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NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: PERSPECTIVES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN SEVEN ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS IN GUYANA

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ABSTRACT

The perspectives of secondary school teachers in seven administrative regions in Guyana, South America on the impact of non-cognitive skills on students' academic performance across different subject such as Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and English Language formed the foundation and conclusion of this study. This study utilized a qualitative approach with a case study design with a fully-open-ended survey as the research instrument to garner teachers' perspectives on the impact of non-cognitive skills on students' academic performance. The participants were purposively selected specific to the regions in Guyana. A total of twenty secondary school teachers participated in this study. The responses were analyzed to answer the three research questions. Qualitative data were analyzed through Thematic Analysis. The findings of the study revealed that teachers perceived non-cognitive skills as integral to students' academic performance and agreed that non-cognitive skills assessment should be incorporated into the curriculum to a greater extent. Teachers are of the belief that non-cognitive skills assessment is not given much needed attention when compared to cognitive skills assessment. It was recommended that curriculum should be amended to include non-cognitive skills assessment and teachers should be trained further in the conduct of non-cognitive skills assessment. The integration of non-cognitive skills assessments to a greater extent into institutional framework would enable educators to construct targeted frameworks to cater for learners' specificities that foster improved academic performance. Non-cognitive skill assessment is critical for not only enhancing learners' academic performance, but also for predicting the academic performance of students in different subjects.

Keywords: Academic performance, Curriculum, Learning strategies, Non-cognitive assessment, Non-cognitive skills

1 INTRODUCTION

Over the years, learners globally, regionally and locally have been subjected to standardized assessment whether online or in-person with the aims of placement into educational institutions, transition from one grade to the next, as a requirement for matriculation, to evaluate students' progress and to inform decision making and policy formation [1,2].

Many of these assessments are designed to measure generally the cognitive abilities of students in different subject areas [3]. Learners are required to study prescribed resources and curriculum materials that are specially designed to target the cognitive domain of learning. A minority of subject areas have assessments that target the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning. The non-cognitive skills which focus on students' motivation, preferences and emotions are usually not focused on to a great extent when there are links between all the domains of learning [4].

In the context of Guyana at the secondary level in both the private and public educational settings, students are exposed to several standardized examinations as they progress throughout this level. This is also true within educational institutions where internal assessments in the core subject areas namely Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and English Language and Literature are constructed to target the cognitive domain of learning to a greater extent without paying attention to learners' non-cognitive skills. The cognitive domain of learning was designed by Benjamin Bloom in 1956 and later redesigned by Krathwohl and Anderson in the year 2001 to reflect the active verbs rather than passive nouns. It was designed to transition from basic recall to the more complex cognitive processes [5]. In Guyana's context and generally at the secondary level it is the requirement of teachers to prepare tables of specifications during the test construction process. The tables of specification are constructed to focus on the cognitive domain of learning beginning from the lower-level skills and advancing to the higher-level skills which is the basis on which test questions are constructed.

As a consequence, many learners are unable to achieve acceptable grades at these standardized and internal assessments since these learners lack the basic non-cognitive skills to complete the cognitive tasks that are required in these assessments as well as the skills needed to function in society [6]. It is also necessary for teachers to be able to have the skill in both cognitive and non-cognitive assessments [7]. The non-cognitive skills of learners play a significant role in conceptualization of content and context in the accomplishment of cognitive tasks [8]. The process of learning entails the incorporation of non-cognitive skills and cognitive skills in the drive towards excellent academic performance [9]. Since educators in the context of this research focus mostly on cognitive assessment, a gap exists with the incorporation of non-cognitive skills assessment in pedagogical practices. Therefore, more emphasis should be placed on learners' non-cognitive skills in order to adequately prepare these learners to master cognitive tasks. More needs to be done to adequately assess learners' non-cognitive skills so as to enable teachers to address the needs of learners in preparation for cognitive assessments. It is therefore necessary to ensure that non-cognitive assessments are conducted prior to the implementation of teaching strategies to encourage students to improve academic performance.

