



**Article**

## **Academic Performance of Fee Paying and Scholarship Students at CTEVT Affiliated Nursing Colleges in Nepal**

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### **Abstract**

The Government of Nepal through its various agencies including the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) has offered different scholarship schemes to promote nursing education. Despite the practice of scholarship in nursing education for many years, there has been insufficient studies conducted to explore and inform about the effectiveness of scholarship in nursing education in association with the students learning performance. This study examines the status of academic performance of the scholarship and fee paying nursing students and also explores their perspectives on professional values they assert for nursing profession. The study reveals that the scholarship students perform better in learning than the fee-paying students. Their educational performances are measured in terms of the frequency of library visit, frequency of reading course-related articles, duration of time spent by students on self-study (independent variables) and the marks obtained by them (dependent variable) in the first and the second year of nursing courses. The scholarship students have exceeded the fee-paying students in all of these educational performance indicators.

**Keywords:** academic performance, scholarship, nursing colleges, Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training

### **Introduction**

Nursing profession is being popular among Nepali female students. The students, parents, health workers and the government have felt the need and importance of nursing education. But this education in the past appeared to be inaccessible for the target students in terms of time, space and affordability. In order to address the need, the government introduced two scholarship schemes. The purpose of classified scholarship was to address the need of making this profession more inclusive and participatory, while the purpose of intelligent scholarship was to produce competent

human resources in the nursing profession. A huge amount of money is invested through scholarship but there is no empirical evidence to prove its usefulness.

A scholarship can be taken as a program under which a financial support is offered to the needy students. It is also considered as an award for the students in their academic world. The scholarship students get a kind of recognition in their societies. If any students get a scholarship, s/he can give herself or himself a pat on the back. In some

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scholarship programs, there are thousands of applicants. When students are recognized for their accomplishments, it gives them the confidence to pursue their further goals. It is very important for the students to recognize their own potential early in their academic career so that they can foster its growth receiving recognition from an organization.

In Nepal, CTEVT offers three types of scholarships, which are categorized as: a) scholarship for genuine and talented students, b) special scholarship and c) classified scholarships (CTEVT, 2016). A classified scholarship is provided to the hard-up students from among women, dalit, ethnic group, martyrs family, former *kamaiya* (poorly paid tenant), *haliya* (poorly paid plough man) and disadvantages groups of people (CTEVT, 2016). Let it say equity scholarship to the disadvantaged group of people in our society.

Equity scholarships aid the students who are experiencing social or financial disadvantage. Equity is a means of social inclusion in the TVET policies, program and activities. Equity scholarship with its strong emphasis on social justice, the recent literature on education and social sciences increasingly advocate the issues of social inclusion (CTEVT, 2016). Establishing and maintaining equity in public finance is not an easy task. Sometimes it is understood as a relative concept rather than an absolute term. However, equity concept is useful to analyze education financing, which provides the merit for value judgments to determine fairness and social justice in resource allocation. It helps to analyze the education financing policies by putting them into the equity framework.

Academic scholarships reward and/or academic excellence require a high level of achievement in nursing education. The innovative and creative students can show academic excellence on his/her work. It can inspire other students to do better in a certain period. To measure the academic performance of the equity scholarship and non-scholarship nursing students of the CTEVT is considering the marks obtained in the final result taking as an independent variable. The marks obtained in the final exam shows academic and clinical competencies of the student.

The notion of academic performance and perspectives on professional values has increasingly been considered in nursing education to mitigate the international requirement and needs through quality assurance. Goffman (1959) links performance as all activities of participants which persuade other participants. Generally, a performance comprises an event in which he/she behaves in a particular way for the audience. In fact, performance is a complex term, which has many forms. For example - performance management, employee performance, academic performance, performance appraisal, performance indicator, etc.

Academic achievement is determined by the performance outcomes that indicate the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in school, college, and university (Steinmayr et al., 2014). School systems mostly define cognitive goals that either apply across multiple subject areas (e.g., critical thinking) or include the acquisition of knowledge and understanding in a specific intellectual domain (e.g. numeracy, literacy, science,

history) (Mlambo, 2001). The field of academic achievement is very wide-ranging and broadening in terms of educational outcomes. The academic achievement depends upon the indicators that issued to measure it. Academic performance of nursing student is shown through the academic and clinical competencies of the student in academic and clinical field.

The nursing course at proficiency certificate level (equivalent to Grade XII) is entirely a technical education in Nepalese educational stream. Technical education is being provided to people through different universities, CTEVT and its affiliated colleges. School Leaving Certificate (SLC) passed female student can enroll in proficiency certificate level (PCL) nursing program in any colleges of their choice. CTEVT has provided affiliation to more than a hundred nursing colleges till the date (CTEVT, 2016).

Every year CTEVT prepares admission directory for newcomer students to appear in an entrance examination to get new admission. In the directory, the provision of entrance examination, admission procedures and scholarship (10 percent) schemes are written clearly.

This study was conducted to examine the status of academic performance of the scholarship and fee-paying nursing students and the perspectives on professional values they assert for nursing profession.

