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# The Aptitude Level of Newly Admitted Students in Nursing Courses Studying at Selected Nursing Colleges of Punjab 

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#### Abstract

It is important to understand that choosing a career does not simply mean deciding upon the ultimate career profile which will guide you through the gates of success and fame; rather it means that a person should have the potential to grow with that career and achieve success through his/her decision. That is why it is very important for every student to understand what is embodied within the word. Every career option requires a particular aptitude combination that should match with the individual's potential ability to grow with that career. The aim of present study is to assess the aptitude level of newly admitted nursing students studying at various nursing colleges in Punjab. Non experimental approach was used. The conceptual framework of the study was developed on the theory of Bloom's taxonomy of learning. Total 330 subjects were enrolled by convenience sampling technique. Sociodemographic sheet and Nursing Aptitude Test (NAT) were used to collect data to assess the aptitude level of newly admitted students in nursing courses studying at selected nursing colleges of Punjab. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. Results showed that $76 \%$ subjects had average cognition level followed by $21.5 \%$ subjects had good cognitive ability while only $2.4 \%$ subjects had average cognitive ability. More than half of the subjects i.e. $52.1 \%$ had strong affective behaviour and $47.8 \%$ subjects had average affective behaviour. A significant association found between cognitive domain and socio demographic characteristics like type of nursing course, senior secondary education stream, marks (\%) in +2 class and mother education at level of significance $<0.005$. Similarly it was found that course, senior secondary education stream were significantly associated with affective domain at level of significance $<0.005$. The study concluded that most of the subjects had average cognitive ability and strong affective behaviour.


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KEYWORDS: Aptitude, Nursing Students

## INTRODUCTION:

## MATERIAL AND METHOD:

Quantitative Non Experimental research approach was used to access the aptitude level of newly admitted nursing students. Descriptive research design- survey design was used and the samples was selected by convenient sampling technique. Socio-demographic sheet and Nursing Aptitude Test (NAT) were used to collect data to assess the aptitude level of newly admitted students in nursing courses.

Section A: Demographic Profile: It was comprised of 17 items of demographic variables like Age, Gender, Religion, Course of nursing, Area of living, Educational stream, Type of school, Board of education, Marks in Senior Secondary Education, Parents education, Parents occupation, Total family income, Birth order, Number of siblings, Source of
information about nursing program, Reason for joining nursing and any family member already in nursing profession.

Section B: Nursing Aptitude Test: NAT was used to assess the aptitude level among nursing students who were newly admitted in nursing courses i.e. GNM, BSc (N) and Post Basic $\mathrm{BSc}(\mathrm{N})$ in the colleges of Punjab.

Nursing Aptitude Test (NAT) comprised of different sub domains given below:

1. Cognitive domain
2. Affective Domain
3. Conative Domain

## RESULT

The results are organized according to the objectives under the study
Table 1(a):- Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects as per their Socio-demographic characteristics

