

Impact of Nursing education on the self-esteem of budding nurses: a study from north India

- 1) Malar Kodi S¹ (Assistant Professor, All India Institute of Medical Sciences Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, India)
Corresponding Author (malar.nur@aiimsrishikesh.edu.in)
- 2) Prasuna Jelly¹, (Assistant Professor, All India Institute of Medical Sciences Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, India)
- 3) Suresh Kumar Sharma², (Professor & Principal, All India Institute of Medical Sciences Rishikesh, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India)
- 4) Vasantha Kalyani C³, (Professor & Principal, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Deogarh, Jharkhand, India)
- 5) Sharmila Jeyarani⁴ (Nursing Tutor, All India Institute of Medical Sciences Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, India)
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Abstract:

Background: Self-esteem in nurses is a tool for articulating themselves without any psychological disturbances in different situations. It is crucial for healthier emotional wellbeing and is nourished during nursing studies.

Aim: To determine and compare the self-esteem among first and final-year nursing students

Methods: A descriptive, comparative survey was conducted among conveniently selected 400 (200-first year, 200-final year) nursing students of Uttarakhand. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) assessed self-esteem through the self-reported paper-pencil method. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: Majority of 178 (89%) & 122 (61%) participants were females and their habitat 59% & 55.5% were rural in both groups respectively. Invariably both the groups (first year, 84% & final year, 63%) had shown a low level of self-esteem. Comparison between the two groups had shown a significant difference between the group with p-value (0.00) of all the items in the level of self-esteem, not only that association of level of self-esteem with the advancement of higher education showed highly significant with 'p-value < 0.001. In addition, the variables like age, gender, training institution, parental occupational status & Habitat had a statistically significant influence on student's self-esteem

Conclusion: Effective grooming and supportive teaching with positive reinforcement will bring a good level of self-esteem among nursing students.

Keywords: Self-esteem, Nursing Students, Self-concept, students, Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, Adolescents.

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I. Introduction:

Nurses interact with patients and health care personnel very often, and developing self-confidence is essential for nursing students, particularly when caring for people whose situations are uncertain. Patients and clients seek confidence and control in turbulent times. Nursing students need to be calm, decisive, and reassuring (1), (2). However, acquiring these skills can be problematic in the initial training phases when understanding and proficiency are limited (1).

Self-esteem is the level of approval, acceptance, and self-worth about self. Coopersmith defines self-esteem dimensions such as personal self-esteem, social self-esteem, academic self-esteem, and parental self-esteem. Personal self-esteem is a detailed understanding of the value of oneself. Social self-esteem is the perception of the quality of their relationships with others. Academic self-esteem is an evaluation of oneself as a student (3).

Self-esteem is one of the essential factors in mental health that plays a vital role in promoting health. Despite the indisputable genuine self-esteem in mental health and lives of dignity, surveys show that students' self-esteem is not satisfactory. In a study by Acharya Pandey R, Chalise HN, nearly 78% of nursing students have

low self-esteem. One of the essential aspects of nursing education is the development of non-cognitive skills, such as self-esteem and self-concept, in college students(2).

It is expected that nurses' self-esteem is partially shaped during nursing education. Therefore, with students' progression to higher education years, changes are expected in their self-esteem—a study by Giri.R et al., in 2012, showed that self-esteem and its dimensions have no significant difference in nursing students in different years of study(4). In another longitudinal study by Edwards et al., final-year nursing students' self-esteem was low(5). Conflicting results were obtained from different studies investigating the effect of nursing education on students' self-esteem. The results of studies on various aspects of self-esteem, including social, personal, and public self-esteem of nursing students differentiated by the school year, showed a relationship between years of education and self-esteem(4).

High self-esteem refers to a highly favourable global evaluation of self, while low self-esteem refers to an unfavourable definition of the self. Self-esteem may refer to an accurate, justified, balanced appreciation of one's worth as a person and one's successes and competencies. Still, it can also refer to an inflated, arrogant, grandiose, unwarranted sense of smug superiority over others. At the same time, low self-esteem can be an accurate, well-founded understanding of one's shortcomings as a person or a distorted, even pathological sense of insecurity and inferiority(2). Self-esteem is a person's own opinion about themselves and appreciation of their value. An individual with high self-esteem has many positive effects and benefits. Students who feel positive about themselves have fewer sleepless nights, succumb less quickly to the pressure of conformity by peers, are less likely to use drugs and alcohol, are more persistent in challenging tasks, are happier, and are more sociable; more importantly, they tend to perform better academically(6).

