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Insights into Effective Communication in Higher Education: A Survey Study on its Effects on Nursing Faculty Self-Esteem and Student Learning

Shaista[1], Abdur Rahman[2], Irum Afsar Ali[3], Sidra Ali[3], Mahrun Nisa[3], Noor Zada[4] and Shagufta[5]

[1]Department of Nursing, Mardan College of Nursing, Bacha Khan Medical College, Mardan, Pakistan
[2]Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre, Lahore, Pakistan
[3]Rufaidah Nursing College Prime, Peshawar, Pakistan
[4]Medical Teaching Institution Mardan Medical Complex, Mardan, Pakistan
[5]Kuwait Central Blood Bank, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital, Kuwait

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ABSTRACT

Student learning outcomes together with faculty self-esteem development benefit significantly from effective communication methods within higher educational environments, especially nursing education. The ability to communicate clearly and effectively contributes to positive relationships, enhanced teaching, and improved student performance. **Objectives:** evaluate how communication effectiveness shapes nursing faculty self-esteem together with student academic results. The main objectives aim to determine which communication methods help retain faculty self-esteem while maximizing student learning opportunities in nursing education. **Methods:** A questionnaire-based assessment of nursing faculty members with students was used as the research method. The research instrument evaluated both communication processes and their relationship with faculty perception of self-esteem and student educational achievements. The researchers tested patterns and links between the study factors and communication effectiveness through data analysis. **Results:** The research data indicates that nursing faculty members who communicate well achieve better self-esteem along with students who experience improved learning outcomes. Nursing faculty who communicated with clarity and empathy along with openness achieved better self-esteem ratings but students learned better when faculty delivered effective communication messages. **Conclusions:** It was concluded that effective communication stands vital in nursing educational settings. Through specific educator recommendations about communication enhancement strategies, the professional self-esteem of faculty can improve alongside building better learning environments for students. The study demonstrates a need for ongoing educational development programs about communication competencies that can boost nursing education effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Effective communication in higher education is crucial for enhancing learning experiences and fostering positive relationships between faculty and students. The rising demand for communication in modern academic competition emerges from the widespread expansion of educational and industrial sectors. Effective communication serves to link different educational levels and to build student-teacher understanding as well as enable schools to reach their objectives smoothly [1]. The foundation of powerful academic organization relationships depends heavily on efficient communication approaches. The management tool performs many vital roles in decision-making while distributing information and building relationships resolving doubts serves emotional needs and safeguarding against conflicts while handling personal needs. A communications process demands both message sending along a response from receivers through feedback [2]. Training effective healthcare professionals

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stands as a crucial priority in nursing education therefore faculty-to-student communication plays an essential role [3]. Knowledge transfer and learning facilitation together with educator and learner professional development happen because of this fundamental base [4]. Effective communication practice in nursing faculty directly influences their teaching systems and directly affects both their self-esteem and professional job satisfaction. [5] Students achieve better results in school and develop new skills based directly on the quality of communication that occurs in their learning environment [6]. A pressing need exists to expand research about communication practices in nursing education even though its significance is widely acknowledged. The essential role of communication in educational contexts has received research attention although more in-depth knowledge about nursing education-specific communication challenges is needed. Medical education standards emphasize that the nurse-patient bond depends on empathy together with trust and effective communication therefore superior communication skills remain essential [7]. Research must remain continuous because the healthcare industry's transformation toward interdisciplinary patient-care models requires evaluation of nursing education programs to produce effective professionals. Research on communication within nursing education exists but there are still unknown elements about teacher-student relationship patterns that affect student learning results. The communication challenges in this context become more complicated because of power dynamics combined with different cultures and advancing educational technology [8]. Research within nursing education about communication effects on self-esteem and education. masks the lack of empirical studies measuring these relationships specifically in nursing educational practices [9]. Improved research about effective communication techniques in nursing education remains vital for the advancement of teaching methods and student success as well as quality patient care delivery. Multiple research reports identify communication as an essential nursing education component which supports both good faculty-student relationships and develops nurses' crucial communication capabilities required for clinical work [10]. Educational programs that teach communication methods have proven effective in building healthcare student capabilities coupled with increased confidence and competence in patient-care interactions [11]. Students' communication abilities benefit from interactive training methods based on role-playing simulations and reflective practice because these approaches are used in these programs [8]. Human interactions make up a fundamental part that shapes interactions between nursing education faculty members and their students. These interactions

