



## Exploring Nonviolent Communication and Empathy in the University Environment: A Qualitative Study

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### Abstract

**Background:** Nonviolent communication (NVC) is a model that promotes empathy and respectful interactions between academic staff and students in the university environment, fostering supportive and effective communication.

**Aim:** to explore nonviolent communication and empathy in the university environment, focusing on understanding the experiences of students and educators through qualitative research. **Research design:** A phenomenological design was used to conduct the existing study. **Setting:** The study was conducted at the faculty of Nursing, Zagazig University.

**Subjects:** A purposive sample of 40 individuals from Students and 40 individuals from nursing educators.

**Tools of data collection:** Two tools were used Socio-demographic data sheet, and In-depth interview and focus groups. The interview data was analyzed using the NVivo V.12 software based on the reflexive intuitive thematic analysis method.

**Results:** The study revealed that participants' perspectives and opinions regarding nonviolent communication included themes of Understanding the Core Principles of Nonviolent Communication, Emphasizing Empathy and Compassion in Communication and Application for NVC in Real-Life Situations. In light of participants' perspectives and opinions regarding empathy themes included Deep Understanding and Relationship Strength, Behavioral Cues of Empathy and Emotional Recognition and Responsiveness. Concerning the effects of nonviolent communication on empathy in the university environment, themes included NVC's Role in Enhancing Empathy and Challenges in Implementing NVC.

**Conclusion:** Nonviolent Communication enhances communication and empathy in academic settings.

**Recommendations:** integrating nonviolent communication into a university environment could promote healthier communication and foster more empathetic academic interactions.

**Keywords:** Empathy, Nonviolent communication (NVC), Qualitative Study, University Environment.



## Introduction:

NVC Created in the early 1960s, It is a form of communication that assumes people are, by nature, compassionate and share the same basic human needs. This assumption is useful within the NVC process because it allows for communication to be directed towards meeting a relatable human need, which can facilitate interpersonal connection. "Nonviolent Communication", also known as "Compassionate Communication" or "Collaborative Communication," aims to foster connection and mutual understanding through communication of judgment-free observations, greater recognition of people's feelings, needs and values, and requests for specific actions to meet those needs. (Williams et al., 2021)

Also, Rosenberg created a framework for nonviolent communication that focuses on empathy for others and expressing one's feelings as a means of effective communication in interpersonal relationships. The framework fundamentally involves expressing oneself honestly and listening empathically (Jung et al., 2023). NVC is an effective method for enhancing multidimensional empathy and seeks to dismantle embedded forms of negative communication and provides a framework for developing an empathic way of communicating with the self and with others. NVC is that empathy and understanding are shared human needs and the foundation for resolving conflict peacefully (Sung & Kweon, 2022).

Empathy is regarded as one of the most fundamental components of human and non-human emotional life and their social interactions, and it has been a popular line of research in social psychology, moral psychology, psychiatry, and social work (Yaghoubi & Wind, 2022).

Empathy is a multidimensional construct that encompasses cognitive,

emotional, moral, and relational elements. Empathy is defined as the ability to identify and understand another person's feelings, emotionally register those feelings, and act appropriately (Gutiérrez-Puertas et al., 2024).

Academic nurse educators are essential to the nursing profession, serving as teachers, mentors, and leaders in educational settings and should be highly competent in teaching, research, clinical practice, management, communication, and ethics. They should be educators with multiple competencies that contribute to the cultivation of highly professional nurses (Satoh et al., 2020).

The "nursing students" generally refers to individuals who are actively enrolled in a professional or vocational nursing education program where they learn nursing skills, practice them, and are evaluated on their competency. This definition emphasizes the concrete identification of nursing students based on their participation in formal nursing education programs (Zhou et al., 2023).

Effective communication is essential for fostering trust and collaboration, and its absence can lead to increased stress and conflict among nursing students (Alimba & Jafaru, 2021). Communication problems between nursing educators and students are a significant concern that can adversely affect the educational experience and professional development of nursing students (Moghaddam et al., 2020).

No rational mind can deny the fact that communication plays a major role in education. It is an essential element for effective learning for learners, and the key for efficient teaching for teachers. Briefly put, communication is the linchpin of the teaching-learning process (Ben-Yahia & Lamzira, 2024).



NVC has been applied in a wide range of contexts including in schools, health care centers, prisons, community groups, and families. Examples of positive outcomes of NVC training in diverse settings include respectful discussions on a polarizing topic in a classroom setting (Koopman & Seliga, 2021), growth in empathy, confidence, resolving interpersonal conflicts and strengthening relationships in a group of youth involved with the juvenile justice system (McMahon & Pederson, 2020) and increased empathy scores for previously incarcerated men and trainee nursing students (Kansky & Maassarani, 2022).

Recently, qualitative studies have been widespread in various areas such as psychology, business, and sociology. In the last few decades, the utilization of the qualitative approach has grown in several fields. It may be utilized to investigate a variety of aspects of social interaction for the progress of society. Qualitative research provides descriptive or literary explanations of the hypothesis under the study. When a researcher wants a much more descriptive interpretation, then a qualitative technique could be chosen. It offers a richer and better understanding of society under investigation (Tümen-Akyıldız, & Ahmed, 2021)

Of the different qualitative research designs, the most appropriate for the current research was a *phenomenological design* which was a qualitative method aimed at grasping and portraying the fundamental essence of a phenomenon. This approach delved into the ordinary encounters of individuals while setting aside any preconceived notions the researchers may have had about the subject. Essentially, phenomenological research examined real-life experiences to uncover a richer understanding of how individuals interpreted those experiences (Alhazmi and Kaufmann, 2022).

## Significance of the Study:

Nowadays, children and young people often use the language of violent communication. These various violent problems show that young people today are less able to feel what others feel (Maksimović et al., 2022). One communication strategy that is effectively used is Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication (NVC), which aims to foster connection and understanding through the communication of judgment-free observations, greater recognition of people's feelings, needs, and values, and requests for specific actions to meet those needs. NVC offers tools and principles that support the principles of nonviolence, empathy, and collaborative communication (Batūraitė-Bunka, et al., 2024). So, this study seeks to explore nonviolent communication and empathy in the university environment, focusing on understanding the experiences of students and educators through qualitative research.

## Aim of the study:

### The aim of the study was:

To explore nonviolent communication and empathy in the university environment, focusing on understanding the experiences of students and educators through qualitative research.

## Research questions:

1. What are the perspectives and opinions of students and nursing educators regarding nonviolent communication?
2. What are the perspectives and opinions of students and nursing educators regarding empathy?
3. What are the effects of nonviolent communication on empathy in the university environment?

## Subjects and Methods:

### Research design:

A phenomenological design was used to conduct this study.



### Study Setting:

The current study was conducted at the Faculty of Nursing, Zagazig University, which consists of five floors. The first and second floors are designated for the faculty's employees, including staff and faculty members, and the other three floors include rooms for teaching theoretical subjects, laboratories, and small rooms for teaching practical subjects. The interviews took place at different places, such as the staff's office, the Psychological Counseling Unit Office, and practical sections, and via an online platform such as Zoom and Telegram. Data collection occurred over a period of four months (from the beginning of February 2024 to the end of May 2024).

