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## Levels of self-esteem among B.Sc. (N) final year students in selected colleges of nursing at Punjab

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### Abstract

Self-esteem is the judgement or opinion we hold about ourselves. It is the extent to which we perceive ourselves to be worthwhile and capable human being. It is imperative to study self-esteem in nursing students as having healthy self-esteem can influence motivation, mental-being and overall quality of life. The present study adopted a correlational descriptive research design, where multistage sampling was used to collect data from 400 B.Sc. (Nursing) final-year students from the selected nursing colleges in Punjab. The subjects were assessed using Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale. The objectives were to study the socio-demographic profile of the subjects, to assess the level of self-esteem, and to find the association between self-esteem and selected socio-demographic variables. Majority of these students, approximately 77.8% were found to have a moderate level of self-esteem, while a smaller percentage, 19.8%, had a high level of self-esteem. Only a minimal proportion, 2.5%, exhibit low self-esteem. The mean self-esteem score was 17.40, with a standard deviation (SD) of 3.94, reflecting the average level of self-esteem and the extent of variability within the dataset. The median score was 17, indicating that the data's central value is close to the mean and suggesting a reasonably symmetrical distribution. The interquartile range (IQR) of 5 represents the middle 50% of the data's spread, while the minimum (Min.) and maximum (Max.) scores were 3 and 30, respectively, resulting in a range of 27. The results of the study will be useful to nursing educators whose efforts are focused on promoting the professional identity development of future nurses.

**Keywords:** B.Sc. (Nursing) final-year students, self-esteem

### Introduction

#### Background of the Study

Self-esteem is an incredibly crucial aspect of our lives, as it not only impacts our personal security but also serves as a protective factor against engaging in risky behaviors. It is a fundamental psychological need that influences various facets of our existence, including our thoughts, emotions, desires, values, choices, and goals. When there is a deficiency in self-esteem, it can contribute to the development of numerous psychological issues, which in turn further diminishes one's self-esteem. This creates a reciprocal relationship between self-esteem and psychological problems. Nurses play an integral role in the national healthcare system and are indispensable to the nation's well-being. Therefore, recognizing self-esteem as a basic human need implies that it is essential for normal and healthy development, ultimately holding significant value for survival. If a nurse lacks positive self-esteem, their psychological growth becomes stagnant. Positive self-esteem functions as a source of resilience, strength, and the ability to rejuvenate oneself. Without believing in their own capabilities and inherent goodness, a nurse will struggle to effectively perform their duties within their profession (Supriya Mane, 2016)<sup>[9]</sup>.

Self-esteem refers to an individual's personal evaluation and perception of their own significance and value as a human being. It is a crucial aspect of mental health, as lower levels of self-esteem have been associated with various mental conditions, including stress and depression. Within the realm of nursing education, self-esteem has been identified as a significant factor influencing students' academic achievements, clinical competence, and overall sense of well-being. Extensive research indicates that self-esteem levels among student nurses vary significantly across different countries and cultures. Therefore, it becomes imperative to assess and understand the self-esteem levels of student nurses in order to identify those who may be at risk of encountering academic challenges or mental health issues (Almansour, 2023)<sup>[1]</sup>.

Nursing is a profession that places a significant emphasis on maintaining optimal mental health. Throughout the process of nursing education, students undergo a transformation in which they develop a strong sense of identity as a nurse (Randle, 2012) [6]. This sense of self is vital in nursing activities, as it directly impacts one's self-esteem (Chris, Pais, Kumar, Sisodia, 2012) [12].

**Objectives of the Study**

- To study the socio-demographic profile of the subjects,
- To assess the level of self-esteem, and
- To find the association between self-esteem and selected socio-demographic variables.

**Materials and Methods**

A correlation descriptive design was used for conducting the study. A sample of 400 final year B.Sc. (N) final year students were selected from nursing colleges of Punjab using a multi-stage random sampling method. The research tool consists of a Socio-Demographic Profile (age, gender, habitat, religion, family income, mother's education, father's education, birth order, and place of stay during the course), The Rosenberg self esteem scale consists of ten items, five of which assess positive feelings and five negative feelings of individuals in relation to themselves; their answers are divided according to a four-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to analyze socio-demographic data. The association of socio demographic variables with self-esteem was tested using Chi Square t test and tested at  $p < 0.05$ .

