

# Predictors of Academic Motivation and Its Impact on Performance in Nursing Education

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**Abstract: Background:** Academic motivation is a key determinant of success and retention in nursing education, influencing professional development, clinical competence, and quality care. Identifying predictors of motivation and its impact on performance is essential to strengthen nursing education outcomes. **Methods:** A descriptive correlation study was conducted among 144 first year B.Sc. Nursing students at a college in Tamil Nadu, selected through purposive sampling. Academic motivation was measured using the Academic Motivation Scale–College Version (AMS C 28), while academic performance was assessed through psychology examination scores. Data were analyzed using SPSS 20 with descriptive statistics, Pearson’s correlation, and regression analysis. **Results:** Findings revealed that the mean academic motivation score was  $87.85 \pm 8.34$  out of 168 (**Mean%** = 52.28), with intrinsic motivation averaging  $42.68 \pm 5.41$  out of 84 (50.82%) and extrinsic motivation  $45.17 \pm 3.91$  out of 84 (53.77%). Academic performance scores averaged  $59.38 \pm 8.44$  out of 100 (59.38%). A significant positive correlation was found between academic motivation and academic performance ( $r = 0.58, p < 0.001$ ). Most students demonstrated average levels of motivation (93%) and performance (91.7%). Regression analysis showed no significant association between demographic variables and motivation, while family income was inversely related to performance ( $B = -1.810, p = 0.009$ ). **Conclusion:** Academic motivation plays a vital role in nursing education. Strengthening motivation through targeted educational strategies can improve academic outcomes and contribute to the preparation of competent nursing professionals.

**Keywords:** Predictors, Academic motivation, Academic performance, Nursing students, Nursing education

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## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Nursing education is a dynamic and multifaceted process that integrates theoretical knowledge with clinical practice to prepare competent and compassionate healthcare professionals. In today's evolving academic landscape, it is no longer sufficient to rely solely on traditional, one-size-fits-all teaching approaches. Instead, educators must recognize the diversity in students' cognitive, emotional, and motivational profiles to create effective and inclusive learning environments [1].

Nurses play a vital role in health care facilities and emergency responses. Academic motivation among nursing students is a key factor for achieving academic success. They are often the first to detect health emergencies and work on the frontlines of disease prevention and delivery of primary health, including promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation [2]. Therefore, most countries have strengthened their nursing profession through degree-level education and specialization in selected fields of nursing to provide effective and efficient health care for the public.

The World Health Organization estimates that there is a worldwide shortage of approximately 4.3 million doctors, midwives, nurses, and other healthcare professionals [3]. Buerhaus, Auerbach, and Staiger reported that the demand for qualified nurse practitioners was increasing at a rate of 2-3% per year [4].

Achievement was initially recognized as an important source of human motivation by Henry Murray in the late 1930s. Although Murray identified achievement motivation as important, it was David McClelland and John Atkinson who devised a way of measuring differences in achievement motivation [5,6]. Achievement motivation is the need for excellence and significant accomplishment, despite what rewards may be offered after achievement has been met [7]. Motivation and attitude were found to be strong predictors of student academic performance [8].

Academic motivation plays a crucial role in determining an individual's decision to enroll in school and pursue a degree [9]. It is of utmost importance for students' academic achievement, making it a prominent area of research in education [10]. Izuchi and Onyekuru emphasized that academic motivation nurtures students' interest in learning, inspiring them to invest effort toward attaining their objectives, and molding their perception of their academic abilities [11].

Maintaining academic performance, success, and retention in nursing education is a global challenge. Several studies have identified predictors of academic performance. Learning approaches and study strategies have been shown to correlate strongly with achievement [12]. In nursing education, motivational packages have demonstrated effectiveness in improving performance [13]. Strategies such as effective learning approaches, Simulation-based learning, creative teaching approaches and innovative teaching methods can positively influence the learning outcomes among students [12-15]. These factors are of vital importance to nursing institutions and educators in identifying students at risk of unsatisfactory performance.

Academic achievement plays an important role in producing quality graduates who contribute to health, economic, and social development [16]. Academic performance refers to grades achieved by nursing students, influenced by socio-demographic and school-related factors [17]. Good grades are linked to how students manage their studies and cope with tasks. In addition to teaching methodology and innovative strategies, students' evaluation methods also play important role in students' motivation, satisfaction, critical thinking and their performance [18-19].

