Self-Awareness, Knowledge, and Personality Traits and the Academic Performance of the Students

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DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.903SEDU0714

Received: 10 November 2025; Accepted: 20 November 2025; Published: 03 December 2025

ABSTRACT

Academic underachievement is a global concern in educational institutions, which can be linked to factors such as inadequate self-awareness, knowledge deficits, and unfavorable personality traits. Hence, this descriptive correlational study assessed the levels of self-awareness (reflection, goal setting, self-monitoring, metacognitive skills), knowledge (content mastery, information recall, critical thinking), and personality traits (conscientiousness, openness to experience, emotional stability, proactivity), and examined their relationships with academic performance among nursing students in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Davao del Sur. Findings revealed high self-awareness among students, especially in reflection and self-monitoring, while systematic goal setting and advanced metacognitive strategies were less practiced. Knowledge levels were also high, with strengths in content mastery and recall, but challenges in practical application and long-term retention. Critical thinking was present but required improvement in deeper inquiry and theoretical application. Personality traits showed strong proactivity, conscientiousness, and openness, while emotional stability under prolonged stress was weaker. Result also revealed that students' academic performance was generally high. Pearson correlation analysis further revealed that reflection, content mastery, and openness to experience significantly linked to students' academic performance. Hence, these findings underscore the importance of Nursing HEIs in cultivating reflective practices, strengthening content mastery, and supporting the development of openness to experience to enhance students' academic performance.

Keywords: self-awareness, knowledge, personality traits, students' academic performance, descriptive-correlation

INTRODUCTION

Academic underachievement is a global concern in educational institutions, which can be linked to factors such as inadequate self-awareness, knowledge deficits, and unfavorable personality traits. The presence of these elements is vital in influencing students' academic performance and outcomes. Their absence may impede students' ability to achieve their full potential, resulting in adverse effects such as decreased grades, diminished motivation, and restricted prospects for future success.

Inadequate self-awareness is a significant contributor to substandard academic achievement. Studies revealed that students with low self-awareness may have difficulty accurately assessing their academic abilities, which could lead to poorer academic performance [1]. In addition, knowledge gaps have a significant impact on academic performance. Insufficient knowledge in certain subjects can impede one's capacity to comprehend novel concepts, comprehend intricate notions, and apply acquire knowledge efficiently. Shulman's [2] research emphasizes the significance of prior knowledge for academic success. It indicates that students who possess limited background knowledge may encounter difficulties in comprehending and incorporating new information, leading to a negative impact on their academic performance. Furthermore, unfavorable personality traits may negatively impact academic performance. Traits like procrastination, impulsivity, and lack of focus can hinder students' ability to maintain consistent study habits and academic engagement, which can ultimately impact their performance. Duckworth and Seligman [3] discovered that students with deficient

self-discipline exhibited a higher likelihood of encountering academic challenges, such as inferior grades and increased dropout rates.

Although self-awareness is extensively researched in relation to personal growth and well-being, its influence on academic achievement is not yet fully explored. Investigating the relationship between self-awareness, knowledge, personality traits, and academic performance can guide the creation of targeted interventions and strategies to improve students' academic outcomes. Most importantly, the findings of this study would serve as a basis for developing evidence-based programs and institutional policies that enhance learning support, strengthen academic competencies, and promote students' overall success in Nursing HEIs.

This study is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: Quality Education, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. By examining the interplay among self-awareness, knowledge, and personality traits as determinants of students' academic performance, the study contributes to understanding how personal and cognitive factors influence the quality of learning outcomes. Through this investigation, the research underscores the importance of nurturing holistic development, encompassing intellectual, emotional, and behavioral dimensions, as a means of advancing educational excellence and fostering lifelong learning in accordance with SDG 4.