receive influence from power differences and ethnic backgrounds alongside distinct communication patterns [12]. Students develop their learning perceptions and satisfaction levels about nursing education directly through the communication strategies faculty employ for giving feedback while offering support with respect. All faculty members must strive to improve their teaching methods which enhance patient safety education while conducting assessments on their communication methods [13]. Research has demonstrated that clear, empathetic communication from faculty fosters student motivation, engagement, and academic success [14]. Supportive faculty-student communication helps students develop self-esteem together with stronger confidence and develops their professional identity thus making them ready for clinical practice demands [10]. Conversely, ineffective communication characterized by a lack of clarity, feedback, or respect can lead to disengagement, hinder learning, and negatively affect students' academic performance [11]. The analysis evidences how excellent communication methods in nursing education affect teacher morale and student educational achievement. The article emphasizes both faculty-student relationship development along with communication skill mastery and interpersonal relationship comprehension within educational settings. The text emphasizes the necessity to conduct additional research on particular communication obstacles that nursing education faces. The research goals for this study match the evaluation of communication effectiveness on faculty self-esteem alongside student learning outcomes. Despite the recognized importance of effective communication in nursing education, limited empirical evidence exists on how specific communication strategies directly influence faculty self-esteem and student learning outcomes, particularly in the context of higher education institutions in Pakistan. Most studies have focused on general healthcare communication or student skills, leaving a gap in understanding the faculty perspective and the institutional factors that affect communication efficacy. This gap underscores the need for research that evaluates the interplay between faculty communication practices, self-esteem, and student academic performance. The study aims to inform the development of evidence-based strategies to enhance communication effectiveness and improve educational outcomes for both faculty and students.

METHODS

A quantitative cross-sectional study was conducted for four months among 70 nursing faculty members in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa-specific regions, including Swat, Mardan, Dir, Charsadda, and Peshawar, Semi government

College/University, Private College/University, Government College/University. Data were collected online (google form) through convenient sampling, and modified questionnaires were used. The link was shared Via e-mail and WhatsApp group with colleges/ universities faculty members of different colleges. The data were collected through the online questionnaire. The questionnaire was in both languages (English and Urdu). The convenient sampling technique was used for data collection [15]. A total of 70 participants successfully responded. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were set on the base of teaching experience. Faculty whose experience was less than one year or non-nursing faculty and visiting faculty were excluded. Those who were full-time faculty and teaching experience of more than one year holding at least a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree were included. The questionnaire contains two sections of demographic data such as age, gender, educational background, teaching experience and institute type, and Likert scale questions contain two further segments. The 1st segment contains 10 questions regarding the "Perceptions of University Administrators' Support and Engagement in Academic Development: Likert scale survey None=0 Little=1, Frequently=2, Sometime=3, Always=4, and the 2nd segment contain 12 questions regarding "Self-Esteem and Confidence Among Nursing Faculty: A Likert Scale Assessment"Very Low=0, Low=1, Moderate=2, High=3, Very High=4. The study was analyzed using SPSS version 26.0. Initially, the responses were coded and entered into the SPSS software for processing. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the data, focusing on the frequency and percentage of each response to the Likert scale items. Cronbach's Alpha was computed with the minimum acceptable reliability alpha of 0.70 being sought [16]. The minimum sample size was determined using G*Power software version 3.1.9.6 [17]. This method helped to determine the distribution of participants' views on various aspects of self-esteem, communication, and faculty-student interactions. By calculating the frequency and percentage, we were able to gain insights into the overall trends and patterns in the data, providing a clear understanding of the participants' perceptions. These analyses contributed to a comprehensive evaluation of the study variables, helping to identify key areas of focus for further research and potential interventions.