However, the academic performance of those students with scholarship has always been the matter of research to come with the idea either there is effective rate of return or not.

In order to open the door of international job markets, this type of education is an effective

means. It not only opens the door in the labor markets but also creates job opportunities and entrepreneurship to other people. People having technical and vocational skills can easily sell their skills to national and international markets through which they can get better earning. It ultimately helps them to uplift their living standard in their society. Nowadays, it is found Australia, Canada, USA, UK and other European countries have very eye-catching plans only if Permanent Residence (PR) and working visa for the people having technical and vocational skills, specially nursing education. In the context of Nepal, the number of enrolments shows that nursing is the career subject of choice for most of the SLC graduates. As such, it is more than necessary to come with the idea whether government's investment in nursing education and its scholarship provision is being effective or not.

Nursing education is an entire professional course and nurses have to exhibit a competent skill to deliver their services in any society. And values are individual beliefs that derived from previous experiences, education, social and physical environments that are held to be true and may change over time (Lent et al., 1994).

The students of the study were studying nursing course and every college under the affiliation of CTEVT). Scholarship holder's academic performance, however, is not studied till date. Generally, people expect their academic performance to be high in comparison to other students who have to pay for the study. Colleges are expending a huge amount of money (Rs. 19,57,00,000.00) for nursing students in the name of scholarship each year (CTEVT, 2016). The effect of scholarship program on academic

performances of students with scholarship is hardly discussed in present academia. Are those students, as our expectation, doing fine in their studies? Or, are there any other social, cultural, economic and demographic factors that influence the academic performances of scholarship holder nursing students? Here, it demands an empirical study to claim whether the provision of such scholarships for nursing students is being fruitful for the nation. Nursing education basically focuses to produce skillful nursing professionals to deliver services to the people who need nursing care. Nurses are very much demanding in national and international health service market in this globalized context and they are producing rapidly to meet the global requirement. Their job is becoming more challenging day by day due to the increased expectation of people. So, it should be taken in any research that what is the nursing students' perceptions on professional values.

Moreover, it is to identify the major socio-cultural, economic and demographic factors associated with academic performance of those students. Similarly, values are considering as enduring beliefs or attitudes in persons or groups who are conducting their behavior and serve as criteria for making their own decisions (Eddy et al., 1994). It is also known that professional values are standards for action and that might be favorable to practitioners, professional groups and provide a framework for evaluating behavior (Weis & Schank, 2000).

### **Roles of Professional Values in Nursing**

Nursing values are learnt through formal and informal means. Nursing education influences the formation and development

of professional values and identity provides different approaches to learning and developing these values. Nurses Professional Values Scale determined that nursing education does not only improve academics but also build on fundamental professional values (Harding, 2016).

Mentoring of nursing students is an important portal through which nursing values are transferred. It was found that values displayed by nursing students were developed during interactions with, and observations of the nurse educator. Faculty also has the responsibility for providing encouragement and educational support in order to promote the extraction of professional values from their clinical experiences (Bhandari, 2012). The implementation of clear codes of conduct resulted in improved professional development and noticeably higher professional values among nursing students. Nursing values influence nursing actions and serves as a guide when dealing with ethical issues. Professional values and their resultant behavior are causes for concern, with most nurses displaying very little respect for nursing values (Bhandari, 2012). Similarly, anecdotal reports from both clinical and educational nursing leaders in Jamaica indicate that attitudes and conducts displayed by a significant number of nursing students from different schools of nursing have increasingly been unprofessional (Harding, 2016).

Culture plays an important role in the development of professional values (Brown, 2002). It also influences the development and prioritization of these nursing professional values. The nursing values being the same across all jurisdictions; priority values differ according to culture. Values studied in the

Japanese and American cultures determined that despite having similar values in both cultures, each country had values that were unique to them and this was supported by another study that identified unique cultural indicators in the Japanese culture (Boss et al., 2016). In the context of Nepal, data from no objection certificate department of Ministry of Education, Science and Technology shows that a large number of students are interested for higher education on abroad.

To make students ready for the world of work by developing skilled human resources, access to education without compromising quality, provide options and accredited learning pathways for students between technical and general secondary education, strengthen institutional links and facilitate the transition to higher education, prepare students to uphold and fulfill their civic duties and ensure the acquisition of foundation skills through technical and vocational education at secondary level that will enable adolescents to acquire skill sets (MoE, 2016).

### **Methodology**

The study is based on the survey. The population of the study were the students of PCL nursing who were studying in the second and third year in the CTEVT affiliated institutes located in the Kathmandu valley. The reason behind choosing the study area is that most of the nursing colleges are in the Kathmandu valley and most of the parents prefer to enroll their children in institutes located in the valley irrespective of location, caste and economic position. Out of 29 institutes, 19 nursing colleges were selected for the study. The total population of this study was 1249 and 303 students were taken

as the sample for the study. Out of them, 125 were studying in scholarship and the remaining 178 were from the fee paying group. The fee-paying students were selected randomly.