**Results**

**1. Socio-demographic Profile of B.Sc. Nursing Final Year Students**

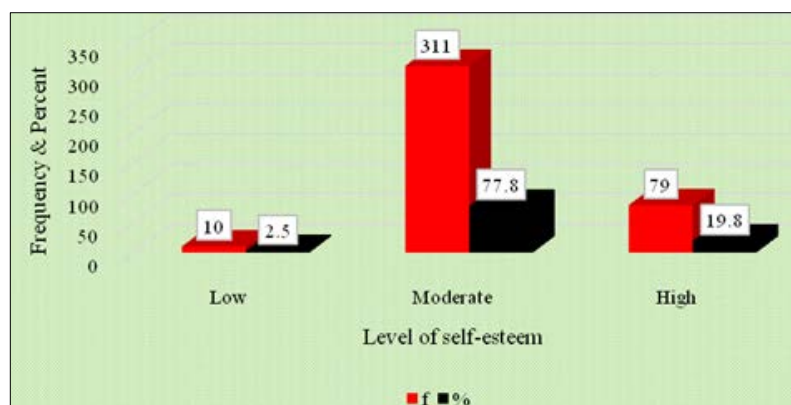
Among 400 B. Sc Nursing final year students, the majority of students, approximately 55.8%, were within the age range of 22-23 years. Gender-wise, the data showed that the nursing program is predominantly female-oriented, with 78.5% of the students being female and only 21.5% male. In terms of habitat, a substantial portion of the students

(58.0%) came from rural areas. Religion-wise, the sample was diverse, with a relatively equal distribution among Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim students, while Christian students make up a smaller proportion. Regarding parental education, a significant portion of both fathers and mothers had some form of education, with a notable percentage having completed graduation or post-graduation. This suggests that the students come from families with varying levels of educational backgrounds. Regarding family income, the majority (51.5%) had a family income of 30,000 Rs. or less, with 29.3% falling within the 30,001-60,000 Rs. range. Parental marital status primarily indicated that most students come from families where parents were together (88.5%). However, there were smaller percentages representing divorced, separated, or widowed parents, which may have implications for understanding the support systems available to these students. Regarding the place of living during the course, a substantial number of students reside in hostels (48.0%), while others lived in P.G. accommodations, at home, or with relatives. The type of family and birth order data revealed that the majority of students came from nuclear families (67.5%) and that a significant proportion were first-born children (51.0%). In summary, the socio-demographic profile of these B.Sc. Nursing final year students gave insights into their age, gender, habitat, religious background, parental education, family structure.

**Table 1:** Levels of self-esteem among B.Sc. Nursing final year students. N=400

S. No.	Level of self-esteem	f	%
1.	Low	10	2.5
2.	Moderate	311	77.8
3.	High	79	19.8

Table 1 and Figure 1 present data on the levels of self-esteem among B.Sc. Nursing final-year students in a sample of 400 individuals. The data showed that the majority of these students, approximately 77.8%, had a moderate level of self-esteem, while a smaller percentage, 19.8%, had a high level of self-esteem. Only a minimal proportion, 2.5%, exhibit low self-esteem.