| Sr. No | Characteristics | n (\%) |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Age: } \\ & 17-20 \\ & 21-25 \\ & 26-30 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 274(83.0) \\ & 053(16.1) \\ & 003(00.9) \end{aligned}$ |
| 2 | Gender: Female Male | $\begin{aligned} & 315 \text { (95.5) } \\ & 015(04.5) \end{aligned}$ |
| 3 | Religion: <br> Hindu <br> Muslim <br> Sikh <br> Christian | $\begin{aligned} & 147(44.5) \\ & 013(03.9) \\ & 160(48.5) \\ & 010(03.0) \end{aligned}$ |
| 4 | Area of living: <br> Rural <br> Urban | $\begin{aligned} & 173 \text { (52.4) } \\ & 157(47.5) \end{aligned}$ |
| 5 | Course: <br> B.sc (N) $1^{\text {st }}$ year <br> GNM $1^{\text {st }}$ year <br> Post Basic B.sc (N) 1 ${ }^{\text {st }}$ year | $\begin{aligned} & 194(58.8) \\ & 097(28.4) \\ & 039(11.8) \end{aligned}$ |
| 6 | Type of School: <br> Government <br> Private | $\begin{aligned} & 174(52.7) \\ & 156(47.3) \end{aligned}$ |
| 7 | Co-Education: <br> Primary Classes <br> Middle classes <br> Secondary classes <br> Senior Secondary classes <br> Complete education from co-education schools <br> No co-education | $\begin{aligned} & 005(01.5) \\ & 012(03.6) \\ & 024(07.3) \\ & 064(19.4) \\ & 205(62.1) \\ & 020(06.6) \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ |
| 8 | Board Of Senior Secondary Education: <br> State Board <br> CBSE | $\begin{aligned} & 191(57.9) \\ & 139(42.1) \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ |
| 9 | +2 stream: <br> Medical <br> Non medical <br> Arts <br> Commerce | $\begin{aligned} & 209(63.3) \\ & 019(05.7) \\ & 085(25.7) \\ & 017(05.2) \end{aligned}$ |
| 10 | Marks (\%) In Senior Secondary Education: $40-50 \%$ <br> 51-60\% <br> 61-70\% <br> 71-80\% <br> Above 80\% | $\begin{aligned} & 008(02.4) \\ & 106(32.1) \\ & 147(44.5) \\ & 052(15.8) \\ & 017(05.2) \end{aligned}$ |
| 11 | Education Of Father: <br> No formal education <br> Elementary education( 1st- 8th grade <br> Secondary education( 9th and 10th Grade) <br> Senior secondary education ( +1 and +2 grade) <br> Graduation and above | $\begin{aligned} & 019(05.8) \\ & 033(10.0) \\ & 081(24.5) \\ & 110(33.3) \\ & 087(26.4) \end{aligned}$ |
| 12 | Education Of Mother: <br> No formal education <br> Elementary education( 1st- 8th grade) <br> Secondary education( 9th and 10th Grade) <br> Senior secondary education ( +1 and +2 grade) <br> Graduation and above | $\begin{aligned} & 028(08.5) \\ & 049(14.8) \\ & 093(28.2) \\ & 097(29.4) \\ & 063(19.1) \end{aligned}$ |


| 13 | Father Occupation: <br> Govt employee <br> Private job <br> Business <br> Agriculture <br> Unemployed | $\begin{aligned} & 104(31.5) \\ & 090(27.3) \\ & 054(16.4) \\ & 072(21.8) \\ & 010(03.0) \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 14 | Mother Occupation: <br> Govt employee <br> Private job <br> Business <br> Home maker | $\begin{aligned} & 022(06.7) \\ & 020(06.1) \\ & 004(01.2) \\ & 284(86.1) \end{aligned}$ |
| 15 | Total Family Income: <br> 1. Below 10,000 <br> 2. 10001-50000 <br> 3. 50001-100000 <br> 4. Above 100000 | $\begin{aligned} & 067(20.3) \\ & 169(51.2) \\ & 067(20.3) \\ & 027(08.2) \end{aligned}$ |
| 16 | Birth Order: <br> 1. First child <br> 2. Middle child <br> 3. Last child | $\begin{aligned} & 164(49.7) \\ & 081(24.5) \\ & 085(25.8) \end{aligned}$ |
| 17 | Number of siblings: <br> 1. 1 <br> 2. 2 <br> 3. 3 <br> 4. More than 3 <br> 5. No siblings | $\begin{aligned} & 076(23.0) \\ & 134(40.6) \\ & 074(22.4) \\ & 031(09.4) \\ & 015(04.5) \end{aligned}$ |
| 18 | Source Of Information Of Nursing: <br> 1. Advertisement <br> 2. Parents <br> 3. Relatives <br> 4. Friends <br> 5. Any other | $\begin{gathered} 023(07.0) \\ 174(52.7) \\ 071(21.5) \\ 045(13.6) \\ 017(5.2) \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| 19 | Reason For Joining Nursing Programme: <br> 1. Self interest <br> 2. Parents choice <br> 3. Peer pressure <br> 4. Any other | $\begin{gathered} 209 \text { (63.3) } \\ 104 \text { (31.5) } \\ 005(01.5) \\ 012(3.6) \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| 20 | Any Family Member In Nursing: <br> 1. Yes <br> 2. No | $\begin{aligned} & 112 \text { (33.9) } \\ & 218 \text { (66.1) } \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ |

Table1 (a) shows the frequency and percentage distribution of subjects as per their socio-demographic characteristics.
As per age most of 274 ( $83 \%$ ) subjects were in the age group of 17-20 years. Most of the subjects were female i.e. 315 (95.5\%) and only $15(4.5 \%)$ were male. Nearly half of the subjects were Sikhs $160(48.5 \%), 147(44.5 \%)$ of subjects were Hindus, $13(3.9 \%)$ subjects were Muslims and only $10(3.0 \%)$ were Christian. More than half of the subjects 173(52.4\%) were rural residents and 157 subjects ( $47.5 \%$ ) were urban residents. Most of 194 ( $58.8 \%$ ) subjects were from B.sc ( N ) $1^{\text {sty }}$ year, $97(29.4 \%$ ) were from GNM $1^{\text {st }}$ year and only $39\left(11.8 \%\right.$ ) from Post Basic B.sc (N) $1^{\text {st }}$ year. Nearly half of the subjects i.e. 174(52.7\%) were from Govt schools. Majority of subjects i.e. 205 (62.1\%) had completed their education from coeducation schools. More than half of the subjects i.e. 191(57.8\%) passed senior secondary classes from state board and 139(42.1\%) subjects had CBSE board. Majority of the subjects i.e. 209 (63.3\%) were from Medical stream. Less than half of subjects (44.5\%) scored between 61-70\%. As per education of subject's father, only $87(26.4 \%)$ were graduated and above. On the basis of education of subject's mother, one third of 97 (29.4\%) mothers were educated up to senior secondary classes. As per occupation of fathers, one third $104(31.5 \%)$ were Govt. Employees, As per occupation of mothers most of the mothers i.e. 284(86.1\%) were homemakers. Nearly half of the subjects (51.2\%) had family income between Rs.10001-50000. Nearly half of the subjects i.e. 164(49.7\%) were first child, $85(25.8 \%)$ subjects were last child. Less than 50 percent $134(40.6 \%)$ subjects had two siblings Half of the subjects 174 ( $52.7 \%$ ) came to know about nursing through their parents, Majority of the subjects i.e. 209(63.3\%) joined nursing because of self interest, Most of the subjects i.e. 218(66.1\%) had no family member in nursing profession while $112(33.9 \%)$ had already one or other family member in nursing profession.

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TABLE 2:-Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects as per their overall cognitive ability

| Sr. No. |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Cognitive Ability | N (\%) |  |
| 1 | Good | $071(21.5)$ |
| 2 | Average | $251(76.0)$ |
| 3 | Below Average | $008(02.4)$ |

Table 2 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of subjects as per their overall cognitive ability. Majority of the subjects i.e. $251(76.0 \%)$ had average cognitive domain, 71 (21.5\%) subjects had good cognitive domain, whereas only 08 ( $2.4 \%$ ) subjects had below average cognitive domain.