RESULTS

The survey measured responses on a scale from "Little" to "Always." Findings indicate that 49.3% of faculty members believe the administration effectively communicates a clear vision for academic goals and values. About 62% feel the administration prioritizes academic program enhancement, suggesting a significant focus on improving curriculum and educational standards. Furthermore, 42% of respondents reported that the administration "Always" addresses academic performance, though 2.9% felt such discussions were minimal. Collaboration with the administration was acknowledged, but variability exists in information sharing regarding academic research and trends, with only 20.3% stating that updates are "Always" provided. Additionally, 37.7% of faculty members believe the administration. "Sometimes" supports faculty participation in academic conferences, indicating inconsistency in professional development support. Transparency in faculty evaluation remains a concern, as only 33.3% believe evaluation criteria are well-defined. Additionally, constructive feedback from the administration appears to lack regularity, emphasizing an area for improvement. Accessibility to administration is inconsistent, with a significant proportion of faculty feeling unsupported in addressing concerns. These findings highlight the need for improved communication, transparency, and administrative support to foster a more cohesive academic environment in table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Demographic Variables		p-value
Age	20-30	49 (71%)
	31-40	20 (29%)
Gender	Male	53 (76.8%)
	Female	16 (23.2%)
Educational Background	Bachelor's Degree	43 (62.3%)
	Master's Degree	24 (34.8%)
	Doctoral Degree	2 (2.9%)
Institution Type	Semi Government College/University	17 (24.6%)
	Private College/University	48 (69.6%)
	Government College/University	4 (5.8%)
Years of Teaching Experience	Less Than 1 Year	17 (24.6%)
	1-5 Years	38 (55.1%)
	6-10 Years	14 (20.3%)
Academic Rank	Assistant Professor	11 (15.9%)
	Associate Professor	4 (5.8%)
	Lecturer	44 (63.8%)
	Visiting Faculty	10 (14.5%)
Employment Status	Full-Time Faculty	60 (87%)
	Part-Time Faculty	4 (5.8%)
	Visiting Faculty	5 (7.2%)

The survey assesses faculty perceptions of communication effectiveness within their institutions, using a scale from "Little" to "Always." Findings reveal that 49.3% believe the administration effectively communicates academic goals, while 62% acknowledge a strong focus on program enhancement. Although 42% report consistent discussions on academic performance, only 2.9% find such discussions minimal. Collaboration exists, but only 20.3% receive regular updates on research

trends. Faculty support for academic conferences is inconsistent (37.7% "Sometimes"), and transparency in evaluations remains a concern, with only 33.3% finding criteria well-defined. Inconsistent feedback and limited administrative accessibility highlight areas for improvement in communication and institutional support as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Faculty Perception of Communication Effectiveness