**Fig 1:** Level of self-esteem among B.Sc. Nursing final-year students

**Table 2:** Descriptive statistics of self-esteem score among B.Sc. Nursing final-year students N=400

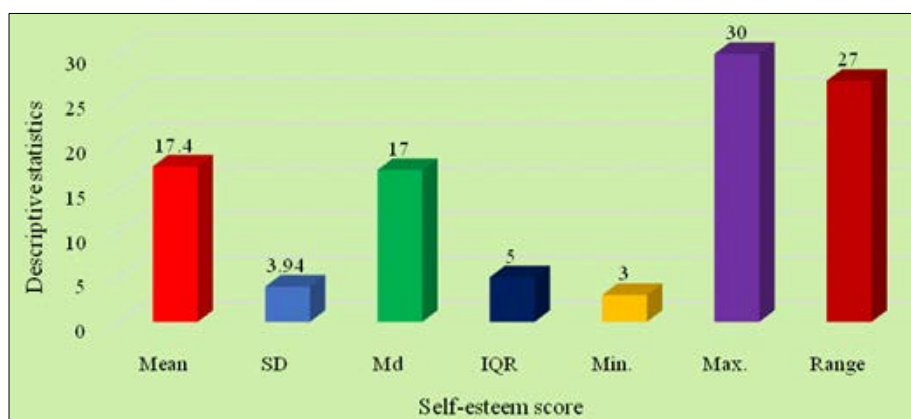
Mean	SD	Md	IQR	Min.	Max.	Range
17.40	3.94	17	5	3	30	27

NB: SD= Standard deviation, Md=Median, IQR+ Inter-quartial range, Min.= Minimum, Max.=Maximum

Table 2 and Figure 2 present descriptive statistics for the self-esteem scores of B.Sc. Nursing final-year students in a sample of 400 individuals. The mean self-esteem score was 17.40, with a standard deviation (SD) of 3.94, reflecting the average level of self-esteem and the extent of variability within the data set. The median score was 17, indicating that the data's central value was close to the mean and suggesting

a reasonably symmetrical distribution. The interquartile range (IQR) of 5 represents the middle 50% of the data's

spread, while the minimum (Min.) and maximum (Max.) scores were 3 and 30, respectively, resulting in a range of 27.



**Fig 2:** Descriptive statistics of self-esteem score among B.Sc. Nursing final-year students

**Table 3:** Association between level of Self Esteem with their demographic variables N=400

S. No.	Variables	Level of Self Esteem			$\chi^2$ value	df	P value
		Low	Moderate	High			
1.	<b>Age (in years)</b>						
	≤21	4	118	32	1.496	4	0.932 <sup>NS†</sup>
	22-23	6	173	44			
	>23	0	20	3			
2.	<b>Gender</b>						
	Male	1	71	14	1.778	2	0.485 <sup>NS†</sup>
	Female	9	240	65			
3.	<b>Habitat</b>						
	Rural	4	180	48	3.019	4	0.441 <sup>NS†</sup>
	Urban	4	101	21			
	Semi urban	2	30	10			
4.	<b>Religion</b>						
	Hindu	2	82	16	4.517	6	0.596 <sup>NS†</sup>
	Sikh	7	149	45			
	Muslim	1	75	16			
	Christian	0	5	2			
5.	<b>Father's Education</b>						
	No formal education	1	84	14	7.331	6	0.352 <sup>NS†</sup>
	Under graduation	6	116	39			
	Graduation	3	90	22			
	Post-graduation and above	0	21	4			
6.	<b>Mother's Education</b>						
	No formal education	2	127	20	8.649	6	0.106 <sup>NS†</sup>
	Under Graduation	4	111	37			
	Graduation	3	59	17			
	Post-graduation and above	1	14	5			
7.	<b>Family income (Rs./month)</b>						
	≤30000	3	165	38	7.397	6	0.178 <sup>NS†</sup>
	30001-60000	3	94	20			
	60001-90000	2	22	9			
	>90000	2	30	12			
8.	<b>Parental marital status</b>						
	Together	10	269	75	6.209	6	0.419 <sup>NS†</sup>
	Divorced	0	2	0			
	Separated	0	6	0			
	Widow/Widower	0	34	4			
9.	<b>Place of living during course</b>						
	Hostel	5	156	31	6.865	6	0.309 <sup>NS†</sup>
	P.G.	2	46	14			
	Home	3	100	34			
	Relative's home	0	9	0			
10.	<b>Type of family</b>						
	Nuclear family	8	213	49	2.631	4	0.576 <sup>NS†</sup>