Research Questions

Three questions guided this research. The research questions that guided the conduct of this research are: -

- **RQ1:** What are the perceptions of teachers on non-cognitive skills as integral to students' academic performance?
- **RQ2:** How do teachers perceive non-cognitive skill assessment incorporation into the curriculum to a greater extent?
- **RQ3:** What are teachers' views on the importance placed on non-cognitive skills when compared to cognitive skills?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Non-cognitive Skills

Non-cognitive skills are those skills that are considered to be "soft skills or socio-emotional skills that reflect individual patterns of behaviors, attitudes and personality that are not directly related to individuals' knowledge" [10, p. 418]. In other instances, non-cognitive skills have been referred to as "life skills" and "21st Century skills" which includes skills which have found to be influential on students' academic performance. In the context of this research, non-cognitive skills of learners namely motivation, pedagogical preferences or learning strategies and social skills are the focus of the study and the influence of these non-cognitive skills on learners' academic performance. Some non-cognitive skills that are often associated with academic performance are "Social Skills, Learning Strategies, Academic Mindset, Academic Perseverance and Academic Behaviours" [11]. Non-cognitive skills are not given the attention that is needed when compared to cognitive skills historically [12]. More recently, in the education sector and other areas, the recognition of the impact of non-cognitive skills through observation and research on the academic performance of learners and the performance of employees in various sectors are far reaching [13,14]. The social skills demonstrated by individuals in all areas are reflective of their non-cognitive skills and are the mechanism by which they are able to approach different scenarios and obtain the different outcomes whether desirable or undesirable.

Further, the social skills of individuals are reflective of their backgrounds, cultures, moral upbringing, the society in which they live and the different interactions they have been involved in. The manner in which individuals manage different situations is influenced by their experiences, values and in some instances based on the knowledge they have gained through research. Social skills to a significant extent involve communication which can be verbal, non-verbal, written, visual or a combination of the different forms of communication. In any organisation, such as the school as an open system, communication that is effective is necessary for the flow of information among stakeholders for the holistic achievement of organisational and individual goals and objectives. The social skills of students are also reflected in their emotional intelligence, which is a contributor to academic performance. In many fields such as medical, business, and education the emotional intelligence of individuals is critical to their performance in the job as well as contribute to the achievement of goals and objectives [15].

To add, the non-cognitive skills namely, learning strategies and academic mindset are essential in the education setting and greatly influences the academic performance of learners. According to [16], learning strategies as a non-cognitive factor affect students' academic performance.

Learning strategies: - Study skills, metacognitive strategies, self-regulated learning, goal setting. Learning strategies are processes and tactics that aid in the cognitive work of thinking, remembering, or learning. Effective learning strategies allow students to leverage academic behaviors to maximize learning. These include strategies for recalling facts, monitoring one's own comprehension [such as while reading or doing math problems], and self-correcting when one detects confusion or errors in one's thinking. Learning strategies may also include goal setting and time management, both of which help students manage the process of learning. [p. 2]

Further, time management is considered as a non-cognitive skill which students are expected to master in the completion of examinations and research at the various levels. It is also incumbent on teachers and supervisors to implement time management practices during the course of the education process [17]. The non-cognitive factors namely, academic perseverance and academic behaviours are also critical contributors to students' academic performance. The innate abilities of learners to pursue their goals and achieve their objectives in the academic realm is heavily dependent on the abilities of learners to be resilient and strive for continued success regardless of the many hindrances they may face as they navigate their academic journeys [18]. Academic perseverance includes skills such as "Grit, tenacity, delayed gratification, self-discipline, self-control" while academic behaviours include skills such as "Going to class, doing homework, organizing materials, participating, studying" [16]. It is critical for learners to develop academic behaviours that will enable students to do all that is required for them to be successful in their academic endeavours. Learners need to be very proactive in their acquisition of knowledge by being involved in all activities that will contribute to their academic success [19].

Figure 1 shows a graphical depiction of the non-cognitive factors that are critical in the accomplishment of cognitive tasks and which in combination greatly influences students' academic performance in several subject areas.