### Participants

This study utilized the purposive sampling technique to select participants. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which units are selected based on specific characteristics needed for the sample. This method relies on the researcher's judgment to identify and choose individuals, cases, or events that best provide the information necessary to achieve the study's goals (Patayon & Gementiza-Cubio, 2024).

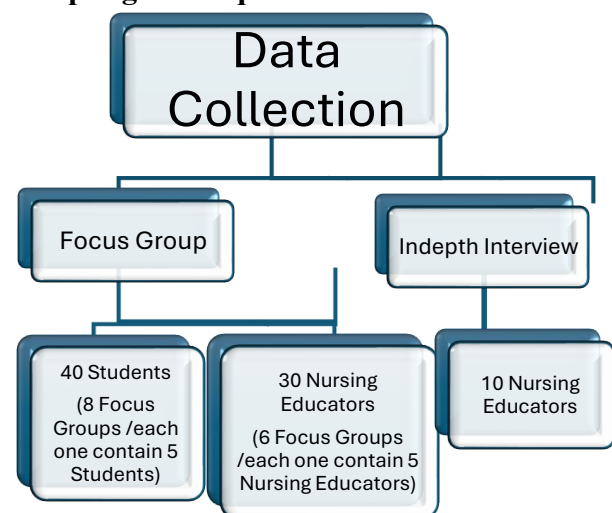
The in-depth interviews (IDIs) participants were students and nursing educators from Nursing College, Zagazig University, who shared their ideas about nonviolent communication. The researcher interviewed forty (40) nursing educators and forty (40) students to understand more about how they empathize in the classroom. The interviews and focus group discussions provide a personal and detailed look at the experiences, viewpoints, and methods students and nursing educators use to manage classroom communication. This approach lets researchers delve into the details, difficulties, and successful approaches that might not be wholly revealed through numbers and statistics

alone. These participants were asked to provide pseudonyms to ensure the confidentiality of their identities, and only the researcher would have access to this information.

### In this study, participants were selected based on the following criteria:

1. Students from all academic years and nursing educators represent all departments.
2. Students and nursing educators are free of any physical or mental problems.

### Sampling technique:



**Figur (1):** Flow chart showing the Sampling technique.

### Tool for data collection:

**The collection of data was concurrent and included the following: -**

#### 1. Socio- demographic data:

##### A. Nursing Students: -

It was adopted from El-Gilany (2012) and composed of 14 open and closed ended questions for students about students' sex, age, educational year, residence, students' birth order, marital status, mother's and father's education& occupation, family income, family members, number of house rooms, and crowding index at house.



## **B. Nursing Educators: -**

It was adopted from **El-Gilany (2012)** and composed of 11 open and closed ended questions about nursing educators' sex, age, specialty, scientific degree, residence, nursing educators' order, marital status, family income, family members, number of house rooms, and crowding index at house.

### **2. In-depth interviews:**

In the current study, 10 in-depth interviews were developed by the researcher taking the role of discussion moderator and included 8 open-ended questions.

### **3. Focus groups discussions: -**

In the current study, 14 focus groups were developed by the researcher taking the role of discussion moderator and included open-ended questions like those used with in-depth interviews.

#### **Field work:**

Field work included the procedures of data collection which are divided into the preparatory phase and the implementation phase.

#### **1. The Introductory phase:**

Once permission was granted to proceed with the study, the researcher met with the vice deans for the Students Affairs and Education in faculty of nursing- Zagazig university, explained to her the study aim and procedures as well as the data collection forms including obtaining an official permission for the approval to conduct the study and get access to students. Then the academic year schedule and a list of students from the Students Affairs Department were also obtained. The introductory phase was executed in one month starting in the beginning of February 2024 and was completed by the end of February 2024.

## **2. The implementation phase:**

The implementation phase was the actual contact with the students and nursing educators through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.

### **Focus group discussions:**

- Each focus group contained 5 homogenous participants (Included 8 focus group discussion for students which included 3 male and 5 female focus group discussion and 5 focus group discussion for nursing educators all were females), as far as possible from the same friendship groupings to encourage openness and honesty. Online focus group discussions were conducted by nursing educators due to limited free time for educators at faculty as they were very busy introducing lectures and doing exams. Online focus group discussions were implemented by adding nursing educators to a newly created group and requiring them to participate in online discussion sessions that gave the participants confidentiality by allowing them to use a participant number and allowing them to have their camera off during the discussion session. The focus group provided an organized discussion platform that enabled the researcher to collect responses from different individuals participating. The participants provided insight into their individual experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of the study topic. The role of the moderator in each focus group discussion was vital to creating an environment where the participants felt comfortable sharing their experiences and perceptions without judgment.
- The researcher began focus group sessions with explaining study and its purpose and ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality. Once informed consent was obtained orally





from online focus group discussions and by written signing in other focus group discussions, the participants were asked to take place in focus group discussions then Participants were given additional time to complete a short demographic survey.

- The focus group sessions began with an introduction, during the introductory part of the session the moderator followed a brief welcome and introduction as an ice breaker. Also, what would take place during the session and ground rules such as listening to each other respectfully, the privacy of each group member would be respected, and that they did not have to answer questions that made them uncomfortable.
- Prior to the main discussion there was usually a warm-up phase designed to make the participants feel at ease. During the warm-up participants generally introduce themselves to the group, beginning by choosing an alias instead of their real name to verify trustworthiness of the researcher's intentions about data obtained from them. Each participant was given a turn at each question. The discussion sessions lasted approximately 1 to 2 hours according to the details provided and for online focus group sessions on Zoom. When the session ended after 40 minutes, we started another session until we ended after approximately 1 to 2 hours. The discussion sessions were recorded using a Dictaphone.
- The focus group sessions started with an opening question to attract the participants' attention and encourage them to participate and express their opinions. The questions were progressively followed up to the main questions.
- A probe questions were used to take the discussion into still deeper territory,

"Please tell me more about that", "What does this remind you of?", "Is this what you said?" or "Do you feel that that is right?". To obtain detailed responses, the researcher responded to the interviewee by utilizing active listening, using silence, keeping group members free to express themselves openly and distilling participants' responses.

- At the end of the discussion, the moderator asked the participants to add any comments they wanted to include. Also, they were thanked for their participation.

N.B. The researcher took the role of moderator (often referred to as a moderator or facilitator), while another staff member took the role of assistant moderator. The responsibilities of the moderator are initiating the debate, as well as inspiring participants to respond by expressing their perceptions and opinions confidently. Another crucial role of the moderator is to make members assure and comfortable to be engaged with the discussion effectively. Furthermore, everyone should be able to speak and interact (**Akyildiz & Ahmed, 2021**). In the absence of an assistant moderator, the researcher played both roles.

### In-depth interview

- 10 in-depth interviews were Conducted with nursing educators, and the researcher was solely responsible for collecting the data. Interviews were conducted face to face and a list of questions determined prior to the interview guided the process. The interview schedule was given to the participants in advance to give them a chance to think over the questions and not be 'put on the spot'. All interviews took place at a venue and a time that was negotiated with participants once consent forms had been received. Each interview was recorded using a



Dictaphone to ensure that all the information gathered was available for analysis. Upon completion, each interview was then transcribed.

- Each interview lasted approximately half - one hour, depending on the degree of detail each interviewee contributed. It was confirmed that the interview is for a research study that is being done to gather information on (non-violence communication). Names would not be recorded, their participation is voluntary, and there is no penalty for refusing to take part. And finally, they may refuse to answer any question in the interview or stop the interview at any time.