	Joint family	2	92	27			
	Extended family	0	6	3			
11.	<b>Birth order</b>						
	1st	6	151	47	3.654	4	0.501 <sup>NS†</sup>
	2nd	3	97	20			
	3rd & above	1	63	12			
NB: NS=Non-significant, S=Significant, †= Fisher exact test p value, ††= Chi-square test p value							

Table 3 presents the association between the level of self-esteem and various demographic variables among students. When examining the relationship between age and self-esteem, the Chi-square test did not reveal a significant association ( $p = 0.932$ ), indicating that age did not significantly impact the level of self-esteem among the participants. Gender also did not show a significant association with self-esteem levels ( $p = 0.485$ ). Similarly, habitat (rural, urban, semi-urban), religion, father's education, mother's education, family income, place of living during the course, type of family, and birth order did not demonstrate significant associations with self-esteem levels, as indicated by non-significant p-values in the respective Chi-square tests. In summary, the analysis suggests that in this sample of 400 individuals, self-esteem levels were not significantly associated with various demographic variables, including age, gender, habitat, religion, parental education, family income, parental marital status, place of living during the course, type of family, and birth order. These findings indicate that self-esteem levels appeared to be relatively consistent across different demographic groups within the study.

### Discussion

The study assessed the levels of self-esteem in a sample of 400 final-year B.Sc. Nursing students that revealed a diverse range of self-esteem among the participants. A substantial majority, approximately 77.8% of the students, were found to possess a moderate level of self-esteem. A smaller but significant portion, accounting for 19.8%, displayed a high level of self-esteem. In contrast, a minimal proportion, just 2.5%, exhibited low self-esteem. These findings underscore the prevalence of moderate to high self-esteem among the surveyed B.Sc. Nursing final-year students, with only a small fraction experiencing low self-esteem. A supporting study by Pérez-Fuentes *et al.* (2023) [3] found that adolescents with higher levels of extraversion and openness to experience and lower levels of neuroticism were more likely to engage in self-expressive creativity in the digital domain. They also found that self-esteem and emotional intelligence mediated the relationship between personality traits and self-expressive creativity. The study's findings suggest that self-expressive creativity in the digital domain can be a positive outlet for adolescents, but it is important to be aware of the potential risks, such as cyberbullying. Parents and educators can help adolescents develop their self-expressive creativity safely and positively by providing them with opportunities for creative expression, such as art, music, and writing. They can also help adolescents develop their self-esteem and emotional intelligence, which can help them cope with the challenges of the digital world. A helpful Study done by Joanna Piekarska (2023) [4] examined the determinants of perceived stress in adolescents. She found that high neuroticism was the strongest predictor of perceived stress, followed by low self-efficacy and low self-esteem. High extraversion and high psychoticism were also

associated with higher perceived stress. Women reported higher perceived stress than men. There were some differences in the determinants of perceived stress between graduate and non-graduate students, with neuroticism being a stronger predictor of perceived stress in non-graduate students, while self-efficacy was a stronger predictor of perceived stress in graduate students. The development of high self-esteem and high self-efficacy may contribute to perceptions of lower stress in adolescents. This may be especially valuable for neurotic individuals and for women, who are more exposed to stress.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Pursuing a career in nursing has always been a challenging path in terms of education. Balancing a demanding lifestyle, dealing with pressure and stress, all of which have become increasingly prevalent in the lives of students, can significantly diminish one's self-confidence. This issue has become a pressing problem in our current times. Consequently, it is crucial to invest in research that aims to understand the characteristics and experiences of nursing students, as well as discover effective methods to boost their self-esteem. The findings of the research study confirmed that majority of students have moderate level of self-esteem. The researcher felt need to conduct mass awareness programme among students regarding ways to boost self-esteem among nursing students. It was recommended that a similar study can be carried out on a large sample to validate and generalise the findings. Also, A comparative study can be conducted to assess self-esteem of nursing students and students from other fields.

### Acknowledgments

Our sincere appreciation to all final-year nursing students who were involved in this research.

### Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

### Data Availability Statement

Data are available upon request from the corresponding author.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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