Sr.no	Variables n (%)	Little	None	Frequently	Sometime	Always
1	The university administration provides a clear vision of the institution's academic goals and values.	2 (2.9%)	12 (17.4%)	8 (11.6%)	13 (18.8%)	34 49.3%)
2	Formal discussions led by the university administration focus on enhancing academic programs and curriculum.	6 (8.7%)	10 (4.5%)	10 (14.5%)	21 (30.4%)	22 (31.9%)
3	Formal discussions led by the university administration address academic performance metrics and student outcomes.	2 (2.9%)	8 (11.6%)	12 (17.4%)	18 (26.%1)	29 (42%)
4	Collaborative discussions with university administrators contribute to the improvement of teaching methodologies.	10 (14.5%)	6 (8.7%)	4 (5.8%)	25 (36.2%)	24 (34.8%)
5	University administrators regularly disseminate information on current academic research, trends, and initiatives.	6 (8.7%)	8 (11.6%)	17 (24.6%)	24 (34.8%)	14 (20.3%)
6	University administrators actively support and facilitate faculty participation in academic conferences, workshops, and research endeavours.	14 (20.3%)	4 (5.8%)	11 (15.9%)	26 (37.7%)	14 (20.3%)
7	The university administration encourages continuous review and enhancement of academic resources, materials, and curriculum.	8 (11.6%)	6 (8.7%)	12 (17.4%)	20 (29%)	23 (33.3%)
8	University administrators utilize transparent and well-defined criteria for evaluating faculty performance in teaching and academic contributions.	10 (14.5%)	6 (8.7%)	16 (23.2%)	23 (33.3%)	14 (20.3%)
9	Faculty receive consistent and constructive feedback from university administrators regarding their teaching methods and academic contributions.	12 (17.4%)	7 (10.1%)	12 (17.4%)	30 (43.5%)	8 (11.6%)
10	University administrators maintain an open-door policy and are accessible to address faculty inquiries, concerns, and professional development needs.	16 (23.2%)	4 (5.8%)	12 (17.4%)	21 (30.4%)	16 (23.2)

Faculty members' self-perceptions on various aspects, were measured on a scale from "Very Low" to "Very High." The majority of respondents rated their self-esteem as "Moderate" (46.4%) or "High" (30.4%), with a smaller percentage (5.8%) experiencing very low self-esteem, suggesting room for improvement in fostering faculty confidence. Confidence levels were generally strong, as 43.5% rated themselves "High," and 33.3% rated "Very High," though 14.5% reported lower confidence. Regarding job satisfaction, 72.5% of faculty expressed "High" or "Very High" satisfaction. However, a notable proportion still experiences self-doubt, which could impact performance. While 72.5% of faculty believe they possess qualities that make them effective educators, a concerning 43% feel they do not take pride in their roles. Most faculty members (71%) feel valued, though efforts to recognize contributions could further enhance faculty morale. A positive attitude is maintained by 72.5%, but a small group experiences negativity in their roles, suggesting the need for institutional support in fostering a more positive work environment as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Faculty Self-Perceptions

Sr.no	Variables n (%)	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
1	On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate your overall self-esteem?	4 (5.8%)	2 (2.9%)	32 (46.4%)	21 (30.4%)	10 (14.5%)
2	Do you feel confident in your abilities as a nursing faculty member?	2 (2.9%)	8 (11.6%)	6 (8.7%)	30 (43.5%)	23 (33.3%)
3	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	8 (11.6%)	5 (7.2%)	6 (8.7%)	26 (37.7%)	24 (34.8%)
4	At times, I feel I am not as effective as I would like to be.	6 (8.7%)	21 (30.4%)	26 (37.7%)	12 (17.4%)	4 (5.8%)
5	I feel that I have several qualities that make me effective in my role.	2 (2.9%)	11 (15.9%)	6 (8.70%)	26 (37.7%)	24 (34.8%)
6	I can communicate effectively with students and colleagues.	2 (2.9%)	8 (11.6%)	8 (11.6%)	24 (34.8%)	27 (39.1%)
7	I feel I do not have much to be proud of in my role as a nursing faculty member.	10 (14.5%)	20 (29%)	17 (24.6%)	10 (14.5%)	12 (17.4%)
8	I sometimes feel ineffective in my role.	12 (17.4%)	19 (27.5%)	22 (31.9%)	16 (23.2%)	0 (0%)

