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A quasi experimental study to assess the effectiveness of assertiveness training modules on assertive behaviour among students in selected nursing colleges, Hoshiarpur, Punjab

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Abstract
Introduction: Students are the leaders of future generation and contributing ample for social development, so each student must have assertive behaviour to succeed with more courage and self-confident in their education and future life. Assertiveness is the ability to express your emotions and needs without being aggressive and not violating the rights of others. If you are not assertive you may have low self-confidence and self-esteem, problems in social life. Assertiveness training is a systematic approach to more assertive self- expression based on a balance between achieving one's own goals and respecting the needs of others.
Aim: To assess the effectiveness of assertiveness training modules on assertive behaviour among students in selected nursing colleges, Hoshiarpur, Punjab.
Methodology: A quasi-experimental non-equivalent control group design was adopted to assess the assertive behaviour of 100 nursing students who were selected by using convenient sampling technique i.e. 50 for experimental and 50 for control group from selected nursing colleges, Hoshiarpur, Punjab. The Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS) was used to assess level of assertive behavior.
Results: The results of the study revealed that the difference between mean pre interventional and post interventional mean score was tested by paired "t" test was statistically non-significant (0.91) at p< 0.05 level of significance. The difference between mean pre interventional and post interventional level of assertive behavior in experimental group (8.21) compared to control group (0.91) was much. Only religion had significant impact on post-interventional level of assertive behaviour among students in experimental group and age (in yrs) had significant impact on post-interventional level of assertive behaviour among students in control group. Thus, assertiveness training modules were effective in improving assertive behavior.
Conclusion: Based on the present study findings, the investigator found that the difference between mean pre-interventional and post-interventional level of assertive behavior in experimental group was statistically significant at *p*< 0.001 level as compared to control group. Hence, assertiveness training modules were effective in improving the level of assertive behaviour among nursing students.

Keywords: Assertive behaviour, assertiveness training modules, nursing students

Introduction
Human life is divided into five main stages namely infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. In each of these stages an individual find himself in different situations and face different problems. Besides physical and sexual maturation, developmental experiences include movement toward social and economic independence, and development of identity, the acquisition of skills needed to carry out adult relationships and roles, and the capacity for abstract [1]. Dorland's Medical Dictionary defines assertiveness as a form of behavior characterized by a confident declaration or affirmation of a statement without need of proof; this affirms the person's rights or point of view without either aggressively threatening the rights of another (assuming a position of dominance) or submissively permitting another to ignore or deny one's rights or point of view [2]. If the students fail to develop the assertiveness, they cannot meet the life expectancy challenges. They are facing many psychological problems, unable to cope up with their problems, leads to poor communication skills, poor academic, performance, shyness, low self esteem which

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leads to low self confidence among them and if it exceeds they develop the substance abuse and alcoholism, so these can prevented through the assertiveness training [3]. Nursing profession is the respectful profession which demands and shows respect for others. Assertive ways of communicating and putting one's own concerns, ideas in front of others which help to the clients care as well as for nursing profession itself. Assertive nurse defends client in every aspect. It enhances honesty and dedication in the nursing profession. It is not only being confident about one's words but also about one's actions, doing, and behavior exhibited in every situation of life [4].

Material and methods

A quantitative research approach was adopted to accomplish the objectives of study. A quasi-experimental non-equivalent control group design was used to assess the assertive behaviour of nursing students. The study was conducted at selected nursing colleges, Hoshiarpur, Punjab. Convenient sampling technique was used for sample selection and sample size was 100 nursing students i.e. 50 for experimental and 50 for control group. The Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS) was used to assess level of assertive behavior.

Data collection procedure

- Data collection was done in the month of February, 2021.
- Written permission was obtained from the Principals of selected colleges for conduction of study in their colleges after explaining them the purpose and the objectives of the study.
- On the first day, self-introduction of the researcher was given to the students and administration of Rathus Assertiveness Schedule was done to assess the level of assertive behavior for the selection of required sample of 100 students i.e. 50 in experimental group and 50 in control group.
- On the second day, selected sample of 50 students that was earlier selected as per the requirement for experimental group had received assertiveness training modules.
- From third day, the same intervention was administrated and supervised for the period of 10 days for experimental group.
- Post- test was conducted on the 12th day with the same Rathus Assertiveness Schedule in both experimental and control group.

