48.34% of students had Low Assertiveness as their score was between 14 to -90. The present study concludes that the maximum Nursing student has a high level of assertiveness.

Key Words: Nursing Student, Assertiveness, Rathus assertiveness inventory

1 . Introduction

In the nursing field, assertiveness is crucial in a variety of important ways. The nursing profession demands and demonstrates respect for others.¹ An assertive manner of speaking and expressing one's thoughts and ideas that benefits both the client's care and the nursing profession as a whole. The client is always protected by an assertive nurse. It improves commitment and integrity in the nursing profession. Assertiveness interacts with the individual from life's hierarchical growth. It increases the best quality of life and support to one's behavior.²

It involves not just being satisfied with one's words but also with one's actions, behavior, and conduct in all facets of life. It is a trained style of expressing thoughts and feelings constructively without being

hostile to other people. It illustrates the conflicting behavior of a person who underestimates others. Everybody gains from being assertive. Communicating one's viewpoint, which is a person's right, without violating another person's rights can be done relatively simply.³

Assertiveness needs a way of expressing in a very open and honest nature, it's a process of expressing one's feelings, opinions, and beliefs, without crossing the rights of others. Registered nurses can point their views clearly, accept criticism positively from others by using assertiveness skills, though respect all the rights, duties and responsibilities in a nursing practice and perform based on that. Lack of assertiveness compromises the quality of patient care by causing inefficient communication.⁴ The patient will be losing the trustworthy relationship if

suppose, there is a lack of assertiveness skills in nurses, Nursing professionals who are assertive help patients and foster collaboration in all aspects of care.⁵

In the nursing profession, where nursing students are completely free to voice their opinions and personal rights in the interests of promoting empowerment and developing autonomy, the promotion of assertiveness and communication skills should begin.⁵

Regular classes are not adequate to train excellent clinical practice. Therefore, Nursing skills can be provided using different methods of teaching like role play, demonstration, discussion and practice in the clinical area, so that the student nurses can get adequate feedback, guidance, encouragement, and motivation from the nursing professionals. The nursing faculty should also ensure the favorable environment for the nursing students to demonstrate their skills.⁶

Assertiveness is very important for nurses to maintain effective interpersonal relationships and therapeutic communication with the patient and it can develop professional ability among nurses. Nursing and assertiveness are strongly related concepts.⁷ A nurse's assertiveness is a requirement for excellent nursing practice. The level of assertiveness present in nursing students will help them directly and indirectly in delivering quality care to patients.

2. Methods & Materials

The non-experimental-descriptive research design was used among undergraduate and postgraduate nursing students currently studying at a Nursing college in Bhubaneswar. A simple random sampling technique (Lottery Method) was adopted for data collection & Total sample size was 120. Sample inclusion criteria were postgraduate and undergraduate nursing students who are attending college and on clinical duty and who can read and understand English. Setting Permission was taken from the principal of the nursing college for data collection. After obtaining informed consent from the participants, the structured questionnaire was distributed to all the participants in the classroom and collected back in the presence of the researchers. Data analysis was performed by using SPSS version 24. Data collection was done with a self-structured demographic profile and Rathus assertiveness inventory. Rathus's assertiveness inventory contains 30 items of a self-report questionnaire to measure assertiveness.⁸ Each item was answered from +3 "very much like me" to -3 "very much unlike me", without including 0. High positive scores shows the high assertiveness of participants while high negative scores shows the opposite. Using the median value, those who score lower than that were considered low assertiveness, and those who score higher than that were considered high assertiveness levels among nursing students.

3. Results

Table 1 – Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Nursing students (n=120)

Demographic profile	Frequency	Percentage
Age in years	88	73.34
18-21	28	23.33
22-25	4	3.33
Above 25		
Gender	108	90.0
Female	12	10.0
Male		
Marital Status	2	1.7
Married	118	98.3
Unmarried		
	4	3.3
	112	93.3
Muslim	4	3.3
Interest in studying Nursing		
No	14	11.7
Yes	106	88.3
Academic Year		
BSc (N) 2 nd year	35	29.2
BSc (N) 3 rd year	70	58.3
MSc (N) 1 st year	15	12.5
Siblings		
Single	22	18.3
One	69	57.5
Two or more	29	24.2
Types of Family		
Joint	26	21.7
Nuclear	94	78.3

Table 2 reveals the demographic characteristics of participants. The majority of the participants (88)

73.34% belonged to the age group 18-21, the Maximum number of participants was female (108)

90.0 %, the Highest number of participants was unmarried (118) 98.3%, and the Hindu religion (112) 93.3%. Most of the participants (106) 88.3% were

interested in studying nursing & (94) 78.3% were from the nuclear family. Based on the siblings (69) 57.5% were having one sibling.

Table 2 - Rathus Assertiveness Inventory score (n=120)

Rathus Assertiveness inventory	Minimum Value -57	Maximum Value 58	Median Value 15	High assertiveness level 51.66%	Low assertiveness level 48.34%
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Table 2 reveals the Rathus assertiveness inventory score where the minimum value was -57 and the maximum value was 58. The Median value is 15. Students who scored from 15 to + 90 were

considered a High Assertiveness level (51.66%) & Students who scored from 14 to -90 were considered a Low Assertiveness level (48.34%).

	Frequency	P value
Age		1.12
		0.154
		0.079
Religion		0.154
		0.309
	35 70 15	0.408
Nuclear	22 69 29	0.284
	26 94	0.451

Table 3 represents the association between the assertiveness level with their selected demographic variables. In this study, There was no significant association found between the Assertiveness level with the demographic variable of participants. ($p \leq 0.05$)

4. Discussion

The study finding of Assertiveness level among undergraduate and postgraduate nursing students, The present research study shows that 51.66% have a high assertiveness score and 48.34% have a Low assertiveness score. This study reveals that there was no significant association found between assertiveness level and selected demographic variables of participants ($p > 0.05$). Based on the above finding a supportive study on Non-experimental - descriptive research design was conducted to understand the assertiveness level

among BSc (N) students studying in College of Nursing, Tamil Nadu. The finding shows that 40% of the participants were little assertive level, 57% of the participants were very assertive level.⁹

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