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## **A pre- experimental study on the effect of 'Assertiveness training program' among nursing students of a selected college of Nursing, Ajitgarh, 2013-2014**

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### **Abstract**

The current study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of Assertiveness Training Programme among Nursing Students of a selected college of Nursing, Ajitgarh, 2013-2014. To assess and describe the effectiveness of 'assertiveness training program' among nursing students of a selected college of nursing. To determine the association of knowledge among selected variables. A quantitative research approach using pre- experimental research design (one group pre test-post test) was adapted for the study. Study sample of 111 nursing students, who fulfilled the inclusive criteria, were selected by non – probability convenience sampling technique. The pre and post assessment level of assertiveness was assessed by using likert scale on assertiveness. Demographic variables, likert scale on Assertiveness were used to collect the data. The study observed that the mean post-test knowledge score (31.25) was significantly higher than the mean pre-test knowledge score (11.71). There is significant difference between the pre – test and post-test level of Assertiveness nursing students at  $P < 0.05$  level. There is no significant association between the post-test level of Assertiveness among nursing students with the selected demographic variables at  $P < 0.05$  level. Therefore, it is concluded that Assertiveness Training Programme was effective in enhancing assertiveness skills among nursing students.

**Keywords:** Assertiveness, Assertiveness Training Program, Effectiveness, Nursing students

### **Introduction**

Assertiveness means standing up for one's personal rights – expressing thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate ways. Assertiveness is an important behavior for today's professional nurse. It is increasingly being recognized that a nurse needs to behave in an assertive manner. Assertiveness is necessary for effective nurse/patient communication, and it is suggested that its development may also aid the confidence of the profession as it develops. Assertive behavior may be encouraged through educational methods. It is preferable that nurses receive this educational preparation during undergraduate program.

### **Need of the study**

"Assertiveness means standing up for one's personal rights - expressing thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate ways." Assertiveness is considered as an important behavior for today's professional nurse and the key to successful relationships with higher authority, seniors and colleagues. As nurses work in different settings, they have to be assertive in order to meet the challenges and to win the cooperation from others.

Assertiveness is not only important in education and clinical settings but is also important for self-protection. If students are assertive, it helps them to prepare responses to avoid, slowdown, an interrupt on attack and also empowers to prevent violence. If nursing students do not express their thoughts, feelings and ideas they can lose their sense of who they are. Relationships can also be affected by a lack of openness and poor communication, leading to stress, anxiety and depression.

Medical News today reported a study done in Japan, novice nurses tend to burnout more easily when their assertiveness scores are too low. Assertiveness training helps to prevent burnout because it empowers nurses to communicate effectively to assist in patient recovery. Eskin (2003) <sup>[1]</sup> Assertiveness as "an important social skill that promotes personal well-being"

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(p.7). reported that the acquisition of assertion skills enhances personal relationships and interactions between people. Assertiveness training can improve individuals' social skills and emotional health (Eskin, 2003) [1]. viewed assertiveness training as a process of learning to stand up for one's rights and cope assertively, not passively or aggressively.

RJ Delamater - 1986 reported recent studies on the social impact of assertiveness have revealed that although assertiveness is perceived as a dimension that is regarded as highly competent and skillful, it also is viewed as unfavorable interpersonal behavior. Such factors as sex, empathy, assertiveness level, and race appear to moderate the perceptions of assertiveness, attesting to the highly complex, situationally specific nature of assertiveness and its social impact. Various findings about these moderators have been reported. Finally, several clinical implications for assertiveness training are explored.

So the researcher felt that nursing students being require more assertive to express confidently their views because they have to deal with many professionals and higher authority. Theoretical documentation is present but there is lack of empirical data. Thus the researcher is interested in this study by giving 'assertiveness training program' to nursing students.

**Objective**

- To assess and describe the effectiveness of 'assertiveness training program' among nursing students of a selected college of nursing.

**Sub objectives**

- To develop and administer Likert scale on assertiveness among nursing students and select less assertive study subjects
- To develop and administer assertiveness training program
- To administer Likert scale on assertiveness after the training
- To compare assertiveness score
- To make association between post-test knowledge score among nursing students with selected demographic variables.

**Research Methodology**

**Research approach**

Quantitative Research approach was used for this study.

**Research design:** Research design selected for the study was pre-experimental one group Pre-test Post-test design.

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Nursing students	O <sub>1</sub>	X	O <sub>2</sub>

**O<sub>1</sub>:** Assess the level of assertiveness before the administration of assertive training program.

**X:** Administration of assertive training program to the study subjets.

**O<sub>2</sub>:** Assess the post-test level of assertiveness after the administration of assertive training program.

**Research setting**

- Study was done at Rattan Professional College of Nursing, Ajitgarh.