Framework

The study was anchored on the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posited that individuals were driven by intrinsic motivation and the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In the context of academic performance, SDT suggested that self-awareness played a crucial role in motivating students to engage in learning activities and pursue academic goals. Self-awareness enabled students to identify their strengths, weaknesses, and interests, allowing them to align their academic pursuits with their personal values and aspirations [4]. This awareness fostered a sense of autonomy, as students became active participants in their educational journey, making choices that aligned with their interests and values. Furthermore, SDT emphasized the importance of competence, suggesting that students who possessed accurate self-awareness were more likely to engage in effective learning strategies, seek help when needed, and persist in the face of challenges, which led to improved academic performance [5].

Moreover, this study was supported by the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) proposed by Bandura [6], which focused on the dynamic interaction among personal factors, environmental influences, and behavior. According to this theory, knowledge played a pivotal role in shaping students' academic performance. Knowledge acquisition enabled students to understand, organize, and apply information, facilitating their ability to solve problems, think critically, and demonstrate competence in academic tasks [7]. Students with greater knowledge in specific subject areas were better equipped to comprehend complex concepts, engage in higher-order thinking, and achieve higher academic performance. Social Cognitive Theory also highlighted the importance of self-efficacy, a component of self-awareness, which referred to an individual's belief in their own capabilities to successfully perform tasks. Students with higher self-efficacy were more likely to set challenging academic goals, exert effort, and persist in the face of obstacles, thereby enhancing their academic performance [8].

The study was further supported by the Five-Factor Model of Personality (FFM), also known as the Big Five, which provided a framework for understanding the various dimensions of human personality. This model consisted of five broad personality traits: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience [9]. Personality traits influenced students' academic performance through different mechanisms. For instance, conscientiousness, characterized by organization, responsibility, and self-discipline, was positively associated with academic achievement [10]. Conscientious students tended to be diligent in their studies, exhibited effective time management skills, and demonstrated a strong work ethic. Openness to experience facilitated students' acquisition of knowledge by fostering curiosity, willingness to explore new ideas, and receptiveness to different perspectives [11]. Moreover, personality traits influenced students' self-awareness, as individuals with greater self-awareness had a better understanding of their personality characteristics and their implications for academic performance.

The integration of the Self-Determination Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and the Five-Factor Model of Personality provided the theoretical foundation that guided the conceptual framework of this study. These theories collectively explained how self-awareness, knowledge, and personality traits interacted as determinants of academic performance. Self-Determination Theory emphasized the role of intrinsic motivation and autonomy in fostering meaningful learning; Social Cognitive Theory underscored the significance of knowledge, self-efficacy, and personal agency in shaping achievement; while the Five-Factor Model of Personality highlighted the influence of enduring personality traits on students' learning behaviors and outcomes. Together, these frameworks supported the study, which posited that higher levels of self-awareness, knowledge, and positive personality traits contributed to improved academic performance. This theoretical integration reinforced the premise that academic success was not solely dependent on cognitive ability, but also on the dynamic interaction of motivational, cognitive, and personality-related factors that shaped students' learning experiences.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to examine the significant relationship between students' self-awareness, knowledge, personality traits, and academic performance in private HEIs in Davao del Sur. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of self- awareness of students in terms of:

1.1 Reflection;

1.2 Goal Setting;

1.3 Self- Monitoring; and

1.4 Metacognitive Skills?

2. What is the level of knowledge of students in terms of:

2.1 Content Mastery;

2.2 Information Recall; and

2.3 Critical Thinking?

3. What is the level of personality traits of students in terms of:

3.1 Conscientiousness;

3.2 Openness to Experience;

3.3 Emotional Stability; and

3.4 Proactivity?

4. What is the level of academic performance of the students?

5. Is there a significant relationship between academic performance of students and:

5.1 Self-Awareness;

5.2 Knowledge; and

5.3 Personality Traits?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 level of significance

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between the level of academic performance and self-awareness, knowledge, and personality traits.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed quantitative descriptive-correlational research design. According to Bierut [12], the correlational approach analyzed how different traits within a group were related to determine the degree of variation among them. In this study, the levels and relationships of self-awareness, knowledge, personality traits, and academic performance among college students were investigated.