N.B. Data collection continued until a research closure was reached (theoretical saturation)

### **Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness in qualitative research supports the findings and argues that attention should be given to the findings. Establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research is important because the raw data that is collected is without a categorization matrix. Trustworthiness in qualitative studies is established when credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are present in a study (Stahl & King, 2020).

- **Credibility.**

Credibility, analogous to internal validity, refers to the researcher's confidence in the study's findings is true and accurate. To establish credibility, the researcher must ensure that the research participants are accurately identified and described in the study. This study used triangulation with the different data collection methods (i.e., focus group and in-depth interviews) to show that the study's findings are credible. During the primary data collection, the researcher ensured that ample time would be given to ensure that

the researcher could listen, document, and obtain saturation of data.

Moreover, to ensure the credibility and validity of the data collection process and mitigate the risk of steering participant responses in a particular direction, a field test was carried out. An expert panel comprising three individuals was enlisted to review the questions utilized in the focus groups, questionnaires, and interviews. This review aimed to assess the clarity, relevance, and alignment of the questions with the study's objectives and research focus. By incorporating this rigorous validation step, potential biases or leading indicators within the data collection instruments were identified and addressed proactively, thereby enhancing the overall methodological integrity of the study.

- **Transferability.**

Transferability, corresponding to external validity, refers to how the researcher can demonstrate that the study's findings can generalize to other settings and groups. Based on the data collected from the current study, findings reveal that there are different interpretations of nonviolent communication in university environments. And the ambiguity of nonviolent communication can create miscommunication based on different interpretations of the users. So, this study's findings may be used to raise awareness on how nonviolent communication is perceived when used in university environments and whether communication policies need to be updated to address the use of nonviolent communication in the university environments to mitigate potential risk for conflicts between students and educators.

- **Dependability.**

Dependability, akin to reliability criterion, refers to the extent that the study's findings would be consistent if the study was to be repeated by others. It is the stability of the study's data under different conditions (Megheirkouni & Moir, 2023).



Dependability was ensured in this study through: -

- ✓ An estimation path that describes the steps taken from the start of the research development, reporting, and findings.
- ✓ And records of the research path were kept throughout the entire study.
- ✓ Also, evidence collected from the focus groups and in-depth interviews were carefully documented and archived throughout the study.
- ✓ The researcher clearly outlined the process of analyzing data in this study.
- ✓ The themes and patterns that emerged through the data analysis were identified, and reports were created.

#### • Confirmability.

Confirmability, corresponding to objectivity criteria, refers to the ability of others to confirm findings. In qualitative research, confirmability is when the insights collected reflect respondent views only without any subjective or biased views of the researcher reporting the study's findings (**Kakar et al., 2023**). To accomplish this,

- ✓ The researcher took an objective reading of what she saw and heard during data collection, putting aside any past prejudices or expectations that might have influenced her interpretation.
- ✓ Additionally, audit trails were used by outside researchers to document the whole data analysis process, including how themes were identified, how sub-themes were organized, and how decisions regarding pertinent insights were reached.
- ✓ Recognition of shortcomings in study methods and their potential effects.

#### Pilot study

The pilot study was conducted at the Faculty of Nursing- Zagazig University, where two focus group discussions were conducted, one with 5 students and the other with 5 nursing educators each lasted for one to two hours, and one in-depth interview with one nursing educator lasted for half to one hour and conducted with one nursing educator. It was a very useful step for the researcher to be more experienced in applying qualitative research. The participants of two focus group discussions and one in-depth interview included in the pilot study were included in the main number of the study sample since no modifications were made.

#### Ethical consideration:

The study proposal was approved by the Ethical Committee at the Faculty of Nursing at Zagazig University with the code M.DZU.NUR/133/12/9/2023. The informed consent for participation in the study was taken from the subjects after fully explaining the aim of the study. Participants were given the opportunity to refuse participation, and they were notified that they could withdraw at any stage of study; also, they were assured that the information would be confidential and used only for research purposes. Confidentiality was confirmed by not writing names.

#### Data analysis design:

##### ▪ Basic Steps in Qualitative Data Analysis:

**There were two main processes for data analysis: A. data preparation and B. data analysis.**

##### A. Data preparation:

The process of data preparation included transcription and translation. Data from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were transcribed from audio words to textual data by the researcher. After that, transcriptions were translated into English by researcher and then



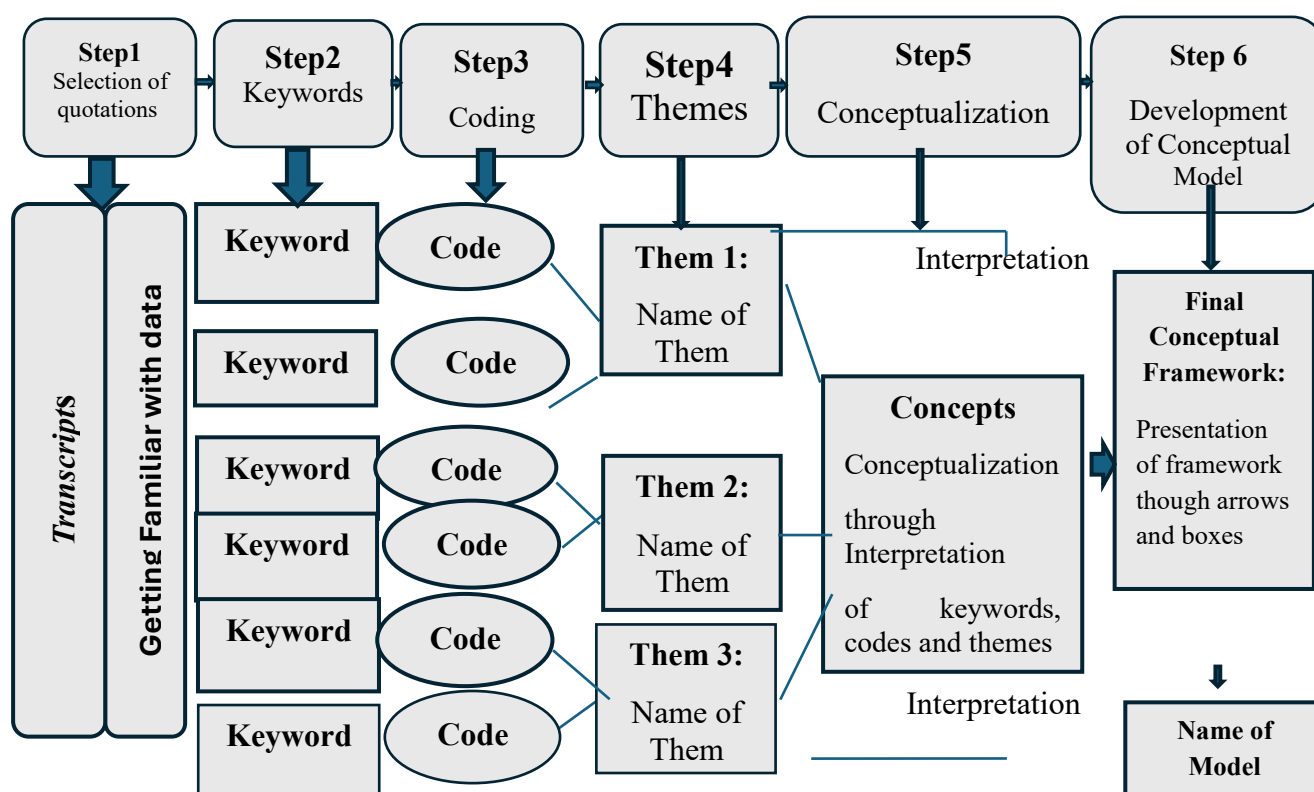


converted to a transcript for later validation. After the transcript had been generated, the actual names of participants were converted to code to protect the participants' privacy.