- Institute is run by Rattan Professional Education Society, established in 1997. It located on the outskirts of Chandigarh on 8.5 Acres of land. Its infrastructure comprises of five-storey building. College has best faculty members in the region. It has well equipped labs of fundamentals of nursing, Midwifery, anatomy & physiology, Nutrition, microbiology, hi –tech computer la.Campus has Wi-Fi facilities and e- Class rooms. It has adequate transportation facilities from all corners of tri city and have well equipped library with over 4000 books. Institute has ultramodern air conditioned auditorium with sitting capacity more 700. It started with GNM diploma course but presently it offers number of courses like BSC nursing, post basic, GNM, ANM and MSC nursing.

**Target population**

Nursing students of Rattan Professional College of Nursing includes: GNM students i.e. 168.

**Sample population**

Students of GNM, (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> year) nursing students who will get less than 50% score in "Assertiveness scale".

**Sample size**

111 nursing students.

**Sampling technique**

The non-probability convenience sampling technique was used to collect the sample.

**Development and description of tool**

With the extensive review of literature and discussion with the experts and with the investigator personal and professional experience a 'Likert scale on assessment of Assertiveness' among nursing students was developed. The tool for the data collection consists of three sections.

**Section A**

This section deals with demographic variables like age, gender, family monthly income, educational status, and educational status of father, educational status of mother, marital status, and residential area.

**Section B**

Likert scale on assessment of Assertiveness among nursing students. Total 25 items were formulated. Among them 1-17 statements were positive and 18-25 statements were negative.

**Scoring key:** Total number of items: 25

1-17: Positive statements (Never - 1, sometimes - 3, always -5)

18-25: Negative statement (Never - 5, sometimes - 3, always -1)

Total score: 125

Score	Level of assertiveness
>95	Highly assertive
65-95	Fairly assertive
<65	Poorly assertive

### Section C

After an extensive review of literature and discussion with psychologist, the intervention tool /protocol was prepared. The 'Assertiveness Training Program' contains: The training program was developed by the investigator.

#### Aim

The aim of Assertiveness training program is to enhance the assertiveness skills of study subjects in all areas of lives, personal, social and work.

#### Philosophy

- The philosophy underlying training program is that all people are entitled to express needs and opinions without feeling guilty or anxious, despite differences in age, gender, social status, education, or income.
- Although everyone wisely chooses to be passive in some situations, never asserting one's opinions, complaints or wants often causes people to become angry or apathetic. People who learn to communicate assertively are the most apt to ask for help when needed and to overcome debilitating feelings.
- Assertiveness is not about 'getting what you want' all the time, but about negotiating life without constant anxiety or lack of self-confidence, It is an alternative to aggressive, passive or manipulative behavior.
- Assertion is defensive response to protect and promote positively
- Assertive people have a positive self image. Assertive people will use positive language, and look for positive outcome to interactions.
- Assertiveness is based on the observation that every individual has 'rights' and can act in accordance with these rights.
- People with good assertiveness skills will have enhanced self awareness, greater confidence, and honest powerful and effective communication skills.

#### Objectives

##### On the completion of assertiveness training program participants will be able to

- Explain the importance of assertiveness in life situations
- Explain the various response patterns
- Identify various situations and how to respond assertively
- identify and express interpersonal rights
- explain the ways of saying 'No'
- explain the key behavioral components of an assertive response
- Explain the use of techniques to promote assertiveness
- Assertiveness training program has a set of 7 sessions. This includes several teaching methods i.e. per day one hour lecture cum group discussion, brain storming, and examples from real life, modeling, role playing, getting participants 'feedback, providing feedback, and assigning homework.
- Assertiveness training will be provided to those study subjects who get less than 50% score.
- **The first session:** Introduce and familiarize group members with each other, mention establish rules, introduction about assertiveness, importance of

assertiveness, ice breaker exercises and the homework assignments to be completed before Session 2.

