

**Self-esteem and Assertiveness among
Staff Nurses at Ain Shams
University Hospital**

Thesis

*Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of the requirements
of Master Degree in Nursing Sciences
(Nursing Administration)*

By

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B.Sc Nursing

**Faculty of Nursing
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Contents

Introduction.....	1
Aim of the Study	4
Review of Literature	5
SELF-ESTEEM	5
Concept of self-esteem	7
Definition of self-esteem.....	9
Basic elements of self-esteem.....	10
Factors that shape self-esteem.....	12
Self-esteem and behavior	14
Self-esteem dimensions	16
Importance of self-esteem	20
ASSERTIVENESS.....	21
Assertiveness rights	33
Factors related to assertiveness.....	34
Assertiveness training.....	36

Contents (Cont....)

Assertive techniques	39
Assertiveness barriers.....	45
Assertiveness and self-esteem	46
Subjects and Methods	50
Results.....	59
Discussion	86
Conclusion and Recommendations	100
Summary.....	103
References.....	108
Appendices	132
Arabic Summary	-

List of Tables

Table	Title	Page
	Tables of Subjects and Methods	
1	Reliability	56
	Tables of Results	
1	Socio-demographic characteristics of staff nurses in the study sample	60
2	Assertiveness among staff nurses in the study sample	62
3	Self-esteem among staff nurses in the study sample	64
4	Relations between staff nurses' verbal and non-verbal assertiveness and their characteristics	66
5	Relations between staff nurses' action orientation assertiveness and their characteristics	67
6	Relations between staff nurses' work habits assertiveness and their characteristics	68
7	Relations between staff nurses' control of anxiety/fears assertiveness and their characteristics	69
8	Relations between staff nurses' relating to coworkers assertiveness and their characteristics	70
9	Relations between staff nurses' negotiating system assertiveness and their characteristics	71
10	Relations between staff nurses' total assertiveness and their characteristics	72
11	Relations between staff nurses' positive personality self-esteem and their characteristics	73
12	Relations between staff nurses' social personality self-esteem and their characteristics	75

Table	Title	Page
13	Relations between staff nurses' negative personality self-esteem and their characteristics	77
14	Relations between staff nurses' total self-esteem and their characteristics	78
15	Relations between staff nurses' total self-esteem and types of assertiveness	79
16	Relations between staff nurses' total assertiveness and types of self-esteem	80
17	Correlation between staff nurses' assertiveness and self-esteem scores and their characteristics	82
18	Best fitting multiple linear regression model for the self-esteem score	83
19	Correlation matrix of self-esteem scale domains and total assertiveness	84
20	Correlation matrix of assertiveness domains and total self-esteem	85

List of Figures

	Figures	Page
1	Attendance of training courses among staff nurses in the study sample	61
2	Total assertiveness among staff nurses in the study sample	63
3	Total self-esteem among staff nurses in the study sample	65
4	Relations between staff nurses' total assertiveness and total self-esteem	81

Self-esteem and Assertiveness among Staff Nurses at Ain Shams University Hospital

Abstract

Background: Nurses need to be assertive in order to be an effective patients' advocate and to be able to empower them. **Aim of the study:** This study was aimed at investigating the relationship between self-esteem and assertiveness among staff nurses at Ain Shams University Hospitals. **Subjects and Methods:** The study was carried out in the Ain-Shams University Hospitals using an analytic cross-sectional design on 98 staff nurses. A self-administered questionnaire with scales for self-esteem and assertiveness was used in data collection. The fieldwork lasted from January to April 2017. **Results:** The staff nurses' age was mostly less than 30-year (51.0%), and 66.3% had a diploma degree. In total, 53.1% had assertiveness, and 63.3% had self-esteem. Their assertiveness is significantly related to their experience years. Their self-esteem is significantly influenced by their nursing qualification and experience years. Assertiveness and self-esteem are positively inter-correlated, with high higher self-esteem among those having high assertiveness. **Conclusion and recommendations:** The staff nurses with higher self-esteem are also having high assertiveness. The study recommends more support and empowerment of staff nurses to enhance their assertiveness and self-esteem.

Keywords: Assertiveness, Self-esteem, Staff Nurses.

Introduction

Nurses interact with patients, colleagues and other health care professionals on a daily basis; such an interaction is improved when nurses have good communication skills. The potential benefits of assertive behavior to nurses are enormous where it enhanced self-awareness, improved staff performance, improved patient care and interdisciplinary collaboration and cohesiveness (*Deltsidou, 2008*).