## B. Data analysis:

Demographic items (age, gender identification, employment, and education level) were analyzed utilizing univariate descriptive statistics. The continuous variables, age and income, were analyzed using means, variances, and standard deviations. The categorical variables of gender identification, employment, and education level are summarized utilizing frequencies and proportions.

Raw data collected from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were uploaded and analyzed through reflexive thematic analysis using **Braun (2022)** thematic analysis approach and supported with NVivo. There are six steps in **(Braun, 2022)** thematic analysis approach that provides a clearly defined process to analyze the data collected; familiarization of data, initial coding, generating themes, validity, and reliability of themes, defining and naming themes, interpretation and reporting.



**Figure (2):** A Systematic Thematic Analysis process.

**Source:** Naeem et al. (2023)

**As in figure 3:** Following the six steps in the current study, the raw data was first transcribed. **In Step One**, the researcher became familiar with the data by reading

and re-reading the transcribed data and writing down any initial codes noticed **(Rathgeber, 2024)**. **In Step Two**, the researcher generated initial codes using



NVIVO. During this step, the initial codes were generated. The raw data was coded first by using line-by-line coding that allowed for the coding to become more detailed, and thus the categorization process came next. Once categorization started, it became easier to detect recurring and consistent themes that emerged. In Step Three, the researcher used the codes that had already been identified and focused on a border level of the identified themes (Busetto et al., 2020). **Step Four** involved reviewing and refining the themes that had been created by making sure there was a coherent pattern. This was a two-step

process where the coded data and the level of themes were reviewed separately (Hemming et al., 2021). **Step Five** was about defining and naming themes to capture the nature of each theme to allow the researcher to create an overall narrative of the data collected (Naeem et al., 2023). **The last step, Step Six**, was about producing a report of the data collected. This data analysis process was most appropriate because it enabled the researcher to identify recurring trends based on the responses provided by the participants by using the triangulation method.



## Results:

**Table (1) Personal Characteristics among the Studied students (n=40):**

Variable	category	No	%
Age (Years)	20 years	5	12.5
	21 years	12	30.0
	22 years	15	<b>37.5</b>
	23 years	8	20.0
Gender	Male	15	37.5
	Female	25	<b>62.5</b>
Residence	Rural	33	<b>82.5</b>
	Urban	7	17.5
Distribution of birth order	First	16	<b>40.0</b>
	Middle	14	35.0
	Last	10	25.0
Marital status	Single	33	<b>82.5</b>
	Engaged	3	7.5
	Married	2	5.0
	Divorced	2	5.0
Income	Insufficient	1	2.5
	Sufficient for daily needs	16	<b>40.0</b>
	Sufficient for daily needs and emergencies	15	37.5
	Sufficient savings capacity	8	20.0
Family size (including participant)	2	1	2.5
	3	2	5.0
	4	6	15.0
	5	17	<b>42.5</b>
	6	10	25.0
	7	2	5.0
	8	2	5.0
<b>Total</b>		40	100

**Table (1)** shows that 37.5 % of studied Students were aged 22 years old, 62.5 % of them were females, 82.5 % from rural areas, 40 % of them were first in distribution of birth order and 82.5 % were currently single. The table also reveals that 40 % of students studied had income sufficient for daily needs, 42.5 % of their family size was five.



**Table (2) Personal Characteristics among the Studied nursing educator (n=40):**

Variable	Category	No	%
<b>Age (Years)</b>	24-26 years	16	<b>40.0</b>
	27-29 years	7	17.5
	30-32 years	11	27.5
	More than 33	6	15.0
<b>Gender</b>	Male	2	5.0
	Female	38	<b>95.0</b>
<b>Residence</b>	Rural	30	<b>75.0</b>
	Urban	10	25.0
<b>Distribution of birth order</b>	First	9	22.5
	Middle	13	32.5
	Last	18	<b>45.0</b>
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	13	32.5
	Engaged	2	5.0
	Married	22	<b>55.0</b>
	Divorced	3	7.5
<b>Income</b>	Insufficient	2	5.0
	Sufficient for daily needs	27	<b>67.5</b>
	Sufficient for daily needs and emergencies	9	22.5
	Sufficient savings capacity	2	5.0
<b>Distribution of specialization</b>	Medical-Surgical Nursing	7	17.5
	Pediatric Nursing	8	20.0
	Obstetrics & Gynecology Nursing	6	15.0
	Geriatric Nursing	10	<b>25.0</b>
	Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing	5	12.5
	Community Health Nursing	3	7.5
	Nursing Administration	1	2.5
	Demonstrator	20	<b>50.0</b>
<b>Distribution of qualification</b>	Assistant Lecturer	10	25.0
	Lecturer	8	20.0
	Assistant Professor	2	5.0
	<b>Total</b>	40	100

**Table (2)** shows that, 40 % of studied Nursing Educators are aged 24-26 years old, 95 % of them are females, 75 % from rural areas, 45 % of them are last in distribution of birth order and 55 % are currently married. The table also reveals that 67.5 % of studied Nursing Educators have sufficient income for daily needs, 25 % of studied nursing educator's Specialization are from Geriatric Nursing and 50 % of nursing educators are Demonstrators.



**Table (3-a): Summary of themes and subthemes for research question No. 1 regarding students' group.**

Themes	Number of participants	Sub-Themes	Responses
<b>Understanding the Core Principles of Nonviolent Communication</b>	<b>(4)</b>	Fundamental Element (Observation, Feelings, Needs, and Requests)	"Observation, feelings, needs, and requests—if we follow these in our interactions, life will be better."(P 7)
		Respectful Requesting Behavior	"We need to express our feelings and make requests respectfully first."(P 9)
		Non-judgmental observation	"I shouldn't judge anyone but instead describe the situation first." (P8)
<b>Prior Knowledge and Discovery of NVC</b>	<b>(2)</b>	Existing Familiarity	"I knew these principles before, but I didn't know they were called nonviolent communication. I feel like professors have started to understand us better."(P6)
		Intuitive Application	"I didn't know the term 'nonviolent communication' before, but I think I already use it when talking to my younger sister. "(P5)
<b>Emphasizing Empathy and Compassion in Communication</b>	<b>(2)</b>	Empathetic Understanding	"We should put ourselves in the other person's shoes."(P6)
		Emotional Awareness	"I should pay attention to my emotions and needs, express them, and also respect others' emotions and needs."(P4)
<b>Application for NVC in Real-Life Situations</b>	<b>(2)</b>	Personal Relationship	"It's something really important that we need, and I've decided to use it to improve communication in my personal relationships. Communication shouldn't just be studied; it must also be applied well."(P6)
		Positive Reinforcement	"Yes, I shouldn't judge someone. Instead, I should help them see that studying is important rather than calling them a failure." (P8)