- **Second Session:** In the second session, a brief summary of the first session will be provided. Then the group members will share their homework. In second session the comparison of passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive and assertive behavior, Describes the homework assignments.
- **Third Session:** Discussion of homework assignment Overview of the principles covered in Sessions 1 and 2.
- Handouts of practice situation for session.
- Investigator selects the first situation from the Practice Situations.
- Then the investigator selects the person and asks that person to role-play on the selected situation.
- The remaining participants are assigned the responsibility of giving Feedback.
- Homework Assignments
- **Session 4:** Discussion of homework assignments, summarization of session 3. This chapter discuss about
- The individual's basic rights of assertive behavior.
- **Fifth Session:** In the fifth session, the fourth session will be summarized and homework will read in the group. The aim of the fifth session will be learning to say "No" to unreasonable requests. Investigator discuss ways of 'saying no'.
- **Sixth session:** In the sixth session, the fifth session will be summarized. Investigator discuss about Assertion Skills – Behavioral Components.
- Tell the participants about different body language cues which has to be used to make communication with others. Home assignment will be given.
- **Seventh session:** sixth session will be summarized. Feedback will be provided by participants. This session will be learning about assertiveness techniques to promote assertive behavior.

#### Procedure for data collection

Formal permission was obtained from the principal of Rattan professional educational college to conduct the main study. Data collection period was from consecutive week from 3.5.2014 to 13.5.2014.

111 nursing students who satisfied the inclusive criteria were selected using the non probability convenience sampling technique. Self introduction was given by the investigator and verbal consent was obtained from the participants to fill the likert scale on assertiveness and the subjects were assured regarding confidentiality of their score.

**Phase 1:** Assess the existing level of assertiveness among nursing students.

The investigator assessed the level of assertiveness of nursing students by the Likert scale. Each person took 20 – 25 min to answer the entire question.

#### Phase 11

Administered Assertiveness training program to the study subject's Assertiveness training program has a set of 7 sessions. This includes several teaching methods i.e. per day one hour lecture cum group discussion, brain storming, and

examples from real life, modeling, role playing, getting participants ‘feedback, providing feedback, and assigning homework.

**Phase 111**

Assess the post-test level of assertiveness among nursing students after 1 week by using the same tool.

**Ethical consideration**

- Written Permission was obtained from the head of nursing college.
- The purpose and details of the study was explained to the study subjects.
- Assurance was given regarding the confidentiality of the data collected.
- Verbal consent was taken from the study subjects.

**Plan of data analysis**

Data collection will be analyzed by using both descriptive and inferential statistics

**Descriptive Statistics**

1. Frequency and percentage distribution will be used to analyze the demographic variables of nursing students.
2. Mean and standard Deviation will be used to assess the level of assertiveness in pretest and post test of nursing students.

**Inferential Statistics**

1. Paired‘t’ test will be used to analyze the difference between pre and post-test level of assertiveness among nursing students.
2. Chi- square will be used to analyze the association between levels of assertiveness among nursing students with selected demographic variables.

**Result**

1. At the pre test level majority of nursing students 66 (59.45%) were fairly assertive, 32(28.82%) were poorly assertive, 13(11.71%) were highly assertive.

**Table 1:** Depicts frequency and percentage distribution of pretest level of assertiveness score among nursing students N=111

Level of Assertiveness	No.	%
Highly Assertive (>75%)	13	11.71
Fairly Assertive (50-75%)	66	59.45
Poorly Assertive (<50%)	32	28.82

2. At the post test level a majority of 22(68.75%) were fairly assertive, 10 (31.25%) were highly assertive.

**Table 2:** Depicts frequency and percentage distribution of post-test level of Assertiveness among nursing students No= 32

Level of Assertiveness	No.	%
Highly Assertive (>75%)	10	31.25
Fairly Assertive (50-75%)	22	68.75
Poorly Assertive (<50%)	Nil	----

3. There is significant difference between the pre – test and post test level of Assertiveness nursing students at P<0.05 level.

**Table 3:** Depicted Mean and standard deviation of pre-test and post-test level of Assertiveness. N=32

Test	Mean	S.D
Pretest	63.43	8
Posttest	88.43	9.40

4. There is no significant association between the post-test level of Assertiveness among nursing students with the selected demographic variables at P<0.05 level.

**Discussion**

This chapter concentrates on the findings of the study derived from the statistical analysis and its pertinence to the objectives set for the study.

**First objective was to assess and describe the effectiveness of ‘Assertiveness Training Program’ among nursing students of a selected college of nursing.**

To assess the pre-test level of assertiveness among nursing students.

The overall pre-test level of assertiveness score among nursing students revealed that A majority of 66 (59.45%) were fairly assertive, 32(28.82%) were poorly assertive, 13(11.71%) were highly assertive.

The present study finding is supported by Ünal S., *et al* (2012), conducted a descriptive study to investigate the levels of Assertiveness among nursing students who experience verbal violence during practical training in Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey. The study sample consisted of 274 nursing students. The result revealed that Students with lack of assertiveness are subjected to violence more frequently. So students should be supported in terms of assertiveness and dealing with violence effectively.