Research Setting

This study was conducted in selected higher education institutions (HEIs) located in Digos City, Davao del Sur, chosen for their integral role in the province's nursing education landscape. Digos City hosts institutions that offer comprehensive nursing programs and environments conducive to both theoretical learning and clinical exposure. These institutions provide diverse academic conditions, support systems, and student development practices, making them suitable settings for examining the levels of self-awareness, knowledge, and personality traits among nursing students. Their varied educational structures and learning cultures allow for a meaningful assessment of how these internal attributes relate to students' academic performance.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The total number of participants in this study was composed exclusively of Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) third-year and fourth year students enrolled in HEIs within Digos City, Davao del Sur. These students were selected due to their academic standing and exposure to foundational and clinical nursing subjects, making them ideal participants for understanding the phenomena under investigation.

To ensure impartiality and representativeness, the study employed random sampling as its primary method for selecting participants. Random sampling is a probability sampling technique wherein each member of the target population has an equal and independent chance of being chosen. This method helps eliminate selection bias, thereby enhancing the validity and generalizability of the study findings [13]. In practical application, the researcher used a computer-generated random number system or an equivalent algorithmic method to select participants from the official list of BSN 3 and 4 students provided by each institution. This process ensures fairness in the selection and aligns with the quantitative nature of the study.

Research Instruments

The study employed researcher-made survey questionnaires to gather comprehensive data on various aspects of student development. The first part of the questionnaire focused on assessing the level of self-awareness among students, in terms of Reflection, Goal Setting, Self- Monitoring, and Metacognitive Skills. The second part of the questionnaire measured the level of knowledge among students, particularly in terms of content mastery, information recall, and critical thinking. The third part of the instrument explored the level of personality traits among students, including dimensions such as Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, Emotional Stability, and Proactivity.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering followed the research protocol of Liceo de Cagayan University–Graduate Studies. The study commenced with a formal request letter to the Deans of the selected HEIs in Digos City, explaining the study's objectives, significance, and scope of respondent involvement. After institutional approval, the full

research protocol, including instruments, informed consent forms, and data management plans, were submitted to the Liceo-Research Ethics Board (LREB) for review and evaluation to ensure adherence to ethical principles such as beneficence, respect for persons, and justice.

Upon receiving ethical clearance, final permission to conduct the study was obtained from the participating institutions, and eligible BSN Level 3 and 4 students were recruited. Inclusion criteria required current enrollment, completion of at least one semester of academic or clinical training, and provision of informed consent; students on leave, unenrolled, or who declined participation were excluded. Participants were informed of study procedures, their rights, and the voluntary nature of participation, with the option to withdraw at any time without penalty. Upon securing the informed consent forms of each respondent, the academic performance was obtained from the School's Registrar.

Furthermore, the data collection was conducted online via secured survey platforms lasting approximately 10–30 minutes per respondent. The researcher facilitated administration to ensure clarity and completeness while maintaining privacy. All digital data were encrypted and password-protected. Data were anonymized, and access was restricted to the researcher and qualified analysts, following the Philippine Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173).

Participation posed minimal risk, primarily mild reflection on academic experiences, and offered benefits such as contributing to improvements in nursing education and student support programs. No monetary incentives were provided.

Statistical Treatment and Data Analysis

This study utilized mean and standard deviation to establish foundational insights into the central tendency and variability of interval or ratio-scaled variables such as self-awareness, knowledge, and personality traits. These measures were particularly effective in summarizing student responses and identifying consistency or disparity in patterns. According to Field [14], the mean offered a precise summary of a dataset, while the standard deviation quantified the extent of variability around that average, thus providing a nuanced perspective of group tendencies and individual differences.

Additionally, to investigate the relationships between variables, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was employed. This technique was deemed ideal for exploring the strength and direction of linear relationships between continuous variables such as academic performance and psychosocial attributes. As Tabachnick and Fidell [15] explained, Pearson's r served as a foundational tool in quantitative research because it provided clarity on whether and how two variables were related, which was essential for validating hypotheses regarding associative patterns.

Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire was evaluated by three recognized field experts to assess its content validity, clarity, and relevance to the research objectives. Feedback provided by these experts was incorporated to enhance the tool's accuracy and appropriateness for the target population. After validation, the instrument was pilot tested and obtained an overall Cronbach's alpha value not less than 0.700 ensuring high reliability and internal consistency among the items.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the level of self- awareness of students in terms of:

1.1 Reflection;

1.2 Goal Setting;

1.3 Self- Monitoring; and

1.4 Metacognitive Skills?

Table 1 Summary Of The Level Of Self-Awareness Of Students

Sub-constructs	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Reflection	4.22	.525	Agree	High
Goal Setting	4.10	.633	Agree	High
Self- Monitoring	4.05	.754	Agree	High
Metacognitive Skills	4.03	.610	Agree	High
Over-all Mean	4.10	.565	Agree	High

As shown in the Table 1, the students obtained the highest mean of M = 4.22 (SD = .525) for reflection, followed by goal setting (M = 4.10, SD = .633), self-monitoring (M = 4.05, SD = .754), and the lowest in metacognitive skills (M = 4.03, SD = .610). These findings suggested that the nursing students were most confident in reflecting on their experiences and emotions to guide their actions, while they were relatively less consistent in applying structured metacognitive techniques, although they still demonstrated a high level overall.

The overall mean score was M = 4.10 (SD = .565), described as agree and interpreted that the respondents possessed a high level of self-awareness. Meanwhile, the overall SD indicated that the responses were closely clustered around the mean, signifying consistency in how the students perceived their self-awareness across all domains. This reinforced the idea that while certain areas, such as reflection, were more strongly developed, all dimensions of self-awareness functioned at a high level among the respondents.

These findings were supported by the claim of Okwuduba et al. [16], who asserted that self-awareness served as a foundation for professional growth, as it allowed students to connect personal experiences with future professional decisions. In addition, Pretorius et al. [17] emphasized that reflection was a critical factor in strengthening empathy and clinical judgment, making it a cornerstone of nursing education. Similarly, Portela-Pino et al. [18] found that goal-setting behaviors improved students' academic motivation and long-term perseverance, which aligned with the present finding that students scored highly in this dimension.

2. What is the level of knowledge of students in terms of:

2.1 Content Mastery;

2.2 Information Recall; and

2.3 Critical Thinking?

Table 2 Summary Of The Level Of Knowledge Of Students

Sub-constructs	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Content Mastery	4.01	.561	Agree	High
Information Recall	4.03	.700	Agree	High
Critical Thinking	3.92	.795	Agree	High
Over-all Mean	3.99	.582	Agree	High

As shown in the table 2, the highest mean score was recorded in information recall (M = 4.03, SD = .700), followed closely by content mastery (M = 4.01, SD = .561), both described as agree and interpreted as high. On the other hand, the lowest indicator was critical thinking (M = 3.92, SD = .795), which, although still high, reflected a relatively lower level compared to the other dimensions. The overall mean of M = 3.99 (SD = .582) indicated that students generally agreed with the indicators, showing that they possessed a high level of knowledge. The standard deviation also suggested that students' responses were relatively consistent across the different indicators.

These findings highlighted that while students demonstrated strong abilities in recalling information and mastering content, there was relatively less strength in applying higher-order thinking skills such as critical analysis and problem-solving. This aligned with the claim of Hartung [19], who emphasized that students in higher education often excelled in memorization and content understanding but encountered challenges in developing critical and reflective thinking skills. Similarly, Ganieva [20] noted that the educational practices in many institutions still placed greater emphasis on content delivery and information retention, which may have explained why recall and mastery scored higher than critical thinking.