It is expected that the self-esteem of nurses partially shapes during nursing education. Therefore, with the students' progression to higher education years, changes are anticipated in their self-esteem; SimaGhezalbashet al. showed that self-esteem and its dimensions have no significant difference in nursing students in different years of study(3). In another longitudinal study by Edwards D et al. et al., The self-esteem of final-year nursing students was at its lowest level(6). Conflicting results were obtained from different studies investigating the effects of nursing education on students' self-esteem. Low self-esteem has been a significant problem in the nursing profession. Nursing students today are the backbone of the professional nurses of tomorrow; to ensure competent and safe practice, they must be individuals with high self-esteem(6),(7).

The results of studies on various aspects of self-esteem, including social, personal, and public self-esteem of nursing students differentiated by the school year, showed a relationship between years of education and self-esteem. Hence there is a felt need to assess the students' self-esteem in the initial period to shape them.

II. Material & Methods:

A descriptive, comparative survey was conducted among first and final-year nursing students of selected nursing colleges in Uttarakhand from July 2019 to October 2019. 400 (200 from each group) nursing students were selected by non-probability convenience sampling. The inclusion criteria were those willing to consent to read and write English during data collection. Permission for data collection was obtained from the Principal of the nursing college. Informed consent was obtained from the participants after explaining the study. A questionnaire including a sociodemographic sheet and Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES) was administered in the classroom and returned in the researcher's presence; therefore, no dropouts and incomplete responses. The self-esteem scale included ten statements that capture participants' general feelings toward themselves with 4-point Likert scale with the options strongly disagree to agree firmly was categorized as low (0-10), Moderate (11-20), and high (21-30). Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

Data analysis:

The received data were coded and entered in Microsoft Excel sheet and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences for Windows, version 20.0. Descriptive statistics have been used in the study to calculate frequencies, mean, and standard deviation have been used to estimate the results of the study. The Chi-square test was applied to assess self-esteem and association among variables. A dependent t-test was used to compare the level of self-esteem between the first and final years $p < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Ethical considerations:

Written permission was taken from the Institutional Ethics Committee (AIIMS/IEC/2018/368). Participation in this survey was voluntary and was not compensated; informed written consent was obtained from the participants before the commencing of the survey. The participants were assured of their rights to refuse to participate in the study or withdraw their consent at any stage and promised anonymity and confidentiality of data.

III. Results:

Table-1: Characteristics of Nursing students

N=400

Variables	First-year n ₁ (200) f (%)	Final year n ₂ (200) f (%)
Age (in years)		
17-19 Years	87 (43.5)	0 (0)
20- 22Years	99 (49.5)	72 (36.0)
22 -24 Years	12 (6.0)	101 (50.5)
>24 Years	2 (1.0)	27 (13.5)
Mean± SD	0.65 (±0.64)	1.78 (±0.67)
Gender		
Male	22 (11.0)	78 (39.0)
Female	178 (89.0)	122 (61.0)
Habitat		
Rural	119 (59.5)	111 (55.5)
Urban	81 (40.5)	89 (44.5)
Institution of training		
Government	177 (88.5)	87 (43.5)
Private	23 (11.5)	113 (56.5)
Parent Occupational Status		
Unemployed / Homemaker	16 (8.0)	-
Labourer	8 (4.0)	30 (15.0)
Self-employed/Business	77 (38.5)	75 (37.5)
Private sector	30 (15.0)	65 (32.5)
Government sector	69 (34.5)	30 (15.0)
Family Monthly Income (In rupees)		
10000	18 (9.0)	2 (1.0)
10001-20000	56 (28.0)	12 (6.0)
20001-30000	32 (16.0)	41 (20.5)
>30001	94 (47.0)	145 (72.5)
Religion		
Hindu	159 (79.5)	107 (53.5)
Muslim	20 (10.0)	65 (32.5)
Christian	11 (5.5)	12 (6.0)
Sikh	10 (5.0)	16 (8.0)
Has nursing is your own choice?		
Yes	122 (61.0)	120 (60.0)
No	78 (39.0)	80 (40.0)
If not, who has motivated?		
Family	59 (70.2)	45 (56.3)
Friends	4 (4.8)	Nil
Relatives	21 (25.0)	35 (43.7)