TABLE 3:- Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects as per sub domains of cognitive ability

| Sr. No. |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Sub Domains of cognitive ability | Good | Poor |  |
| 1 | Applied sciences | $257(77.8)$ | $073(22.1)$ |
| 2 | Judgment | $161(48.7)$ | $169(51.2)$ |
| 3 | Language skills | $312(94.5)$ | $018(05.4)$ |
| 4 | Comprehension | $098(29.6)$ | $232(70.3)$ |

Table 3 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of subjects as per sub domains of cognitive ability. More than half of the subjects i.e. $257(77.8 \%$ ) had good knowledge and $73(22.1 \%)$ subjects had poor knowledge related to applied sciences. Nearly half of the subjects $169(51.2 \%)$ and $161(48.7 \%)$ subjects had poor and good judgment respectively. Majority of the subjects i.e. 312 ( $94.5 \%$ ) had good language skills whereas 018 ( $5.4 \%$ ) subjects had poor language skills. Maximum subjects i.e. $232(70.3 \%)$ had poor reading skills and $98(29.6 \%)$ subjects had good reading skills.

Table 4:-Description of sub domains scores of cognitive behavior

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | N=330 |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Cognitive Sub Domains | No. of items | Range Of Score | Min | Max | Mean $\pm$ SD |  |  |  |  |  |
| Applied sciences | 15 | $0-15$ | 1.00 | 15.00 | $8.76 \pm 2.79$ |  |  |  |  |  |
| Judgment | 10 | $0-10$ | .00 | 9.00 | $4.37 \pm 1.57$ |  |  |  |  |  |
| Language skills/ Verbal reasoning | 17 | $0-17$ | 1.00 | 17.00 | $12.46 \pm 2.81$ |  |  |  |  |  |
| Comprehension | 09 | $0-9$ | .00 | 8.00 | $3.74 \pm 1.69$ |  |  |  |  |  |

Table 4 depicts sub domains scores of cognitive behavior. Results showed that mean score for applied sciences was ( $8.76 \pm 2.79$ ); mean judgment score was ( $4.37 \pm 1.57$ ), mean language score was ( $12.46 \pm 2.81$ ) and mean comprehension score was (3.74 $\pm 1.69)$.

Table 5:- Association of cognitive domain with their selected socio-demographic variables

| Demographic variables | N | MIEAN $\pm$ SD | df | Sig. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Senior Secondary Education Stream: |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Medical | 209 | $30.91 \pm 5.2$ |  |  |
| 2. Non Medical | 19 | $29.42 \pm 5.22$ | 4 | . $000{ }^{\text {s }}$ |
| 3. Arts | 85 | $26.0 \pm 5.99$ |  |  |
| 4. Commerce | 17 | $26.5 \pm 8.30$ |  |  |
| Marks (\%) in +2 class: |  |  |  |  |
| 1. $40-50 \%$ | 8 | $28.0 \pm 6.9$ |  |  |
| 2. 51-60\% | 106 | $28.6 \pm 5.8$ | 4 |  |
| 3. 61-70\% | 147 | $28.1 \pm 5.6$ |  |  |
| 4. 71-80\% | 52 | $32.8 \pm 6.3$ |  |  |
| $5 . \quad$ Above 81\% | 17 | $33.8 \pm 3.6$ |  |  |
| Mother education: |  |  |  |  |
| 1. No formal education | 28 | $29.5 \pm 6.8$ |  |  |
| 2. Elementary education( 1st- 8th grade | 49 | $27.6 \pm 4.99$ | 4 | 000 ${ }^{\text {s }}$ |
| 3. Secondary education( 9th and 10th Grade) | 93 | $93 \pm 29.4$ | 4 | . $000{ }^{5}$ |
| 4. Senior secondary education ( +1 and +2 grade) | 97 | 97 $\pm 28.1$ |  |  |
| 5. Graduation and above | 63 | $32.2 \pm 5.26$ |  |  |

Table 5 depicts the association of cognitive domain with their selected socio-demographic variables, senior secondary education stream, marks (\%) in +2 class and mother education were found significantly associated with cognitive domain at level of significance $<0.005$.