\*P(Participant)





**Table (3-b): Summary of themes and subthemes for research question No. 1 regarding nursing educators' group.**

Themes	Number of participants	Sub-Themes	Responses
<b>Understanding the Core Principles of Nonviolent Communication</b>	<b>(7)</b>	Recognizing the Four Steps of NVC	"First, I observe without making an immediate judgment. The second step is to express my feelings. After that, I will state what I need to fulfill my emotions. Lastly, I will make my request." (P2)
		Expressing Feelings and Needs Clearly	"First, I observe the situation without judging the person. Then, I express my feelings and state what bothered me in the situation. Next, I say what I want to get rid of the negative feelings and tell the person what they should do." (P1)
<b>Emphasizing Empathy and Compassion in Communication</b>	<b>(6)</b>	Importance of Empathy in Understanding Others	"Empathy and understanding, that we understand each other." (P5)
		Listening More Than Speaking	"Compassion and understanding the other person's perspective, listening more than speaking, giving the other party a chance to express themselves, meaning a relationship between two people involving give and take." (P1)
<b>Application for NVC in Real-Life Situations</b>	<b>(6)</b>	Applying NVC Unconsciously in Daily Life	"I've been applying them unconsciously, meaning I always practice observation and empathy, within limits and depending on the situation and the student." (P2,interview)
		Taking Time Before Responding	"I understand that I need to take my time before making any decisions or actions, ensuring that my response is not punitive." (P7)
<b>Awareness and Learning About NVC</b>	<b>(5)</b>	First-Time Exposure to NVC	"This is my first time hearing about it, but I understand the importance of not harming others with my words or actions and focusing on behavior rather than personal attacks." (P5)
		Learning from the Discussion	"Before the session, I didn't know much. But I learned that if I encounter a situation that upsets me, I should observe without judgment, organize my thoughts, advise the person on what to change, and make my request gently and non-violently." (P13)

\*P(Participant)



**Table (4-a): Summary of themes and subthemes for research question No. 2 regarding Students Group.**

Themes	Number of participants	Sub-Themes	Responses
<b>Understanding Empathy</b>	<b>(4)</b>	Familiarity & Shared Understanding	"If someone is close to me, we talk a lot, understand each other's thoughts and words.(P6)"
		Immediate Response to Needs	"To feel that someone understands my emotions, they will react immediately." (P8)
		Encouragement & Support	"The professor who reassures us that exams will be easy and wishes us luck."(P5)
<b>Behavioral Cues of Empathy</b>	<b>(3)</b>	Actions Reflecting Genuine Care	"From how they treat me and their actions, I can tell if they care."(P4)
		Tone & Way of Speaking	"Yes, from their behavior and way of speaking, I can tell how much they understand me." (P8)
		Expectation vs. Reality in Emotional Support	"I expect the person to think like me and act the way I would."(P2)
<b>Recognizing Emotional Shifts</b>	<b>(3)</b>	Awareness of Changes in Mood	"If someone is close to me and I'm sad one day, they will notice."(P4)
		Noticing Verbal & Nonverbal Cues	"If I'm talking and my tone changes or I yell, they will understand I have a problem."(P8)
<b>Comfort in Communication</b>	<b>(3)</b>	Being Understood Without Justification	"The person in front of me understands me, and I don't need to justify myself."(P24)
		Freedom to Express Feelings	"I can interact with the person without worrying about every word I say."(P3)
		Feeling Relaxed in Conversations	"I feel comfortable talking to them without needing to explain much."(P9)
<b>Acts of Kindness &amp; Effort</b>	<b>(3)</b>	Attempts to Relieve Distress	"The other person tries to comfort me even if their attempt doesn't help."(P12)
		Awareness of Hurtful Words	"The other person notices if they said something that hurt me."(P6)
<b>Proactive Empathy</b>	<b>(3)</b>	Initiative in Offering Support	"Based on their reaction and whether they show concern without me saying anything."(P2)
		Physical Expressions of Care	"From their facial expressions—if someone is crying, they at least offer a hug."(P5)



<b>Consistent Emotional Presence</b>	<b>(3)</b>	Checking in & Changing Topics to Help	"If I'm upset, my friend asks what's wrong or changes the subject to help." (P2)
		Repeated Efforts to Engage	"They come to talk to me, ask about me, and keep trying to see what's bothering me."(P4)
		Understanding Without Words	"If someone is close to me, they should understand what's wrong even if I don't speak."(P7).
		Respecting Emotional Boundaries	"When I get angry, I don't like talking. If someone understands and doesn't get upset, they respect me."(P4)
<b>Emotional Sensitivity</b>	<b>(1)</b>	Unspoken Emotional Expectations	"When I'm upset, I ask people to leave, but deep inside, I want them to stay."(P6)
		Intuitive Understanding	"They understand what I'm feeling without me speaking."(P2)
		Physical Comfort as an Expression of Empathy	"When I love someone, I express it with a hug. If they know me, they'll understand."(P5)

\*P(Participant)

**Table (4-b): Summary of themes and subthemes for research question No. 2 regarding nursing educators Group.**

Themes	Number of participants	Sub-Themes	Responses
<b>Deep Understanding and Relationship Strength</b>	<b>(8)</b>	Empathy Through Close Relationships	"Only my family senses my feelings without me having to speak. No one else does." (P2). "Honestly, no one understands me as well as my mom. She's the one who understands me the most. My friends might also notice." (P16).
		Intuitive Understanding Without Verbal Communication	"I am naturally someone whose emotions are visible, like sadness. When I'm upset about something, I don't speak, and I might stop talking to the person for a while. My mom and siblings are the ones who understand me quickly without me having to say anything." (P17) "Hearts feel each other. I know someone understands me when they do something kind for me or put themselves in my place." (P3 - Interview).
		Facial Expressions and Body Language	"From facial expressions. For example, if I'm upset, I feel that they are also upset with me



<b>Emotional Recognition and Responsiveness</b>	<b>(7)</b>		– from their facial expressions and way of talking." (P14) "From their facial expressions, words, and concern for me. For instance, if I'm upset, they might ask why I'm frowning or seem tired." (P4)".
		Matching Emotional Reactions	It shows in their manner with me, like if I'm talking, they listen attentively and react appropriately. If I say something happy, they seem happy with me, and the same goes for something sad." (P1).
		Sensitivity to Words and Actions	"For instance, if I'm upset and they're laughing, they should calm me down or apologize if they're the reason for my upset. If they laugh or ignore me, it means they don't appreciate or understand my feelings." (P3) . "If they know something upsets me and they don't repeat it without me having to say it again." (P5) "They avoid doing things that hurt me. For instance, they won't be late if they know it bothers me." (P5 - Interview)
<b>Behavioral Cues of Empathy</b>	<b>(6)</b>	Actions Reflecting Empathy	"Through their actions, not just words. Actions speak louder as someone might talk nicely but not follow through with any steps." (P6).
		Taking Supportive Actions	"By meeting my needs. If they understand and fulfill my needs, then we're on the same page." (P9)
<b>Communication as a Tool for Empathy</b>	<b>(6)</b>	Verbal Reassurance and Comforting Words	"The way the person interacts with me shows whether they understand my feelings." (P13) "Through verbal communication and body language....." (P7 - Interview)
		Listening and Acknowledging Feelings	