Results

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of nursing students according to socio-demographic variables. N= 100

Experimental group			Control group			
Demographic variables	(n-50)		(n=50)			
	n	%	n	%	df	x2
Age (in years)						
20	8	16	7	14	3	4.73^{NS}
21	19	38	29	58		
22	14	28	10	20		
≥23	9	18	4	8		
Religion						
Hindu	16	32	30	60	3	21.23*
Muslim	2	4	9	18		
Sikh	32	64	10	20		
others	0	0	1	2		
Family type						
Joint	16	32	14	28	2	1.36^{NS}
Nuclear	34	68	36	72		
Extended	0	0	0	0		
Participation in family's decision making						
Yes	40	80	46	92	1	2.8^{NS}
No	10	20	4	8		
Place of residence						
Urban	13	26	27	54	1	6.3^{NS}
Rural	37	774	23	46		
Education of father						
No formal	0	0	0	0		3.19^{NS}
Primary	13	26	9	18		
Secondary	26	52	22	44		
Graduation and above	11	22	19	38		
Education of mother						
No formal	0	0	2	4	3	10.17*
Primary	6	12	16	32		
Secondary	30	60	17	34		
Graduation and above	14	28	15	30		
Family income (Rs/- month)						
10000-20000	11	22	14	28	2	1.97^{NS}
20001-30000	12	24	16	32		
≥30000	27	54	20	40		
Occupation of father						
Self employed	18	16	17	34	3	5.12^{NS}

Private	11	22	20	40		
Govt.	20	40	13	26		
Un-employed	1	2	0	0		
Occupation of mother						
Self employed	12	24	12	24		
Private	2	4	4	8	3	0.73[NS]
Govt.	5	10	5	10		
Un-employed	31	62	29	58		
Birth order						
First	27	54	21	40		
Second	17	34	15	30	3	4.34[NS]
Third	4	8	11	22		
More than three	2	4	3	6		
Number of siblings						
None	2	4	2	4		
One	26	52	17	34	3	6.91[NS]
Two	17	34	16	32		
More than two	5	10	15	30		

NS= Non – significant at $p < 0.05$ level
*=significant at < 0.05 level

Table 1 shows frequency and percentage distribution of subjects as per socio- demographic variables i.e. age (in years), religion, family type, participation in family's decision making, place of residence, education of father, education of mother, family income (Rs/- month), occupation of father, occupation of mother, birth order, number of siblings. According to age among experimental group, majority of students i.e. 38% were of age 21years and in control group, most of the students i.e. 58% students were also of age 21 years. According to religion, most of the students in experimental group i.e. 64% were Sikh, whereas in control group, majority of students i.e. 60% were Hindu. As per type of family, maximum number of students in experimental group i.e. 68% were from nuclear family and in control group, majority of the students i.e. 72% were also from nuclear family. According to participation in family's decision making among experimental group, maximum students i.e. 80% of students participated in family's decision making and in control group most of the students i.e. 92% of students participated in family's decision making. As per area of residence, majority of students i.e. 74% of students in experimental group were living in rural areas whereas in control group, more than half i.e. 54% of students were residing in urban areas. According to father's education, in experimental group, majority of fathers i.e.

52% fathers had secondary education and in control group, majority of fathers i.e. 44% fathers also had secondary education. According to mother's education, in experimental group, maximum mothers i.e. 60% mothers had secondary education, whereas in control group, majority of mothers i.e. 34% mothers also had secondary education.

According to monthly family income in experimental group, more than half i.e. 54% parents were earning more than 30,000/- month and in control group, majority of parents i.e. 40% parents were also earning more than 30,000/-month. According to occupation of father, in experimental group, maximum fathers i.e. 40% fathers were doing government job, whereas in control group, maximum fathers i.e. 40% fathers were doing private job. According to occupation of mother, in experimental group, more than half i.e. 62% mothers were un- employed and in control group, also more than half i.e. 58% mothers were un-employed. As per birth order, in experimental group, majority of students i.e. 54% students belonged to first order of birth. On the other hand, in control group, 42% students also belonged to first order of birth. According to number of siblings among experimental group, majority of students i.e.52% students was having only one sibling. Whereas in control group, 34% students were also having only one sibling.

Table 2 (a): Frequency and percentage distribution of nursing students in experimental and control group according to pre-interventional level of assertive behavior. N= 100

Level of assertiveness	Criterion Measure	Experimental group (n=50)		Control group (n=50)	
		n	**%**	**n**	**%**
Very non assertive	-90 to -20	0	0	7	14
Situational non-assertive	-20 to 0	10	20	3	6
Somewhat assertive	0 to +20	20	40	8	16
Assertive	+20 to +40	14	28	12	24
Probably aggressive	+40 to +90	6	12	20	40

Table 2 (a) shows the frequency and percentage distribution pre-interventional level of assertive behavior among nursing students in experimental and control group. In experimental

group, only 40% (20) students were having somewhat assertive behavior. Whereas in control group, majority of students i.e. 40% (20) were having probably aggressive.