Table 6:-Mean scores of subjects as per their affective behavior

| N=330 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Affective Sub Domains | No. of Items | Range of Score | Min. | Max | Mean $\pm$ SD |  |
| Self Awareness | 7 | $7-35$ | 15.00 | 32.00 | $22.4 \pm 3.33$ |  |
| Self Regulation | 8 | $8-40$ | 12.00 | 37.00 | $25.3 \pm 3.95$ |  |
| Self Motivation | 7 | $7-35$ | 7.00 | 35.00 | $24.9 \pm 4.15$ |  |
| Empathy | 6 | $6-30$ | 9.00 | 30.00 | $21.4 \pm 3.59$ |  |
| Social Skills | 6 | $6-30$ | 0.00 | 17.00 | $19.6 \pm 3.46$ |  |
| Total | 34 | $170-34$ | 68 | 149 | $113.97 \pm 10.76$ |  |

Table 6 depicts scores of sub domains of affective behavior showed that mean score for self regulation was high i.e. (25.3 $\pm 3.95$ ) than self motivation, self awareness, empathy and social skills i.e. (24.9 $\pm 4.15),(22.4 \pm 3.33),(21.4 \pm 3.59)$ and (19.6 $\pm 3.46)$ respectively. Total mean score for affective behaviour was $113.97 \pm 10.76$.

TABLE 7: Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects as per their affective behaviour (sub domains)

$$
\mathbf{N}=330
$$

| Sr. No. | Sub Domains | Strong | Weak |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | Self awareness | $324(98.1)$ | $006(01.8)$ |
| 2 | Self Regulation | $308(93.3)$ | $022(06.6)$ |
| 3 | Self Motivation | $321(97.2)$ | $009(02.7)$ |
| 4 | Empathy | $319(96.6)$ | $011(3.33)$ |
| 5 | Social skills | $310(93.9)$ | $020(06.0)$ |

Table 7 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of subjects as per sub-domains of affective behavior. Almost all the subjects $324(98.1 \%)$ had strong self awareness and only $06(1.8 \%)$ subjects had weak self awareness. Most of the subjects $308(93.3 \%)$ had strong self regulation and $22(6.6 \%)$ subjects had weak self regulation. Majority of the subjects i.e. $321(97.2 \%)$ were strongly motivated whereas $9(2.7 \%)$ subjects had weak self motivation. $319(96.6 \%)$ subjects had strong empathy while $11(3.33 \%)$ subjects had weak empathy. Majority of the subjects i.e. 310 ( $93.9 \%$ ) had good social skills and 20 ( $6.0 \%$ ) subjects had poor social skills.

TABLE 8:- Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects as per their scores in affective domain.

| Sr. No. | Affective Domain | $\mathbf{n}(\%)$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | Strong | $172(52.1)$ |
| 2 | Average | $158(47.8)$ |

Table 8 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of subjects as per their affective sub-domains. As per overall affective behaviour172 (52.1\%) subjects had strong affective behavior and 158(47.8\%) subjects had average affective behavior.

TABLE 9:- Association of affective domain with their selected socio-demographic variables

| Demographic variables |  | N | MEAN $\pm$ SD | df | Sig. |
| :--- | :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Course: |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. | B.sc(N) 1st | 194 | $115.9 \pm 11.0$ |  |  |
| 2. | GNM 1 ${ }^{\text {st }}$ | 97 | $111.21 \pm 9.77$ | 2 | $.000^{\mathrm{s}}$ |
| 3. | Post Basic B.sc (N) 1st | 39 | $111.18 \pm 9.9$ |  |  |
| Senior Secondary Education Stream: |  | 1 |  |  |  |
| 5. | Medical | 209 | $15.74 \pm 10.8$ |  |  |
| 6. | Non Medical | 19 | $111.74 \pm 10.6$ | 4 | $.001^{\text {s }}$ |
| 7. | Arts | 85 | $110.68 \pm 9.92$ |  |  |
| 8. | Commerce | 17 | $110.35 \pm 9.97$ |  |  |

Table 9 depicts the association of affective domain with their selected socio-demographic variables. As per the ANOVA test association of affective domain with selected socio- demographical variable it was found that course, senior secondary education stream, were found significantly associated with affective domain at level of significance $<0.005$

Table 10:- Correlation of cognitive and affective domain $\mathrm{N}=330$

| $\mathbf{N}=\mathbf{V 3 0}$ |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Variable | r | p |
| Cognitive and affective domain | $.299^{* *}$ | .00 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 10 depicts the correlation coefficient value for cognitive and affective domain is .299 . Value suggests that there is significant correlation between cognitive domain and affective domain.