3. What is the level of personality traits of students in terms of:

3.1 Conscientiousness;

3.2 Openness to Experience;

3.3 Emotional Stability; and

3.4 Proactivity?

Table 3 Summary Of The Level Of Personality Traits Of Students

Sub-constructs	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Conscientiousness	3.91	.654	Agree	High
Openness to Experience	3.92	.738	Agree	High
Emotional Stability	3.82	.742	Agree	High
Proactivity	4.18	.580	Agree	High
Over-all Mean	3.96	.464	Agree	High

The results in Table 3 summarizes the overall level of personality traits of the students, revealing that all four domains were rated within the "High" range. Among the dimensions, proactivity obtained the highest mean score (M = 4.18, SD = .580), followed by openness to experience (M = 3.92, SD = .738). These findings suggested that students were highly proactive in their academic and personal undertakings, frequently took initiative, sought opportunities for growth, and assumed responsibility for their progress. Similarly, their openness to experience indicated a willingness to embrace new ideas, challenges, and learning opportunities, which aligned with a growth-oriented mindset. These two dominant traits reflected adaptability and self-driven motivation, which were critical for students navigating academic demands and preparing for future career roles.

On the other hand, emotional stability registered the lowest mean (M = 3.82, SD = .742), closely followed by conscientiousness (M = 3.91, SD = .654). While still within the "High" category, these slightly lower ratings indicated that some students faced challenges in managing stress, controlling negative emotions, and maintaining consistency in their commitments and responsibilities. The results suggested that although students generally displayed dependable and organized behaviors and managed emotions well, there was still room for improvement in building resilience and cultivating stronger habits of discipline and self-regulation.

The overall mean score of 3.96 (SD = .464) suggested that students possessed high levels of personality traits across the four domains measured. This indicated that they were generally proactive, open-minded, conscientious, and emotionally stable, equipping them with essential traits for academic achievement, interpersonal relationships, and career readiness.

These findings were supported by recent literature that underscored the importance of personality traits in academic and personal success. According to Pajares [21], personality traits significantly shaped how students approached learning, coped with stress, and engaged with peers. Proactivity, in particular, was highlighted as a strong predictor of effective problem-solving and leadership potential [17]. Similarly, openness to experience was associated with intellectual curiosity and adaptability, which were critical for students navigating complex academic environments [16].

4. What is the level of academic performance of the students?

Table 4 The Level Of Academic Performance Among Nursing Students

Grade	F	%	Mean	Sd	Interpretation
80.00	33	11.0	85.97	3.01	High
84.00	50	16.7			
85.00	20	6.7			
86.00	103	34.4			
87.00	31	10.4			
90.00	31	10.4			
91.00	31	10.4			
Total	299	100.0			

Legend

Scale	Interpretation
90-Above	Very High
85-89.9	High
80-84.9	Moderately High
75-79.9	Low
Below 75	Very Low

Table 4 presents the results of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation for the academic performance of students. As shown in the table, 34.4% of the respondents obtained a grade of 86, 16.7% obtained a grade of 84, 11% obtained a grade of 80, 10.4% obtained a grade of 87, another 10.4% obtained a grade of 90, 10.4% obtained a grade of 91, and 6.7% obtained a grade of 85. Meanwhile, the overall mean was M = 85.97 (SD = 3.01), interpreted as indicating that the respondents had a high level of academic performance.

These findings were supported by the claim of Demetriou et al. [22] that academic performance reflected not only the intellectual ability of students but also their motivation, study habits, and support systems, which were key in attaining consistently high grades. Similarly, Pretorius et al. [17] emphasized that students' academic achievement was shaped by a combination of cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors, including effective learning strategies and institutional support. Moreover, Dong et al. [23] highlighted that academic performance in higher education was strongly linked to students' self-regulation, perseverance, and engagement in their studies, which helped them sustain good performance despite challenges

5. Is there a significant relationship between academic performance of students and:

5.1 Self-Awareness;

5.2 Knowledge; and

5.3 Personality Traits?

Table 5 Relationship Between Students' Academic Performance, Self-Awareness, Knowledge, And Personality Traits