9	I feel that I'm a valuable member of the nursing faculty team.	2 (2.9%)	4 (5.8%)	14 (20.3%)	23 (33.3%)	26 (37.7%)
10	I wish I could have more confidence in my abilities as a nursing faculty member.	5 (7.2%)	9 (13%)	12 (17.4%)	21 (30.4%)	22 (31.9%)
11	All in all, I am inclined to think that I am successful in my role as a nursing faculty member.	2 (2.9%)	9 (13%)	6 (8.7%)	30 (43.5%)	22 (31.9%)
12	I take a positive attitude toward myself in my role as a nursing faculty member.	4 (5.8%)	9 (13%)	6 (8.7%)	20 (29%)	30 (43.5%)

The listed test has been applied, which shows the result that these findings suggest that self-esteem and confidence are positively related, but gender, job satisfaction, and experience levels do not show statistically significant differences in the surveyed faculty as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Listed Test Applied for Gender, Job Satisfaction, Self-Esteem, and Confidence

Sr.no	Test	Variables Tested	Statistics	p-value	Interpretation
1	Chi-Square Test	Gender vs. Job Satisfaction	2.743	0.601	No Significant Association
2	Independent t-Test	Gender vs. Confidence Level	1.126	0.264	No Significant Difference
3	One-Way ANOVA	Job Satisfaction across Experience Levels	0.405	0.668	No Significant Difference
4	Correlation Analysis	Self-Esteem and Confidence	0.532	<0.001	Moderate Positive Correlation

DISCUSSION

Effective communication in nursing education significantly influences faculty self-esteem and student learning outcomes Health professionals, including nursing educators, must continuously adapt to innovations in healthcare and evolving patient expectations to enhance service quality and efficiency. In this context, psychological empowerment becomes essential, particularly for nursing faculty, as they navigate the complexities of higher education and healthcare systems [18]. Psychological empowerment, defined as intrinsic motivation and self-control in work, is essential for fostering self-esteem and resilience. Empowered employees feel more capable, supported, and involved in their work, which leads to higher productivity and job satisfaction. This concept is particularly relevant in nursing education, where empowering faculty can enhance teaching effectiveness, improve self-esteem, and foster better student outcomes [19]. Communication is essential in nursing, improving student performance and enabling effective interactions with diverse individuals. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in the Nursing Department of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Foundation University in Istanbul in nursing education, strong communication skills enhance self-confidence and prepare students to handle clinical situations and collaborate effectively with healthcare teams [20]. Nurses interact with patients, colleagues and other healthcare professionals daily, and this interaction is improved when nurses have good communication skills. Several studies have suggested that nurses lack assertiveness skills and that this deficiency in assertiveness results in diminished communication efficacy, thus compromising patient care [21]. Effective classroom management relies heavily on teachers' communication skills. By employing appropriate communication strategies, teachers can promote learner autonomy, engagement, self-concept, and well-being, all of which contribute to managing student behaviour effectively [22]. By utilizing appropriate communication strategies, nurses can better manage patient behaviour, especially in challenging psychiatric settings, improving patient satisfaction and outcomes [23].

This study was limited by its relatively small sample size and the use of convenience sampling, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, self-reported questionnaires could introduce response bias. Future research should consider larger, multi-institutional studies and include observational or mixed-method approaches to capture more nuanced interactions. Further exploration of interventions aimed at enhancing faculty communication skills and institutional support could contribute to improved faculty self-esteem and better student learning outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS

It was concluded that Gender-related differences in achievement may arise due to societal expectations, self-efficacy, and confidence levels in certain disciplines. It can diversify faculty perceptions, indicating areas where university administrations can enhance communication, accessibility, and transparency. Research-intensive universities may provide more opportunities for innovation, while teaching-focused institutions may prioritize different learning methodologies.

Authors' Contribution

Conceptualization: S[1]
Methodology: IAA, SA, MN, NZ, S[2]
Formal analysis: S[1], AR
Writing and Drafting: S[1]
Review and Editing: S[1], IAA, SA, MN, AR, NZ, S[2]

All authors approved the final manuscript and take responsibility for the integrity of the work.

Conflicts of Interest

All the authors declare no conflict of interest.

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