Assertiveness is the ability to be honest, direct and appropriate expression of opinions, feelings, attitudes and rights, without undue anxiety, in a way that does not infringe on the rights of others (*Hasan et al., 2014*). To develop a successful communication with patients, families, and colleagues, assertiveness is considered as an important hallmark for being a professional nurse. Furthermore, assertiveness is the essence of nursing activities, enabling them to be more independent and make decisions more appropriately (*Ibrahim et al., 2013*).

Moreover, assertiveness is considered as a valuable behavior in nursing since it involves positive results, such as enhancing leadership skills, increasing job satisfaction,

achieving real independence, professional accomplishment, power and determination, avoiding negligence and overlook during the care giving, decreased job stress, and increased efficiency during the changes in condition. The ability of giving proper assertive response to the critical or potentially risky situations is a vital and life-saving skill. Through an assertive behavior, it is possible to develop appropriate communications and support patients' rights without harming the professional relationships (*Taghavi et al., 2010*).

Self-esteem can be defined as an individual's perception of feeling worthy and satisfaction with themselves. In other words, it means how close the real self is to the ideal self (*Mohtashemi et al., 2008*). People's self-views play an important role in how they think, behave and feel (*DeMarree and Rios, 2014*). Self-esteem is one of the most important factors affecting mental health (*Valizadeh et al., 2016*). It is a developmental phenomenon because it is formed and will vary over time and a dynamic phenomenon because although it has stability but is open to change (*Wilson and Dunn, 2004*).

The nurses who have poor self-esteem and poor interpersonal skills without a doubt exhibit negative

professional attitudes and behaviors. In order for nurses to become more influential in the improvement of healthcare delivery system, more competent in the provision of quality patient care, more comfortable in their communication within society and more effective in using their professional knowledge and skills, it is necessary for them to be more assertive and have high self-esteem (*Abed et al., 2015*). Accordingly, it is significantly important to enhance assertiveness and self-esteem of nurses through implementing an assertiveness skills training.

Significance of the Study

The current trend in healthcare settings is inclined towards team working with a multidisciplinary approach. The nurse within a multidisciplinary team can play a pivotal role in providing quality care to the patients under his/her care. There are several misconceptions about assertiveness but nurses need to be assertive in order to be an effective patients' advocate and to be able to empower them. Non-assertiveness can lead to stress, low self-esteem, helplessness and poor job satisfaction leading to poor job retention and high staff turnover.

Aim of the Study

This study was aimed at investigating the relationship between self-esteem and assertiveness among staff nurses at Ain Shams University Hospitals through:

- 1- Assessing the level of self-esteem among staff nurses;
- 2- Assessing the level of assertiveness among staff nurses;
- 3- Finding out the relationship between self-esteem and assertiveness among staff nurses.

Research hypothesis

There is a relationship between self-esteem and assertiveness among staff nurses.

Review of Literature

SELF-ESTEEM

Overview

The interaction between people is a prerequisite for building one's personality, identity and to meet needs such as belonging or love. Moreover, the interpersonal relationships are necessary for the survival, for the adaptation to the society (particularly in workplaces), but also for the happiness of individuals. The nursing students as well as the newly appointed nurses should develop coping skills so that they are initially accepted by colleagues and then be able to successfully fulfill their goals. Nurses with solid theoretical background and ability to apply the skills acquired during their studies can maintain a healthy social and working life (*Canevello and Crocker, 2010*).

In this effort, important contributory mental and cognitive parameters are self-concept and self-esteem. The perception of self-concept is "the organized set of characteristics that the individual understands that identify him/her". The self-concept is defined as "all the thoughts and feelings of the individual in relation to him/herself" and

is based largely on social evaluations that have tried (**Brown, 2008**). The two main components of self-perception are the self-image or self-concept and self-esteem or global self-worth; both components involved in the element of self-assessment (**Makri-Botsari, 2013**).

The beliefs and self-ratings of individuals compose a sense of self and determine not only who he/she is, but also what he/she thinks he/she is, what he/she thinks he/she can do, and what he/she thinks that can be done (**Makri-Botsari, 2013**). The self-concept refers primarily to the cognitive dimension (who I am), while the esteem is in evaluative-emotional side (how I feel about what I am) (**Papanis, 2004**). Self-esteem is a subset of self-perception (**Papanis, 2011**).

Furthermore, self-esteem, with a positive or negative way, is defined as an emotion, an internal belief system that expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval to one's self". It is a favorable opinion about oneself and one's abilities (**Wilson et al., 2003**). The way in which the individual perceives himself remains largely unchanged through time and affects behavior (**Papanis, 2004**), feelings, values, goals and ambitions (**Makri-Botsari, 2013**) and is considered as a fairly stable personality trait (**Papanis, 2004**).