\*P(Participant)

**Table (5-a): Summary of themes and subthemes for research question No. 3 regarding students' group.**

Themes	Number of participants	Sub-Themes	Responses
<b>NVC's Role in Enhancing Empathy</b>	<b>(6)</b>	Perspective- Taking	" Give others the benefit of the doubt and put myself in their shoes. For example, if a professor seems upset, I assume they might have personal problems." P1 "If everyone saw things from the other person's perspective, all problems would be resolved." (P2)
		Compassion in Conflict	"Yes, because if I communicate with kindness and compassion instead of violence, it will



<b>The Effectiveness of NVC in Conflict Resolution</b>	<b>(6)</b>		prevent the other person from becoming defensive." (P4)
		Effective Communication	"Yes, because when we feel that the professor understands us and is willing to listen, it gives us space to express everything inside us." (P5)
		Mutual Respect	"Yes, it will have an impact because we will be more aware of expressing our feelings and needs. For example, we won't be afraid to say that we don't understand if we've had a long school day. The professor, if they are understanding, might suggest postponing the lesson to another day, reducing conflicts between us." (P15)
		Practical Problem-Solving	"Yes, because as a student, if I understand nonviolent communication, I will appreciate the professor and acknowledge that they also have other responsibilities and problems. This will help me listen calmly"(P16)
<b>Long-Term Impact</b>	<b>(4)</b>	Future Relationships	"Yes, and we will have more trust in the people around us. The circle of people we trust will expand beyond just our parents and siblings. When I go out, I will feel understood and realize that not everyone will fight with me. Our interactions will be smoother. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'Hell is forbidden for those who are easygoing, kind, and gentle.'" (P12)
		Psychological Well-Being	" Yes, because everyone will be comfortable talking to those around them and won't be misunderstood, so they can speak spontaneously and everything will be fine." (P11)
<b>Relational Dynamics</b>	<b>(4)</b>	Student-Teacher Relationship	"Yes, of course, a lot, because I will put myself in the place of the person in front of me, so I will not anger from him, which will reduce conflicts." (P7)
		Building Trust	"Yeah, of course, but with limits because if you're good with me, I'll be good with you too. But there are other people I have to be strict with, so there should be limits, meaning I shouldn't be too open or too strict." (P18)

\*P(Participant)





**Table (5-b): Summary of themes and subthemes for research question No. 3 regarding nursing educators' group.**

Themes	Number of participants	Sub-Themes	Responses
<b>The Effectiveness of NVC in Conflict Resolution</b>	<b>(7)</b>	Improved Understanding and Reduced Mis-communication	"Absolutely, because what caused the problems between us was that we didn't understand each other. With nonviolent communication, we will understand each other, understand our feelings and needs, and start putting ourselves in the other person's shoes." (P4).
		Positive Psychological Impact	"If we deal with this style with the students or even our work colleagues, there will be more and more sympathy between us, which will make a positive difference in our psychological state."(P3)
<b>Challenges in Implementing NVC</b>	<b>(6)</b>	Cultural and Environmental Barriers	"Yes, definitely, but it will take a long time, and we will face many difficulties in applying it until people get used to it due to cultural differences." (P5).
		Personality Differences and Resistance	"But I believe the key factor is the individual's personality. Some people respond well to empathy and prefer nonviolent communication, while others are accustomed to strict and authoritarian approaches." (P4)
<b>NVC's Role in Enhancing Empathy</b>	<b>(6)</b>	Developing Compassion and Emotional Awareness	"Through empathy, understanding the other person's feelings and needs, and striving to meet them, mutual understanding will improve, reducing conflicts and improving communication." (P2)
		Creating a Safe and Trusting Environment	"It can have an incredibly positive impact because it makes the person in front of me feel safe, knowing that I will understand and appreciate the situation without fear of my reaction." (P4)
<b>Practical Applications and Real-life</b>	<b>(5)</b>	NVC in Educational Settings	"If both students and professors express their feelings and needs clearly and compromise, it will reduce conflicts." (P5)
		NVC in Conflict Resolution Scenarios	"I entered a section and found a student quarreling with another. I didn't want to be violent or judgmental, so I spoke to them calmly and asked one to apologize. Later, the student told me he didn't want to upset me, and the situation changed." (P3)

\*P(Participant)



## Discussion:

NVC is an effective method for enhancing multidimensional empathy and seeks to dismantle embedded forms of negative communication and provides a framework for developing an empathic way of communicating with the self and with others (**Batūraitē-Bunka, et al., 2024**).

Also, NVC offers tools and principles that support the principles of nonviolence, empathy, and collaborative communication. In the process of education, effective communication facilitates students' understanding of knowledge imparted by teachers, and improves interpersonal relationship, and empathy abilities (**Williams et al., 2021**).

Therefore, this study aimed to explore nonviolent communication and empathy in the university environment, focusing on understanding the experiences of students and educators through qualitative research.

### Concerning perspectives and opinions of students and nursing educators regarding nonviolent communication

#### 1. Students Group

Concerning students' perspectives on their prior knowledge, understanding, and application of nonviolent communication (NVC). Their responses provide insights into how they interpret and implement NVC principles in academic and personal interactions. The responses from students revealed several themes, categorized into four themes: Understanding the Core Principles of Nonviolent Communication, Prior Knowledge and Discovery of NVC, Emphasizing Empathy and Compassion in Communication, and Application of NVC in Real-Life Situations.

- The first theme, "Understanding the Core Principles of Nonviolent Communication," is classified into 3 sub-themes: Fundamental element (Observation, Feelings, Needs, and Requests) (sub-theme

1), Respectful requesting behavior (sub-theme 2), and Non-judgmental observation (sub-theme 3).

For the first sub-theme, 'Fundamental Element (Observation, Feelings, Needs, and Requests)', most students stated the fundamental elements of NVC observation, feelings, needs, and requests as essential for improving communication. According to NVC theory, compassionate communication goes through a first stage, where a non-judgmental objective observation about a particular situation is followed by acknowledging the accompanying emotional response to the observed situation as the second stage. The third stage involves identifying met and unmet needs related to the observation, which is greatly influenced by an individual's self-awareness and knowledge about distinct feelings and underlying universal needs. The fourth stage involves addressing a non-demanding request towards the dialogue partner for behaviors satisfying one's unmet needs (**Wacker and Dziobek, 2018**).

This result is so consistent with **Julia et al. (2024)**, who conducted a systemic review about compassionate communication and reported that fourteen articles discussed the theory of Non-violent Communication (NVC), which suggested a new language of life, which is a four-stage process to effective conflict resolution and positive relationship building, as it prevents one from responding violently to challenging social scenarios.

For the second sub-theme, 'Respectful Requesting Behavior,' Most students stated that they recognized the importance of respectful requests. This finding may be explained by the approach developed by **Marshall Rosenberg (2015)** that promotes more empathetic, respectful, and constructive communication between people. As NVC principle framing needs as respectful requests rather than demands,



which fosters cooperation and reduces defensiveness.

This result is so consistent with **Adriani et al. (2024)**, who conducted a scoping review about Nonviolent communication as a technology in interpersonal relationships in health work and reported that studies have shown that NVC is a light technology that has made it possible to improve interpersonal relationships. NVC is a non-confrontational approach used to address conflicts without blaming or judging others. It focuses on objective observations, feelings, needs, and requests, facilitating mutual understanding and solutions.