### **Findings and Discussion**

The level of the academic performance of the fee-paying and scholarship students was analyzed and interpreted in terms of how often they visited library, time they paid for self-study, the frequency of reading course related articles and the educational achievements obtained in the first and the second year of nursing studies. The findings of the study are presented in the Table 1.

A majority of students were found to have visited library occasionally. Also, the scholarship students were found to have visited library more frequently than those of fee-paying students. And, hence, a significant relationship was found between the scholarship and fee-paying students and their library visit as an academic performance. In the same way, the time offered by the students for self-study was also counted as an academic performance. For self-study, the scholarship holders were found to have paid more time than the fee-paying students on daily basis. It was, therefore, found that academic performance of the students in terms of the time offered for self-study has a significant association with their type: scholarship and fee-paying students. Again, in terms of the frequency of reading articles, the scholarship students were found to have read more articles related to their course compared to the fee-paying students. Also, the scholarship students were found to have obtained more marks in total than those of fee-paying students in their nursing studies.

**Table 1**  
*The Major Finding of the Study*

Association between the type of Students and the Frequency of Visiting Library						
Students	Daily/Frequently	Occasionally/Never	Chi-square	<i>p</i> -value		
Scholarship	68(54.4%)	57 (45.6%)	4.345	0.0371		
Fee paying	77 (43.3%)	101 (56.7%)				
Respondents by their Type and the Time offering for Self -study						
Students	Average Reading Hours in a day			t-value	<i>p</i> -value	
	Mean	SD				
Scholarship	4.03	2.68		2.7563	0.0062	
Fee paying	3.25	1.93				
Association between Students' Type and Frequency of Reading Course Related Article						
Reading Article related to Course from the Internet						
Students	Reading Article related to Course from the Internet		Chi-square	<i>p</i> -value		
	Often	Sometime				
Scholarship	75 (60.0%)	50 (40.0%)	2.513	0.1129		
Fee paying	90 (50.6%)	88(49.4%)				
Respondents by their Types and Educational Performance						
Students	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	<i>p</i> -value		
Scholarship	79.6922	4.71481	5.451	<0.001		
Fee paying	75.4412	7.76368				
Respondents by their Level of Performance in Nursing Studies						
Students	Performance			Chi-square	OR (95% CI)	<i>p</i> -value
	high	low	Total			
Scholarship	117	8	125	44.206	10(4.61-21.74)	<0.001
Fee -paying	105	72	178			
Respondents by Learning Achievements and the Type of Scholarship						
Study year	Scholarship type	Mean	SD	t-value	<i>p</i> -value	
1 <sup>st</sup> year	Classified	73.79	10.31	0.61	0.542	
	Intelligent	74.76	7.41			
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Classified	80.73	11.23	5.73	<0.001	
	Intelligent	93.87	14.21			

The educational performances shown by the scholarship and fee-paying students in the first and second year of nursing studies were also analyzed and interpreted. In this regard, it was found that their educational performance has a significant association with their type: scholarship and fee-paying in the first and the second year of their nursing studies. The students learning performances

were analyzed and interpreted by the type of scholarship (intelligent and classified) they held. Based on the statistical test, the intelligent scholarship holders found to have higher level of academic performance, especially in the first and the second year of nursing studies, than those of classified scholarship holders.

The learning performances of the scholarship and the fee-paying students in theory subjects in the first and the second year of nursing studies were also analyzed and interpreted statistically. The scholarship students were found to have obtained better learning performance than those of fee-paying students, especially in the theory subjects, which are being studied in the first and second year of nursing studies. Similarly, so far the matter of educational performances in the practical subject is concerned, the scholarship students in the first year of nursing were found to have scored better marks than the fee-paying students. But their learning achievement in practical course in the second year was found to be more or less similar. On the way to measuring the level of academic performance of the fee-paying and scholarship students their annual score in each subject being taught in the first and second year of nursing was examined. The subject-wise learning performances in the part of scholarship holders were found to be higher compare to the learning performances of the fee-paying students both in the first and the second year of nursing.

### Conclusion

There are two types of scholarship in nursing studies. They are 'intelligence' and 'classified' scholarship. Intelligence scholarship is provided to those who perform excellent in the entrance test or in the first- and second-year examination. Classified scholarship, on the other hand, is provided to different classified groups of students including Dalit, Ethnic, Indigenous, Madhesi, and Muslim students (CTEVT, 2016). Due to this provision, on the one hand, the students from very poor family will not be eligible to get

the scholarship but on the other, the students from very rich family will be eligible to get the scholarship under the classified scheme. Seemingly, it is not justifiable in the socio economic context. But it is the provision of law. Private investment is in a huge volume in this field and providing national and social contribution to develop the nation (Parajuli, 2013). Even they are under some blame. There is a burning need to come with empirical studies in identifying whether the investment in scholarship is being effective. As such, in identifying the effectiveness of scholarship provision for nursing students, and in identifying other socio-economic factors affecting academic performance of scholarship students, the finding of this research endeavor is likely to carry its high significance in forming national educational policy with regard to the scholarship provision for nursing students. And, it is equally significant to parents, students and college owners. Not only in scholarship, it is equally significant to determine the nursing students' perspectives on professional values.

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