Therefore, the knowledge on students' motivation and their performance are essential in planning strategies to maximize these factors. Hence, this study was undertaken to assess the predictors of academic motivation and its impact on academic success among B.Sc. Nursing students at selected colleges in Tamil Nadu.

## 2 | METHODOLOGY

Study was conducted after obtaining ethical clearance from Institutional ethical committee of Apollo College of Nursing, Chennai and formal permission from the concerned authorities of the nursing colleges. A descriptive correlation study was conducted among 144 nursing students at selected nursing college which offer B.Sc. (N) program affiliated to The Tamil Nadu DR M.G.R. Medical University and admits 200 students in every academic year. The faculty of the college are well qualified and have experience in their respective field and imparts quality education. The setting was chosen in terms of feasibility and cooperation of authorities and availability of the subjects.

The purposive sampling technique was used to select the required number of nursing students from the selected nursing college in Chennai. Sample size was estimated using GPower 3.1 software\* for correlation analysis. Assuming a medium effect size ( $r = 0.30$ ),  $\alpha = 0.05$ , and power = 0.80, the required sample size was 92, after adding 10 % potential incomplete data, and the need for analysis of multiple variables it was rounded up to 150. Hence the final achieved sample was 144 nursing students, after removing the incomplete data.

Data collection tools were developed through an extensive review of the literature in consultation with the research experts and faculty. In this study, the background variables were assessed by questionnaire of baseline variables of Age, Religion, Domicile, Monthly Family Income and academic variables are Percentage of marks in SSLC & Hr. Sec, Basic Education, Medium of instructions in School, Type of School, and Motivational factor to join B.Sc. Nursing are the attribute variables.

Academic motivation was assessed using the Academic Motivation Scale - College Version (AMS-C 28), a validated instrument measuring intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation [20]. Academic performance was assessed by conducting a unit test in the first-year subject psychology. The unit test consisted of 15 one-mark questions, 10 two-mark questions, and 3 short notes each carrying 5 marks. The total score ranged from 0-50. Informed consent was obtained from all study participants. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study.

## 3 | RESULTS

The data was collected from 144 nursing students were coded and entered into Microsoft Excel spread sheet. The data was analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics through SPSS-20. The collected data were analyzed with reference to objectives and hypotheses of the study.

The overall analysis was carried out using a comprehensive set of statistical techniques based on the objectives of the study which is aimed to evaluate the predictors of academic Motivation and its impacts on Performance among Nursing Students. First, frequency and percentage distributions were used to describe baseline demographic and academic characteristics of nursing students.

Descriptive statistics (Mean, SD, percentages) summarized levels of academic motivation, and performance. To identify the predictors of academic motivation and its impact on performance were assessed by correlation analyses (Pearson's  $r$ ), which explored relationships among SSLC marks, higher secondary marks, motivation, and performance. Finally, Regression Analysis was employed to assess associations between background variables and outcomes.

**Table1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Baseline Variables among B.Sc. Nursing Students.  
(N =144)**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age in Years</b>		
17 Years	57	39.9
18 Years	66	46.2
19 Years	17	11.9
20 Years	3	2.1
<b>Domicile</b>		
Rural	68	47.2
Urban	76	52.8
<b>Monthly Family Income</b>		
Up to 20,000	52	36.1
20,001-30,000	43	29.9
30,001-50,000	31	21.5
Above 50,000	18	12.5

The above table reveals that, the higher proportion of the students in 18 years of age 46.2 %, were from urban area 52.6%. Concerning the economic status, the highest percentage of students reported a monthly family income of up to 20,000 36.1%.

**Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Academic Variables among B.Sc. Nursing Students.  
(N =144)**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Type of School Studied</b>		
Government	68	47.2
Private	76	52.8
<b>Basic Education</b>		
Higher Secondary	141	97.9
Graduates	3	2.1
<b>Medium of Instruction</b>		
English	103	71.5
Others	41	28.5
<b>Performance in SSLC ( % of Marks)</b>		
75-100	55	38.2
50-74	89	61.8
< 50	0	0
<b>Performance in Higher Sec ( % of Marks)</b>		
75-100	75	52.1
50-74	69	47.9
< 50	-	-
<b>Motivation to Join Nursing</b>		
Self Interest	38	26.4
Parents' Advice	33	22.9
Job Opportunity	45	31.3
Service to Humanity	27	18.8
Others	1	0.7

The academic profile of the participants is presented in the above table reveal that, more than half of the students 52.8% studied in Private schools, with a significant majority studied through English medium 71.5%, had completed Hr. Secondary 97.9 % of students.