Table 1 shows the characteristics of the nursing students. The majority of the first year (49.5%) was belonged to 20-22 years of age, whereas final years (50.5%) have belonged to 22-24 years. The majority of the 178 (89%) & 122(61%) participants were females in both groups, and their habitat (59.5 & 55.5) was rural. First-year 88.5% and final year 56.5% participants had availed their training from Government and private institutes, respectively. Parents of both the groups were self-employed (38.5%) or businessmen by occupation

(37.5%). The majority of them belong to an affluent population & Hindu religion from both groups. Nursing was their own choice; the primary motivators were their family for those who had been motivated.

Level of self-esteem:

Table-2: Level of self-esteem among nursing students

N=400

Level of Self-Esteem	Score	First-year n ₁ - 200 f (%)	Final year n ₂ - 200 f (%)	Mean ±SD
Low self-esteem	(10-20)	168 (84)	126 (63.0)	1.27 ± 0.449
Moderate self-esteem	(20-30)	31 (15.5)	74 (37.0)	
High self-esteem	(30-40)	1 (0.5)	0 (0.0)	

Median:1 Range:2

Invariably both the groups(first year [84%] and final year [63%]) had shown a low level of self-esteemmajority. However, none of the final-year students showed a high level of self-esteem at all.

Table-3: Comparison of self-esteem of nursing students

N= 400

s.n	Items	Year	SA f (%)	A f (%)	DA f (%)	S DA f (%)	Total f(%)	χ ²	P-value	df
1	I feel that I am a person of worth,at least on an equal plan with others.	First	0 (0)	81 (40.5)	94 (47.0)	25 (12.5)	200 (100)	42.54	.000	2
		Final	0 (0)	35 (17.5)	91 (45.5)	74 (37.0)	200 (100)			
2	I feel that I have several good qualities	First	0 (0)	46 (23)	108 (54.0)	46 (23.0)	200 (100)	62.76	.000	2
		Final	0 (0)	1 (0.5)	100 (50.0)	99 (49.5)	200 (100)			
3	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	First	0 (0)	67 (33.5)	86 (43.0)	47 (23.5)	200 (100)	78.02	.000	3
		Final	53 (26.5)	82 (41.0)	44 (22.0)	21 (10.5)	200 (100)			
4	I can do things as well as most other people.	First	0 (0)	49 (24.5)	102 (51.0)	49 (24.5)	200 (100)	67.72	.000	3
		Final	0 (0)	3 (1.5)	85 (42.5)	112 (56.0)	200 (100)			
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of	First	0 (0)	75 (37.5)	90 (45.0)	35 (17.5)	200 (100)	25.37	.000	2
		Final	0 (0)	39 (19.5)	87 (43.5)	74 (37.0)	200 (100)			
6	I take a positive attitude toward myself	First	0 (0)	99 (49.5)	58 (29.0)	43 (21.5)	200 (100)	112.92	.000	2
		Final	0 (0)	7 (3.5)	85 (42.5)	108 (54.0)	200 (100)			
7	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	First	0 (0)	94 (47.0)	70 (35.0)	36 (18.0)	200 (100)	122.27	.000	3
		Final	1 (0.5)	6 (3.0)	75 (37.5)	118 (59.0)	200 (100)			
8	I wish I could have more respect for myself	First	0 (0)	150 (75.0)	32 (16.0)	18 (9.0)	200 (100)	136.46	.000	3
		Final	0 (0)	96 (48.0)	91 (45.5)	13 (6.5)	200 (100)			
9	I certainly feel useless at times	First	0 (0)	115 (57.5)	70 (35.0)	15 (7.5)	200 (100)	123.99	.000	3
		Final	73(36.5)	113 (56.5)	11 (5.5)	3 (1.5)	200 (100)			
10	At times, I think I am no good at all	First	0 (0)	131 (65.5)	47 (23.5)	22 (11.0)	200 (100)	90.11	.000	3
		Final	57 28.5)	127 (63.5)	11 (5.5)	5 (2.5)	200 (100)			

Comparison between the two groups with the items of the level of self-esteem, they had shown a highly significant difference between the groups with a 'p-value of all the items in the level of self-esteemisthen 0.001.