Table 2(b): Frequency and percentage distribution of nursing students in experimental and control group according to post-interventional level of assertive behavior. N= 100

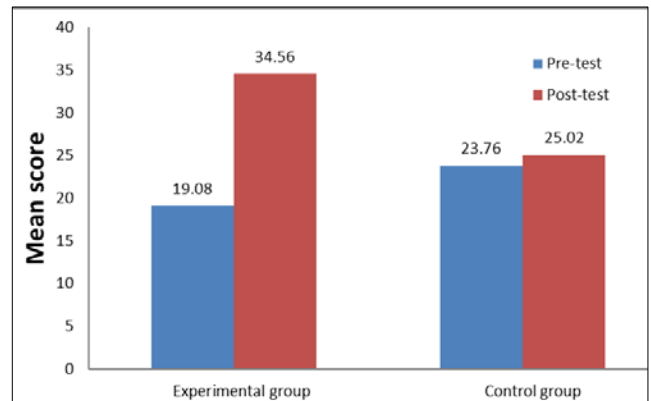| Level of assertiveness	Criterion Measure	Experimental group (n=50)		Control group (n=50)	
		n	**%**	**n**	**%**
Very non assertive	-90 to -20	0	0	6	12
Situational non-assertive	-20 to 0	0	0	3	6
Somewhat assertive	0 to +20	1	2	8	16
Assertive	+20 to +40	47	94	12	24
Probably aggressive	+40 to +90	2	4	21	42

Table 2 (b) shows the frequency and percentage distribution of post-interventional level of assertive behavior among nursing students in experimental and control group. In experimental group, maximum students i.e. 94% (47) students were having assertive behavior. Whereas in control group, 24% (12) were having assertive behavior.

Table 3: Comparison of pre-interventional and post-interventional mean score of assertive behavior among nursing students in experimental and control group N = 100

Assertiveness	Pre-test			Pre-test			df	t
	n	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD		
Experimental Group	50	19.08	14.62	50	34.56	7.18	49	8.21***
Control Group	50	23.76	33.39	50	25.02	32.78	49	1.05^{NS}
	df	t		df	t			
	98	0.91^{NS}		98	2.01*			

NS= Non-significant at $p< 0.05$ level
*= Significant at $p< 0.05$ level
***= Significant at $p< 0.001$ level

Table 3 shows that the difference between mean pre-test and post-test scores of assertive behavior was found highly significant at $p< 0.001$ level of significance. Whereas, in control group, the difference between mean pre-test and post-test scores of assertive behavior was found statistically non- significant at $p< 0.05$ level of significance. Hence, research hypothesis (H$_1$) was accepted as there was significant effect of assertiveness training modules on assertive behavior among nursing students.

Fig 5: Showing comparison between pre and post-interventional level of assertive behavior among nursing students in experimental and control group

Table 4: Association of mean post-interventional level of assertive behavior among nursing students in experimental group and control group with their selected socio-demographic variables N= 100

Socio-demographic variable	Experimental group (n)			Control group (n)		
	N	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD
Age						
20	8	36.38	9.49	7	30.86	21.74
21	19	33.58	6.31	29	16.68	16.67
22	14	35.64	8.21	10	54.10	13.63
≥23	9	33.33	5.36	4	18.75	16.80
	df=3,46	F=0.46^{NS}		df=3,46	F=5.47*	
Religion						
Hindu	16	32.37	5.27	30	28.33	17.68
Muslim	2	35.58	7.78	9	12.11	22.50
Sikh	32	35.48	7.10	10	28.80	28.64
Others	0	0	0	1	6	0
	df=2, 47	F=6.3*		df=3,46	F=0.95^{NS}	
Family type						
Joint	16	32.38	5.24	14	34.69	19.52
Nuclear	34	35.59	7.49	36	38.76	19.19
	df=48	t=0.14^{NS}		df=48	t=0.51^{NS}	
Participation in family's decision making						
Yes	40	34.40	6.80	46	18.20	33.13
No	10	35.20	8.94	4	12.26	16.36
	df=48	t=0.31^{NS}		df=48	t=7.73^{NS}	
Residence						
Urban	13	36.54	7.97	27	15.14	32.21
Rural	37	33.86	6.73	23	30.34	35.84
	df=48	t=1.15^{NS}		df=48	t=1.52^{NS}	
Education of mother						
Primary	6	37.67	6.69	16	41.81	39.58
Secondary	30	34.13	6.55	17	32.94	33.05