**To assess the post-test level of assertiveness among nursing students.**

The overall post-test level of assertiveness score among nursing students revealed that a majority of 22(68.75%) were fairly assertive, 10 (31.25%) were highly assertive. The overall mean assertiveness score was 88.43 and standard deviation was 9.40

This shows that after the ‘Assertiveness training program’, there was a significant improvement in the level of assertiveness among study subjects.

The present study finding is supported by who conducted a quasi experimental study on the Effectiveness of an Assertiveness Training Programme on Adolescents’ level of Assertiveness among 140 students in Ticaret Borsas middle School in Adana, Turkey. The results of the study indicated that the group experience based on the ‘assertiveness training Program’ had a significant positive effect on adolescents’ assertiveness levels.

So the findings of the study support the need for conducting ‘Assertiveness training program’ to enhance the level of assertiveness among nursing student

**To compare pre and post test level of Assertiveness among nursing students.**

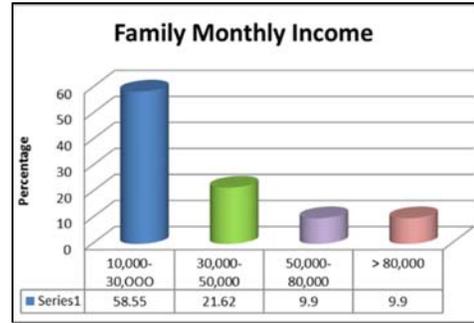
Based on the objective, the effectiveness of ‘Assertiveness training program’ was assessed by comparing pre and post – test level of assertiveness score using paired’ test.

Over all post –test mean score in the level of assertiveness was 88.43and standard deviation was 9.40 with‘t’ value of 14.64 \*\*\*. This showed that there was a statistically

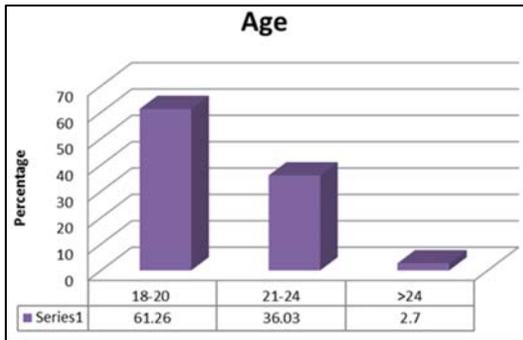
significant difference in the level of assertiveness at  $p < 0.05$  level. Based on the 't' test result, the null hypothesis NH1 "There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post -test level of assertiveness among nursing students" stated earlier was rejected.

**Association between the post-test levels of assertiveness among nursing students with selected demographic variables with frequency and percentage score was done using chi-square.**

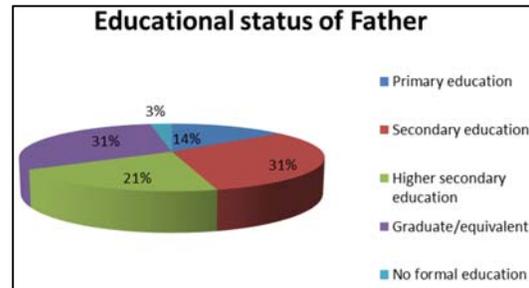
The data analysis revealed that the association of Frequency, Percentage and Chi Square Distribution of Post-test Level of Assertiveness among nursing students with selected demographic Variables such as age, gender, family monthly income, educational status of father & mother, marital status and residential area are not statistically significant at  $P < 0.05$ .



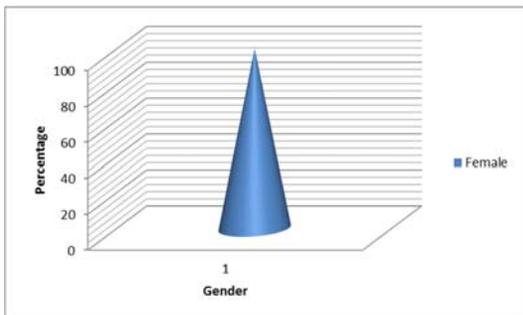
Family monthly income	Percentage
10,000-30,000	58.6
30,000-50,000	21.6
50,000-80,000	9.9
> 80,000	9.9