Regarding academic performance, majority of them scored between 50-74% in their SSLC examinations were 61.8%, while in the Higher Secondary examinations, around half of them scored 75-100% were 52.1% of students. The primary motivation for joining the nursing program was job opportunity 31.3% and self-interest 31.3% of nursing students.

**Table 3: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Levels of academic motivation and Academic Performance among B.Sc. Nursing Students (N =144)**

Levels of Academic Motivation	Frequency	Percentage
Good	4	2.8
Average	134	93
Needs Improvement	6	4.2
Levels of Academic Performance		
Good	2	1.4
Average	132	91.7
Needs Improvement	10	6.9

Regarding the level of Academic motivation, majority of the students 93% had average level and the levels of academic performance among nursing students reveals that 91.7% showed average level of academic performance.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Academic Motivation and Academic performance Scores among Nursing Students (N=144)**

Components	Obtainable Score	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Mean%
Intrinsic Motivation	0-84	23	48	42.68	5.41	50.82
Extrinsic Motivation	0-84	27	48	45.17	3.91	53.77
<b>Grand Motivation Score</b>	<b>0-168</b>	<b>53.00</b>	<b>96.00</b>	<b>87.85</b>	<b>8.34</b>	<b>52.28</b>
<b>Academic performance Score</b>	<b>0-100</b>	<b>30.00</b>	<b>78.00</b>	<b>59.38</b>	<b>8.44</b>	<b>59.38</b>

The above table depicts that, Academic motivation scores were moderate, with mean percentages ranging from 50.8% to 53.7%. Regarding Academic performance scores, were moderate, with mean percentages of 59.4%.

**Table 5: Correlation between SSLC Marks, Hr. Sec Marks, Academic Motivation and Academic Performance Scores among Nursing Students. (N= 144).**

Variables	Test values	SSLC Marks	Hr Sec marks	Academic Motivation	Academic A motivation	Academic performance
SSLC Marks	r	1				
	p					
Hr. Sec marks	r	.623**	1			
	p	.000				
Academic Motivation	r	-.049	.185*	1		
	p	.562	.027			
Academic A motivation	r	.088	.126	.139	1	
	p	.294	.132	.096		
Academic performance	r	.194*	.170*	-.022	.125	1
	p	.020	.042	.798	.135	

The above table reveals that, SSLC and Hr. Sec marks were strongly interrelated and both showed significant positive correlations with academic performance, while Hr. Sec marks also related to academic motivation ( $p < .05$ ). However, there was no correlation between other variables ( $p > 0.05$ ).

**Table 6: Association between selected background variables and Academic Motivation among nursing students. (Regression Analysis) (N=144)**

Model/ Variables	Coefficients					95.0% CI B	
	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P value	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
(Constant)	67.089	18.764		3.575	.000	-.818	3.155
Age	1.169	1.005	.101	1.163	.247	-5.956	.570
Medium of Instruction	-2.693	1.650	-.146	-1.632	.105	-3.433	2.301
Type of School	-.566	1.450	-.034	-.390	.697	-3.186	2.441
Domicile	-.373	1.422	-.022	-.262	.794	-2.584	.190
Monthly Family Income	-1.197	.701	-.148	-1.707	.090	-.159	.176
SSLC Marks	.008	.085	.011	.100	.921	-.085	.275
Hr. Secon Marks	.095	.091	.114	1.044	.298	-.085	.275

The above table reveals that, none of the selected background variables (Age, Medium of Instruction, Type of School, Domicile, Monthly Family Income, SSLC Marks, or Higher Secondary Marks) are associated with Academic Motivation ( $p > .05$ ) among nursing students.