Graduation & above	14	34.14	8.22	15	34.27	29.05
		df=2,47	F= 0.62[NS]		df=2,47	F=2.02[NS]
Education of father						
Primary	13	34.08	2.21	9	36.36	21.53
Secondary	26	33.85	6.25	22	32	17.32
Graduation& above	11	34.14	9.47	19	36.66	19.08
		df=2,47	F=0.62[NS]		df=2,47	F=2.02[NS]
Family income						
10000-20000	11	36	3.74	14	47.29	14.12
20001-30000	12	35.83	11.13	16	28.06	21.89
≥30000	27	33.41	6.03	20	36.10	14.64
		df=2,47	F=0.75[NS]		df=2,47	F=4.3[NS]
Occupation of father						
Self employed	18	34.78	7.28	17	40.41	18.31
Private	11	35.27	4.10	20	38.40	19.55
Govt.	20	33.75	8.63	13	29.08	18.63
Unemployed	1	39	0	0	0 df=2,47	0
		df=3,46	F=0.24[NS]		29.08	F=1.56[NS]
Occupation of mother						
Self employed	12	36.92	7.51	12	30	14.88
Private	2	36.5	2.12	4	36	9.33
Govt.	5	34.6	5.18	5	20	19.61
Unemployed	**31**	33.52	7.50	29	42	16.64
		df=3,46	F=0.68[NS]		df=3,46	F=2.85[NS]
Birth order						
First	27	34.96	7.68	21	34.10	20
Second	17	34.47	7.23	15	41.28	19.30
Third	4	32.75	6.70	11	39.81	17.87
More than three	2	33.5	0.71	3	23.67	14.15
		df=3,46	F=0.12[NS]		df=3,46	F=0.92[NS]
Number of siblings						
None	2	37.5	2.12	2	24	7
One	26	36.92	7.29	17	36.12	22.09
Two	17	31.47	6.33	16	33.62	18.71
More than two	5	31.6	6.77	15	20.33	17.48
		df=3,46	F=0.62[NS]		df=3,46	F=0.35[NS]

NS= Non-significant at $p < 0.05$ level

*= Significant at $p < 0.05$ level

It could be concluded from the above findings that socio-demographic variable such as religion had significant impact on post test level of assertive behaviour among nursing students in experimental group and age (in years) had significant impact on post test level of assertive behaviour among nursing students in control group.

Discussion
According to objectives
Objective1: To assess the level of assertive behaviour among nursing students.

Findings revealed that as per post-interventional level of assertive behaviour in experimental group, 94% of nursing students had assertive behavior, followed by 4% nursing students had probably aggressive behaviour. Whereas in control group, 42% nursing students had probably aggressive behavior, followed by 24% nursing students had assertive behavior.

Objective 2: To compare the level of assertive behavior among students in experimental and control group.
The findings revealed that in experimental group, pre-test mean score of assertive behavior was 19.08 and mean post-test score was 34.56. The difference between mean pre-test and post-test scores of assertive behavior was found highly significant at p<0.001 level of significance. Whereas, in control group, pre-test mean score of assertive behavior was

23.76 and mean post-test score was 25.02. The difference between mean pre-test and post-test scores of assertive behavior was found statistically non- significant at p<0.05 level of significance.

Objective 3: To find out the association of assertive behaviour among students with their selected socio-demographic variables in experimental and control group.
Findings revealed that age had impact on post-interventional level of assertive behaviour among nursing students in control group and religion had impact on post-interventional level of assertive behaviour among nursing students in experimental group.

Conclusion
Based on the present study findings, the investigator found that the difference between mean pre-interventional and post-interventional level of assertive behaviour in experimental group was statistically significant at p<0.001 level as compared to control group. Hence, assertiveness training modules was effective in improving the assertive behaviour of nursing students. It indicated that assertiveness training modules had impact on the assertive behaviour of students because as it was simple, understandable and included some easily performed techniques to improve assertive behaviour. Students should be motivated to use assertiveness in their daily life so that they can improve their

communication pattern, skills, boost up their self-esteem, self- confidence and earn others respect.

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