For the third sub-theme, "Non-judgmental observation", many students stated that they recognized the importance of non-judgmental observation in fostering effective dialogue. This may be attributed to **Rosenberg (2003)**, who indicated that students' emphasis on non-judgmental observation aligns with the first step of the NVC model, which promotes cognitive de-biasing by separating observations from evaluations, facilitating clearer and more empathetic dialogue.

The previous results were supported by **Espiritu (2023)**, who conducted a qualitative study about nonviolence, peace, and nonviolent communication towards a holistic framework for a nonviolent world. After five studies on nonviolence and nonviolent communication training in education settings, Espiritu reported that nonviolence was an essential component in the teaching of peace, love, empathy, compassion, expressing sympathy for one's opponents, recognition of one's own and others' universal needs, belief in the possibility of human transformation, connection across difference, non-judgmental expression of thoughts and feelings, talking about emotions without judgement, and use of positive language.

Also, **Batūraitė-Bunka et al. (2024)**, who conducted a qualitative study about unveiling the effects of nonviolent communication training on youth empathy in Lithuania, reported that observation lets people avoid moralistic judgments about others and leads to interpersonal connection. Observation is related to empathy because to be able to feel and try to understand another individual first, humans need to give up prejudice and judgements.

## 2. Nursing Educators Group

Concerning nursing educators' perspectives on their prior knowledge, understanding, and application of nonviolent communication (NVC). Their responses provide insights into how they interpret and implement NVC principles in academic and personal interactions. The responses from nursing educators revealed several themes, categorized into four themes: Understanding the Core Principles of Nonviolent Communication, Emphasizing Empathy and Compassion in Communication, Application for NVC in Real-Life Situations, and Awareness and Learning About NVC. Each theme is further divided into sub-themes that capture specific concerns raised by nursing educators.

- The first theme, "Understanding the core principles of Nonviolent Communication," is classified into 2 sub-themes: Recognizing the four steps of NVC (sub-theme 1) and Expressing Feelings and needs clearly (sub-theme 2).

For the first sub-theme, "Recognizing the Four Steps of NVC," many nursing educators admit that they demonstrated an understanding of the four-step process of NVC, which includes observing without judgment, expressing emotions, stating needs, and making requests.

This study is consistent with **Khuyen (2019)**, who conducted a qualitative study



about the role of nonviolent communication in addressing power in Viet Nam, which revealed that the participants properly applied NVC principles as they empathized with themselves and with others and practiced honest expression for both sides. Practitioners mentioned observing their feelings and honestly expressing their met/unmet needs. They then suggested strategies to fulfill the needs of both sides. Khuyen (2019) concludes that “this conversation approach helped stakeholders to limit hurtful communication and focus on good intention and solutions.”

For the second sub-theme, "Expressing Feelings and Needs Clearly," as many nursing educators demonstrated, A significant emphasis was placed on expressing feelings and needs clearly, ensuring that communication remains non-judgmental and solution focused.

This finding matches that of **Batūraitė-Bunka et al. (2024)**, who conducted a study about unveiling the effects of nonviolent communication training on youth empathy, where they revealed that the participants recognize and understand their feelings and needs and express themselves honestly.

### Concerning perspectives and opinions of students and nursing educators regarding empathy

#### 1. Students Group

Concerning students' perceptions of empathy and how they recognize, experience, and express it in their daily lives. Their responses provide insights into emotional awareness, communication comfort, and behavioral cues. The responses from students revealed several themes, categorized into eight themes: Understanding Empathy, Behavioral Cues of Empathy, Recognizing Emotional Shifts, Comfort in Communication, Acts of Kindness & Effort, Proactive Empathy, Consistent Emotional Presence and Emotional Sensitivity.

- The first theme, "Understanding empathy," is classified into 3 sub-themes: Familiarity & shared understanding (sub-theme 1), Immediate Response to needs (sub-theme 2), and Encouragement & support (sub-theme 3).

For the first sub-theme, 'Familiarity & Shared Understanding,' most students stated that they associate empathy with familiarity and shared understanding, as they expect those close to them to recognize their feelings instinctively and offer reassurance. In this regard, **Yu & Chou (2018)** reported that the dual-route model of empathy proposes that both affective and cognitive processes are utilized. Regarding familiarity, both routes are facilitated: affective empathy tends to be triggered more in those we know well, and cognitive empathy, or perspective taking, benefits from existing knowledge and shared history. Also, shared understanding explained by **Luis et al. (2023)**, who related it directly to Theory of Mind (ToM), which deals with the capability of attributing mental conditions both to oneself and to other people. ToM is enhanced by familiarity as it exists with respect to close others, easing the ability to forecast and comprehend their emotions and responses.

This finding aligned with **Silke et al. (2024)**, who conducted a study about empathy rules, maps, and paths: A qualitative exploration of the factors that facilitate or inhibit empathy and prosocial responding among youth in Ireland reported that young people believe that the ability to empathize with others comes from both one's own personality traits and one's exposure to key contextual factors. Most participants seemed to believe that empathy is socially constructed and relational in nature. Specifically, most suggest that young people's empathic responding is influenced by parents' and friends' modelling and encouragement of empathy.

For the second sub-theme, 'Immediate Response to Needs,' most





students stated that understanding empathy is influenced by immediate responses to emotional needs. In line with this, **Pang et al. (2022)** indicated that there are two distinct levels of empathy mechanisms, namely, cognitive and affective empathy. Cognitive empathy is the ability to understand the target's mental state by imagining how they feel, recognizing others' emotions, and understanding others' viewpoints. This ability is related to perspective taking and the theory of mind (ToM). Affective empathy is the automatic mimicking of others' emotional responses as one's own, including empathic concern and personal distress.

This is supported by the results of **Fulford, (2022)** who conducted a qualitative study about undergraduate college student perceptions of empathy cultivation in the humanities classroom: a qualitative narrative inquiry in England and reported that empathy cultivation happens most effectively in environments where educators and peers respond promptly and supportively to emotional needs. These immediate responses enable students to understand and mirror others' emotions, thereby deepening their empathy. Specific pedagogical strategies such as group discussions, small groupwork, and active listening—often involving real-time responses—were highlighted as crucial for empathy development.

For the third sub-theme, 'Encouragement & Support, most students stated that understanding empathy is influenced by encouragement & support. This result is so consistent with **Ferguson et al. (2020)** who reported that empathy is considered by many to be an important skill for social life. Despite its benefits, there is good evidence to suggest that empathy is not always automatic across social situations. Variations in empathic responding suggest that, at least some of the time, empathy is affected by one's motivation to empathize in any circumstance; encouragement and support

influence empathy by enhancing empathic motivation.

Additionally, **Aldrup et al. (2022)**, who conducted a systemic review about "Is empathy the key to effective teaching?" a systematic review of its association with teacher-student interactions and student outcomes" and emphasized that increasing the number of studies finding a statistically significant positive association between teachers' empathy and their emotional support for students.

### 3. Nursing Educators Group

Concerning nursing educators' perceptions of empathy and how they recognize, experience, and express it in their daily lives. The themes and subthemes extracted from their responses highlight the key factors that contribute to their recognition of empathy in social and professional settings. The responses from nursing educators revealed several themes, categorized into four themes: Deep Understanding and Relationship Strength, Emotional Recognition and Responsiveness, Behavioral Cues of Empathy and Communication as a Tool for Empathy. Each theme is further divided into sub-themes that capture specific concerns raised by nursing educators.