Variables	n	r	P-value	Interpretation
Reflection	299	.101	.008	**Significant**
Goal Setting	299	.086	.140	Not Significant
Self- Monitoring	299	.043	.461	Not Significant
Metacognitive Skills	299	.077	.186	Not Significant
Self-Awareness	299	**.083**	**.155**	**Not Significant**
Content Mastery	299	.189	.007	Significant
Information Recall	299	.078	.180	Not Significant
Critical Thinking	299	.075	.196	Not Significant
Knowledge	299	**.041**	.223	Not Significant
Conscientiousness	299	.067	.249	Not Significant
Openness to Experience	299	.600	.030	Significant
Emotional Stability	299	.019	.748	Not Significant
Proactivity	299	.062	.285	Not Significant
Personality Traits	299	**.001**	**.990**	**Not Significant**

Table 5 presents the results of the Pearson R correlation for the significant relationship between the academic performance of students, self-awareness, knowledge, and personality traits. As shown in the table, the variables reflection ($r = .101$, $p < .05$), content mastery ($r = .189$, $p < .05$), and openness to experience ($r = .60$, $p < .05$) were the only variables that indicated a positive significant relationship with students' academic performance. This meant that if the levels of these variables had increased, it was likely that the students' academic performance would have also increased.

The results of the Pearson R correlation analysis in Table 5 offered nuanced insights into the relationship between academic performance and the core constructs of self-awareness, knowledge, and personality traits. Among the variables examined, only reflection ($r = .101$, $p < .05$), content mastery ($r = .189$, $p < .05$), and openness to experience ($r = .60$, $p < .05$) demonstrated statistically significant positive correlations with academic performance.

Reflection, a key dimension of self-awareness, suggested that students who engaged in introspective evaluation of their learning processes were more likely to perform better academically, reinforcing the role of metacognitive reflection in fostering self-regulated learning. Content mastery, which represented the depth and integration of knowledge, aligned with cognitive theories of learning that emphasized the importance of conceptual understanding and application in academic success. The strong correlation with openness to experience—a central trait within the Big Five personality framework—highlighted the influence of personality traits on academic engagement, particularly the value of intellectual curiosity, adaptability, and receptiveness to novel ideas.

In contrast, other dimensions of self-awareness (e.g., goal setting, self-monitoring), knowledge (e.g., information recall, critical thinking), and personality traits (e.g., conscientiousness, emotional stability, proactivity) did not yield significant relationships ($p > .05$), suggesting that their influence may have been indirect, context-dependent, or obscured by measurement limitations. These findings underscored the importance of fostering reflective practices, mastery-oriented instruction, and learner dispositions that supported openness, while also inviting further investigation into the complex interplay among self-awareness, knowledge acquisition, and personality development in shaping academic outcomes.

On the other hand, goal setting ($p > .05$), self-monitoring ($p > .05$), metacognitive skills ($p > .05$), self-awareness ($p > .05$), information recall ($p > .05$), critical thinking ($p > .05$), knowledge ($p > .05$), conscientiousness ($p > .05$), emotional stability ($p > .05$), proactivity ($p > .05$), and personality traits ($p > .05$) indicated no significant relationship with students' academic performance, which meant that the relationship of these variables to academic performance could have occurred only by random chance.

These findings were supported by the claim reported in [3] that only certain dimensions of self-regulation and personality could consistently predict academic success, particularly those linked to reflection and openness to new experiences. Recent literature also strengthened this claim, as studies showed that reflective thinking was a key determinant of academic performance because it enhanced students' ability to connect prior knowledge with new concepts, thereby fostering deeper learning [22]. Similarly, content mastery, which referred to the ability to effectively grasp and retain essential knowledge, had been documented to correlate with higher grades and better performance outcomes, as mastery contributed to students' confidence and persistence in academic tasks [24]. Moreover, openness to experience had been consistently highlighted as a crucial personality trait influencing performance since students who were open-minded were more adaptive, creative, and willing to engage with challenging tasks that expanded their learning potential [25].

CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that the students possessed a generally high level of self-awareness, particularly in reflection, goal setting, and self-monitoring. They were more inclined to recognize how past experiences shaped their present behavior and to prioritize responsibilities effectively, although they were less consistent in setting specific, achievable goals and in maintaining systematic journaling practices. Their metacognitive skills were also evident, especially in articulating thought processes, but advanced strategies were not fully maximized.

In terms of knowledge, the students demonstrated strength in both content mastery and information recall, although they encountered challenges in applying their knowledge to real-world scenarios and in retaining information consistently. Critical thinking was also rated high, as the students excelled in analyzing sources; however, their ability to question deeply and apply theoretical perspectives in a sustained manner required improvement.

When it came to personality traits, the students were found to be proactive, open-minded, and conscientious, demonstrating a strong sense of accountability and a readiness to embrace challenges. However, they exhibited weaker tendencies in maintaining emotional stability, particularly in sustaining balance during prolonged stress and in consistently seeking feedback or anticipating potential problems. Overall, while their proactive and open attitudes supported their personal and academic growth, their ability to manage stress effectively and demonstrate consistent discipline required further strengthening.

Academic performance was found to be generally high, as reflected in the students' clustered grades, which indicated their capability to perform well in academic tasks. The correlational analysis revealed that reflection, content mastery, and openness to experience were positively associated with higher academic performance, suggesting that both cognitive skills and personality traits played a vital role in shaping learning outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

School administrators may design and implement programs that cultivate openness to experience, such as interdisciplinary projects, innovation fairs, and inquiry-based research tasks. Such initiatives can provide students with opportunities to explore creativity, critical thinking, and adaptability within the academic setting. Also, school administrators and curriculum planners may integrate critical thinking and problem-solving modules across subjects with full support in conducting training on good policies and procedures, ensuring that students consistently practice higher-order thinking. Faculty training sessions may also be introduced to equip teachers with effective strategies for embedding critical thinking in their instructional design. The administrators may also hire nurses with clinical experience to cover the best practices for using skills profiling to attract and retain the right nurses for institution's facility.

Commission on Higher Education (CHED) may design strategic position to champion the integration of self-awareness, knowledge acquisition, and personality development into institutional outcomes-based education frameworks. Based on the study's findings, CHED is encouraged to advocate for the inclusion of reflective learning, self-monitoring strategies, and personality-sensitive pedagogies in curriculum standards and faculty development programs.

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) may integrate structured metacognitive training, including guided journaling, reflective writing, learning diaries, and self-regulation workshops to improve students' goal-setting and deeper thinking skills. To address students' emotional stability, HEIs should institutionalize mental wellness programs, mindfulness training, resilience-building activities, and peer-support circles specifically designed for nursing students who are frequently exposed to academic and clinical stress. Personality-development modules could also be incorporated into the curriculum to strengthen traits linked to academic success, such as conscientiousness and emotional regulation.

Faculty may design assessments that go beyond memorization, using case analyses, simulation-based learning, and problem-based learning (PBL) to enhance critical thinking and clinical reasoning. Moreover, as openness to experience showed a strong positive correlation with academic performance, programs that stimulate creativity, adaptability, and intellectual curiosity such as interdisciplinary projects, leadership training, and innovation labs should be encouraged. These initiatives will not only support academic success but also prepare nursing students for dynamic, real-world healthcare environments.

Guidance counselors and wellness coordinators may also develop initiatives like stress management workshops, mindfulness sessions, and peer-support groups to address emotional stability. These programs can strengthen students' resilience, emotional regulation, and overall well-being while improving their academic focus.

Finally, **future researchers** may further validate the findings in diverse educational settings and larger populations. Expanding the sampling to include multiple cities or regions to improve generalizability. Future research should also consider mixed-method designs that combine surveys with interviews, focus groups, or observational tools to capture a more nuanced understanding of students' internal traits.

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