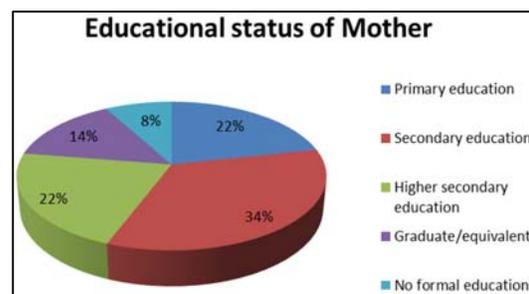
Age	%
18-20	61.26
21-24	36.03
>24	2.7



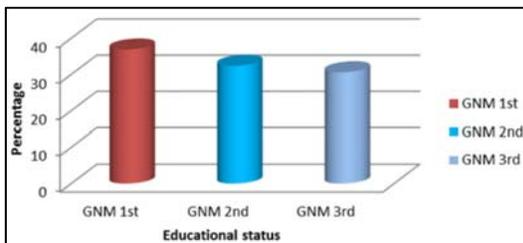
Educational status of father	Percentage
Primary education	14.41
Secondary education	31.53
Higher secondary education	20.72
Graduate/equivalent	30.63
No formal education	2.7



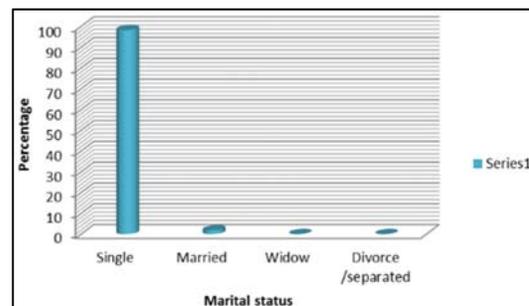
Gender	Percentage
Female	100



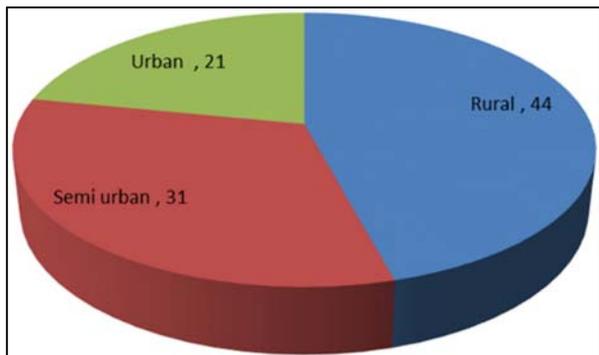
Educational status of mother	Percentage
Primary education	21.62
Secondary education	34.23
Higher secondary education	21.62
Graduate/equivalent	14.4
No formal education	8.1



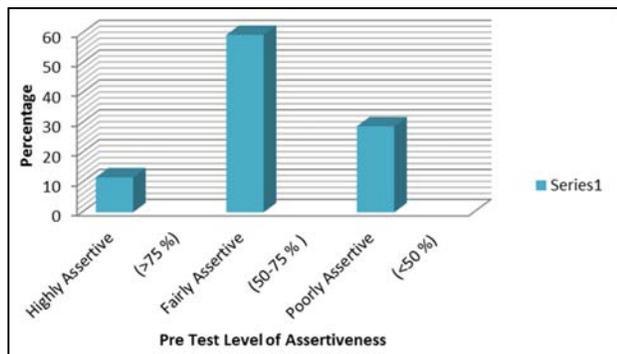
Educational status	Percentage
GNM 1 <sup>st</sup>	36.9
GNM 2 <sup>nd</sup>	32.4
GNM 3 <sup>rd</sup>	30.6



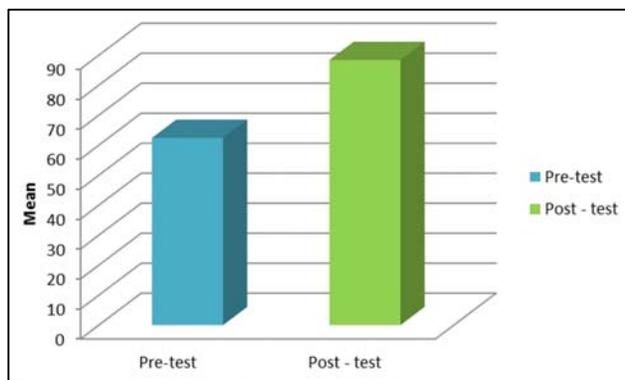
Marital status	
Single	98.19
Married	1.8
Widow	0
Divorce /separated	0



Residential area	
Rural	44
Semi urban	31
Urban	21
	96



Level of Assertiveness	
Highly Assertive (>75 %)	11.71
Fairly Assertive (50-75 %)	59.45
Poorly Assertive (<50 %)	28.82



Pre-test	62.4
Post - test	88.4

**Conclusion**

The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant improvement in the level of assertiveness score among nursing students after providing the Assertiveness training program’

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