Table 10(a):- Correlation of cognitive domains (Verbal reasoning, Comprehension and language) $\mathrm{N}=330$

| Variable | r | p |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Cognitive and verbal reasoning | $.584^{* *}$ | .00 |
| Comprehension and language | $.320^{* *}$ |  |
| Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). |  |  |

Table 10(a) depicts the correlation coefficient value for verbal reasoning and cognitive domain was .584 and for comprehension and language .320 . Values suggest there is a significant correlation between the domains.

DISCUSSION: The aim of the current study was to assess aptitude level of newly admitted students in nursing courses studying at selected nursing colleges of Punjab. A non experimental approach was applied. NAT (Nursing Aptitude Test) developed by Dr. Triza Jiwan was used to assess the aptitude level of the students. Data was collected from 330 students studying in various nursing colleges of Punjab. Maximum subjects i.e. 76\% had average cognition level followed by $21.5 \%$ had good level of cognition and only $2.4 \%$ had average cognition. More than half of the subjects i.e. $52.1 \%$ had strong affective behavior and $47.8 \%$ subjects had average affective behavior. Present study showed that 58.4\% subjects had good verbal ability and $41.5 \%$ subjects had poor verbal ability in term of English language. A similar study was conducted by Andrade M , George A , Mayya S , Furtado R(2013) ${ }^{20}$ to assess the verbal and numerical aptitude of graduate nursing students at entry level. The results showed that out of the 92 participants, 73(79.3\%) had poor verbal ability and 19 (20.7\%) had average verbal ability in English language.

Present study revealed a positive correlation of verbal reasoning with cognitive aptitude. Similarly Olatoye R A Aderogba A A (2011) ${ }^{\mathbf{2 4}}$ conducted a study to measure aptitude level and investigated the role of student's verbal and numerical abilities among students' performance on aptitude test.This study provides an empirically based suggestion for students to develop high verbal and numerical skills in order to do well in aptitude test.

The present study findings showed that streams in the senior secondary education of the subject i.e. Medical, Non medical, Arts and Commerce were significantly associated with cognitive domain of subjects with $p$ value of .000.Similarly a study was conducted by Ogbonnaya N P, Okpuruka P O U, Iheanacho P N Ndu (2014) ${ }^{23}$ to find out the relationship between entry qualification and academic performance in two basic schools of nursing. The results showed that science students performed better than non science based students.

Results of present study showed that majority of the subjects i.e. 172 (52.1\%) had strong affective behavior and 158(47.8\%) subjects had average affective behavior. Beck C E Goodwin C L Hudson M J (1994) ${ }^{\mathbf{4 2}}$ conducted a similar study entitled as assessment of student affective behaviors in US medical technology programs. Results revealed that out of 189 students, 186 ( $98 \%$ ) provided positive responses to questionnaire based on affective behavior.

## CONCLUSION:

On the basis of the findings of the present study following conclusions were drawn:
> Most of the subjects had average cognitive ability and strong affective behavior.
$>$ There was significant statistical association observed among personal characteristics of the subjects like nursing course, Senior Secondary Education Stream, marks in senior secondary education and education of mothers of subjects with cognition of subjects.
$>$ There was significant association of personal characteristics like course and senior secondary education steam with affective behavior of subject.
$>$ On the basis of results it was also concluded that most of the subjects had poor comprehension of reading and half of the subjects had poor clinical judgment.

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