- The first theme, "Deep understanding and relationship strength," is classified into 2 sub-themes: Empathy through close relationships (sub-theme 1) and Intuitive understanding without verbal communication (sub-theme 2).

For the first sub-theme, "Empathy Through Close Relationships," most nursing educators acknowledged that the depth of understanding varies across relationships. Empathy through close relationships was particularly evident, as some respondents mentioned that only family members, especially parents, could intuitively sense their emotions.





This result is so consistent with **Juniarta (2023)**, who conducted a scoping review about empathy in nursing students and reported that Main Theme 2: Factors Contributing to Empathy included interpersonal relationships with significant others, communication, and family attachment style as crucial components and significant predictors of the empathic development of nursing students.

For the second sub-theme, "Intuitive Understanding Without Verbal Communication," most nursing educators emphasized intuitive understanding without verbal communication, indicating that true empathy is often reflected in unspoken gestures and actions rather than explicit discussions.

This result is so consistent with **Valente (2016)**, who conducted a study about empathy and communication: a model of empathy development and reported that the in-depth interviews conducted with the student participants suggested that several personal characteristics mediate the development and perception of empathy. As emotional sharing, it is experiencing and/or understanding how another person feels about themselves and about how other people may feel when observing or openly interacting with that person. This emotional sharing requires acute observation and listening skills. Much of human social interaction depends on implicit cues. Tone of voice, individual mannerisms, and gestures of another person.

### **Concerning the effects of nonviolent communication on empathy in the university environment.**

#### **1. Students Group**

The responses from students regarding their experiences with Nonviolent Communication (NVC) highlight key themes that emphasize the role of empathy, conflict resolution, and

long-term impact on relationships and psychological well-being. The findings suggest that students perceived NVC as facilitating a paradigm shift in communication dynamics, enhancing empathic listening and reducing reactive conflict responses.

- The first theme, "NVC's role in enhancing empathy," which is classified into 2 sub-themes: Perspective-Taking (sub-theme 1) and Compassion in conflict (sub-theme 2).

For the first sub-theme, 'Perspective-Taking,' and the second sub-theme, 'Emotional Resonance,' many students acknowledge that seeing situations from others' perspectives helps resolve conflicts. This mindset shift enables them to interpret others' behaviors with compassion rather than hostility. **Batson (1997)** might explain this due to perspective-taking having been shown to enhance interpersonal understanding and reduce misinterpretation, as supported by empathy and social cognition literature.

The previous results were supported by **Nosek & Durán (2017)** in Italy, who conducted a study about Increasing Empathy and Conflict Resolution Skills through Nonviolent Communication (NVC) Training in Latino Adults and Youth and reported that participants shared gratitude for being able to express and understand feelings and needs, for being heard, for being together in community—particularly the "Latino community"—and for being given the opportunity to "safely and positively" improve their lives. As the following theme emerged, "Enter the other's shoes." This theme captures the increase in empathy gained through understanding the feelings and needs of others.

For the third sub-theme, 'Compassion in Conflict,' many students emphasized that a recurring sentiment is that using compassionate communication strategies



reduces defensiveness and fosters cooperative dialogue. This aligns with affective neuroscience research suggesting that empathic communication activates oxytocin-related responses, which enhance social bonding and conflict resolution (Krueger et al., 2012).

This result is consistent with the study of Koopman & Seliga (2021), who conducted a study about teaching peace by using nonviolent communication for difficult conversations in the college classroom, which found that NVC can be useful for difficult conversations in any college classroom, particularly for deepening students' understanding of nonviolent action. Two important NVC principles—appealing to emotions and pointing to unmet needs—were established as key aspects of nonviolent action.

Also, the results of the current study aligned with the results of Terepyschyi & Khomenko (2019), who conducted a study about the development of methodology for applying nonviolent conflict resolution in academic environments and reported the following themes: "empathy, expressing sympathy for one's opponents." education as a means of developing a culture of peace and nonviolence, non-judgmental expression of thoughts, and recognition of others' needs. And recommend the method of nonviolent communication authored by Marshall Rosenberg in developing a method of nonviolent conflict resolution in the academic environment.

## 2. Nursing Educators Group

Concerning the effects of nonviolent communication on empathy enhancement in the university environment. The responses from nursing educators regarding their experiences with Nonviolent Communication (NVC) highlight key themes that provide valuable insights into the perceived impact, challenges, and practical applications of Nonviolent

Communication (NVC) in academic and professional settings.

- The first theme, "The Effectiveness of NVC in conflict resolution," which is classified into 2 sub-themes: Improved understanding and reduced miscommunication (sub-theme 1) and Positive psychological impact (sub-theme 2).

For the first sub-theme, "Improved Understanding and Reduced Miscommunication," many nursing educators acknowledged that NVC improves communication clarity by promoting structured emotional expression and empathetic listening, thereby reducing instances of misinterpretation and conflict. They emphasized that miscommunication is often the root cause of conflicts and that practicing NVC principles can improve mutual understanding.

In accordance, Nosek et al. (2014), who conducted a mixed-method study about Nonviolent Communication (NVC) training increasing empathy in baccalaureate nursing students, reported qualitative findings that the new skill of NVC suggests the benefit of tuning into the needs of others to help nursing students understand more effectively. This is also a key aspect of therapeutic communication and demonstrates an increase in empathy. Many students shared the success of using NVC with conflicts they have with roommates.

For the second sub-theme, "Positive Psychological Impact" Many nursing educators highlighted the psychological benefits of NVC, noting that empathy-driven interactions contribute to psychological safety and positive group dynamics, which are essential for effective academic environments.

This result is consistent with Visakavičiūtė & Bandzevičienė (2019), who conducted a systematic review of the



impact of the nonviolent communication intervention program on the social behavior of the participants, where the results of this systematic review assumed that the NVC intervention program can be an effective tool for changing the patterns of social behavior of individuals and groups, as it enhances communicative empathy and sensitivity to one's and others' needs and experiences and develops the ability to verbalize and empathetically deal with stress and conflicts.

Moreover, **Holmström (2022)**, who conducted a study about enhancing the effects of emotion-focused individual and couples therapy by nonviolent communication, reported that an emotion-focused therapist could introduce NVC as a facilitating tool for helping clients express their needs in a manner that likely engenders compassion. NVC also assists clients in hearing others with empathy outside the therapy session, without the emotion regulation support from the therapist. The timing for the beneficial use is described for both the individual and couples therapy processes.

### Conclusion:

The current study findings concluded that nonviolent communication enhances communication and empathy in academic settings. Sustained empathetic behaviors such as avoiding hurtful actions, offering support, and maintaining emotional sensitivity play a crucial role in fostering meaningful connections.

### Recommendation:

Based on the findings, the study recommended:

1. Including NVC Training in student orientation programs and university courses.
2. Sharing the study's findings with the heads of the scientific departments at Zagazig University's Faculty of Nursing in an effort to advance the

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) culture as a useful strategy for fostering empathy in academic settings.

3. Encouraging action-based empathy where supportive behavior matches verbal expressions.
4. Creating an academic department-wide communication system based on NVC concepts.

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