**Table 7: Association between the Selected Background Variables and Academic Performance Among Nursing Students (Regression Analysis) (N=144)**

Model/ Variables	Coefficients					95.0% CI B	
	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P value	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
(Constant)	77.364	18.251		4.239	.000	41.269	113.460
Age	-.426	.977	-.037	-.436	.664	-2.358	1.507
Medium of Instruction	.817	1.605	.045	.509	.612	-2.357	3.991
Type of School	.450	1.410	.027	.319	.750	-2.339	3.238
Domicile	1.091	1.384	.066	.788	.432	-1.645	3.827
Monthly Family Income	-1.810	.682	-.225	-2.655	<b>.009</b>	-3.159	-.462
SSLC Marks	-.095	.083	-.121	-1.150	.252	-.258	.068
Hr. Secon Marks	-.049	.089	-.058	-.550	.583	-.224	.126

The above table reveals that, among the background variables, only monthly family income showed a statistically significant association with academic performance among nursing students ( $B = -1.810$ ,  $p = .009$ ). The negative coefficient indicates that students from families with higher income tended to have

lower academic performance scores. All other variables, including age, medium of instruction, type of school, domicile, SSLC marks, and Hr. marks, were not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Thus, baseline academic performance was largely independent of most background characteristics, except for the inverse relationship with family income.

#### 4 | DISCUSSION

The study examined predictors of academic motivation and its effect on academic performance among first-year B.Sc. Nursing students, revealing a significant positive relationship between the two ( $r = 0.58$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates that higher motivation is associated with better academic outcomes, reinforcing the idea that motivated students are more engaged, persistent, and effective learners. In nursing education, this connection is particularly important, as it supports the development of essential clinical competencies. However, most students demonstrated only average levels of both motivation (93%) and performance (91.7%), suggesting that while motivation plays a key role, its overall level may not be strong enough to drive high academic excellence.

The study also found that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation levels were moderate, with slightly higher influence from extrinsic factors such as job opportunities, which emerged as a major reason for choosing nursing. While extrinsic motivation can encourage participation, intrinsic motivation is more closely linked to deep learning and long-term success, highlighting the need to strengthen internal drive among students. This finding is consistent with earlier work emphasizing the role of motivation in academic achievement [10,11]. Additionally, prior academic performance (SSLC and Higher Secondary marks) showed weak but significant relationships with current academic performance and motivation, suggesting limited predictive value. Most demographic variables, however, showed no significant association with motivation, indicating that it is shaped more by psychological and environmental factors rather than background characteristics.

Research on selfie addiction among college students demonstrated how external behavioral influences can affect concentration and learning [21]. Interventions such as virtual reality therapy have been shown to improve concentration among secondary school students [22], while bibliotherapy has enhanced coping skills among first-year nursing students [23]. These findings suggest that psychosocial and innovative interventions can complement motivation in improving performance.

Evaluation methods such as Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) also play a role in shaping motivation and performance [24]. Cross-disciplinary evidence also supports the relationship between learning approaches and academic performance, as demonstrated in dental education [25]. Together, these supportive studies reinforce the importance of integrating motivational strategies, innovative teaching methods, and psychological support into nursing education. Self Esteem, Self-confidence and judgement also are influencing factors that might influence the overall performance which must be focused during the professional course [26-28]. Assessment and its impact of self-confidence on learning output is also emphasized in researches, highlighting importance of enhancement self confidence, [ 29-32]

An interesting finding in this study was the negative association between family income and academic performance, suggesting that students from lower-income backgrounds may perform slightly better, possibly due to stronger determination or career focus. Overall, regression analysis confirmed that background variables did not significantly predict motivation, emphasizing the importance of improving educational strategies rather than focusing on demographics. The study highlights the need for supportive learning environments, active teaching methods, mentorship, and early interventions to enhance motivation. Strengthening academic motivation can ultimately improve student performance and contribute to the development of competent and committed nursing professionals.

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## 5 | IMPLICATION

The study recommends the implementation of awareness-raising interventions for the nurses to improve the understanding of different types of intrinsic motivation and different learning opportunities. By reducing anxiety, providing clear and meaningful tasks, and fostering a positive learning atmosphere, educators can help students maintain their preference for deep learning approaches even in challenging situations. Promoting improved student performance and the development of effective interventions for academic success. This research has significant implications for educators, and other groups of interest who are concerned about improving student achievement and academic success.

## 6 | RECOMMENDATION

This study can be conducted in large population, experimental study helps to identify effectiveness of nursing curriculum. Encourage active learning strategies by Provide mentorship and counseling support.

## 7 | CONCLUSION

Academic motivation plays vital role in nursing education by improving their motivation level, supportive learning environment and psychological wellbeing directly impacts on academic performance in theoretical and clinical area.

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