Table-4: Correlation of level of self-esteem between first and final year nursing students

	Mean±SD	p-value
First-year (n ₁ - 200)	1.17 (0.385)	0.000
Final year (n ₂ - 200)	1.37 (0.484)	0.000

Range: 2

Median: 1

A highly significant level of correlation with self-esteem and higher education as evidenced by 'p-value less than 0.001.

Table-5: Association of the level of self-esteem with demographic variables of participants

N=400

Variables	Self-esteem		
	Mean±SD	f/t	P
Age (in years)			
17-19 Years	21.66 ±1.96	13.9	0.031*
20- 22Years			
22 -24 Years			
>24 Years			
Gender			
Male	1.75 ± 0.43	7.361	0.025*
Female			
Habitat			
Rural	1.43 ± 0.49	1.480	0.477*
Urban			
Institution of training			
Government	1.34 ±0.47	8.265	0.016*
Private			
Family Monthly Income (In rupees)			
10000	3.5 ±1.10	5.739	0.676
10001-20000			
20001-30000			
>30001			
Religion			
Hindu	1.52 ±0.87	8.026	0.236
Muslim			
Christian			
Sikh			
Is nursing is your own choice?			
Yes	1.39 ±0.48	0.742	0.690
No			

There is a highly significant association of self-esteem with age, genders, habitant,& institution trained. The 'p-value of all the items mentioned above is less than 0.001.

IV. Discussion:

This study was aimed to assess and compare the self-esteem of nursing students. The present study has revealed that there were only 1(0.5%) students with high self-esteem level, while 31 (15.5%) & 74 (37%) students with moderate self-esteem level and majority 168(84%) & 126(63%) students with low self-esteem level, this result disagreement with (8), who has indicated that the highest percentage of students (88.6 %) had a high self-esteem level. In comparison (11.4 %) had a low self-esteem level. The present study results may explain why the Nursing profession in Iraqi society is not highly valued(9). The health care system and patients unsupported by them reflected on fidelity, privacy, confidentiality, and respect principles. These findings support a previous study that shows that self-esteem inspires nurses to perform as patient advocates when they encounter value conflict and aid them by balancing personal and organizational values within the context of professional identity(10). This study presented that students' total mean score for the first to fourth year differs significantly. In the fourth stage, students gained the highest levels of whole self-esteem and were the mean scores of the first and second stages less than the third and fourth(11). The results of this study contradicted Sasat's research and others, who pointed out that self-confidence does not differ significantly with the different educational stages for nursing students; on the other hand, the results of this study agreed with the results of the survey conducted by Cowin and others which showed a strong correlation between self-respect and confidence of the students with their academic level(12). Randle's research has shown that self-confidence gradually declines with the advancing study stage for nursing students. Another study found that self-confidence

levels are reduced over time(13).It also confirmed Edward and others similar results in their research where Nursing students complain of low confidence in themselves as they approached graduation (Edwards et al., 2010). The results of a few studies are in support of the current findings as they revealed gender differences in self-esteem. Generally, all know that girls are shy than boys. Nervousness can be a problem for students, especially for female self-esteem, because they may not have insufficient confidence to appreciate themselves in a positive treat. Shyness can be linked with a series of socio-emotional problems,including underprivileged peer relationships and isolation (Hughes 2013). There is some signal that shy students have more school problems than those who do not seem to be shy. Some students' shyness problems prevent them from adapting to the study climate and composition of positive relationships within the school environment (Sonal 2014).

Limitations:

The study was limited to the selected nursing college of Uttarakhand with a nonprobability sampling technique, which restricted the generability of the finding beyond the study settings. The comparative cross-sectional study focused on only first and final-year nursing students with selected variables, but no etiological and associated factors were studied.

V. Conclusion:

The higher self-esteem of the nurses better the professional performance in the health sector. The study revealed that grooming and positive reinforcement of the nursing students as the training advances promote self-esteem.

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