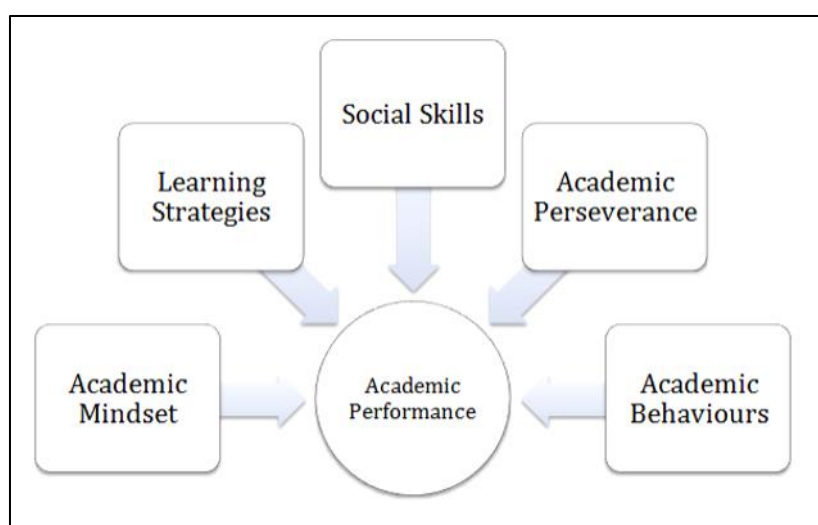


Figure 1: Designed by Lydia Narain, 2025

Figure 1: Non-cognitive Factors which Influence Academic Performance

Figure 1 is reflective of non-cognitive factors which influence students' academic performance. A combination of these non-cognitive factors and their associated skills are contributors to cognitive skills. Cognitive tasks cannot be executed without focusing on the non-cognitive skills of students for holistic development [20]. It must be emphasized that the

integration of non-cognitive and cognitive skills assessment should be encouraged for the overall improvement of students' academic performance as well as performance in other fields such as business [21]. The non-cognitive factors namely social skills, learning strategies, academic mindset, academic perseverance, and academic behaviours are integral to students' academic accomplishments.

2.2 Non-Cognitive Skills and Students Academic Performance

Researchers in different fields have conducted studies where non-cognitive skills in relation to academic performance/overall performance specific to the subject area have been correlated. In the education context, several educators have examined through research the effectiveness of non-cognitive skills on students' academic performance at the distinct levels in the school system. The following studies highlight the findings of different research where non-cognitive skills as the independent variable influences students' academic performance which is the dependent variable. In a study conducted by [22] titled "Impact of Social Skills on High School Students' Academic Performance," a 34 items questionnaire was developed to gain responses from 300 high school students in the private and public schools in one district in Pakistan. It was found that the social skills namely problem solving, effective communication, empathy and interpersonal abilities yielded a positive correlation with academic performance of these high school students with [$p < 0.000$]. It can be seen that social skills which are considered as non-cognitive skills are very impactful on students' academic performance. To add, [23] study titled "Effect of non-cognitive factors on academic achievement among students in Suzhou," where social and emotional skills as non-cognitive abilities were examined for possible relationship with students' subject learning achievements in subjects such as Mathematics, Literacy, Arts and Reading, it was found that the social and emotional skills do have an influence in facilitating learning that is disciplined when it comes to the execution of the different subjects. It was also recommended that in the development of the different policy guidelines in Suzhou, there should be the integration of non-cognitive skills. In [24] study on "The influence of Social and Emotional Skills, migration background, and non-cognitive abilities on Pisa reading and mathematics achievement: Evidence from Sweden," showed that mathematics and reading achievements were influenced by "socio-demographic, socioeconomic, and non-cognitive factors." Some non-cognitive factors that greatly influenced students' achievements in mathematics and reading were growth-mindset and self-concept.

Additionally, [9] study titled "Non-Cognitive Skills as Correlates to Academic Performance among Senior High School Students" entailed 302 participants from Grades 11 and 12 from high schools in one district in the Philippines. The non-cognitive skill of academic perseverance showed a significant positive correlation with students' academic performance. It was also revealed that students' performance in mathematics and science was generally low. It was recommended that the inclusion of the non-cognitive skill of academic perseverance should be enhanced by the provision of programmes to improve students' academic performance in these subject areas. Further, [25] conducted an examination of the effect of non-cognitive skills on STEM subjects. The study titled "Exploring special non-cognitive factors related to young students' academic performance in STEM subjects" comprised of participants from Grades 3 and 4 of both genders. The non-cognitive skills of motivation and self concept were found to have significant correlations to academic performance in STEM subjects. A longitudinal study was conducted by [26], on cognitive and non-cognitive predictor of academic performance among 1681 students at one university in Hungary. The findings of the study revealed that two subject areas, mathematics and reading, were taken into consideration, non-cognitive predictors, namely learning strategies, motivation and attitudes were assessed at the beginning of the study programme. After five years students' academic performance was correlated with non-cognitive skills assessments results. It was found that learning motivation and learning strategies were the predictors of students' academic performance.

Further, some educators are of the view that non-cognitive assessment is difficult to measure. However, there are tools that were developed through research that were validated and are reliable which can be used to measure students' non-cognitive skills. Non-cognitive skills can be measured and is a requirement in some countries such as Canada, where assessment of students' performance is not merely academic, but the non-cognitive skills of students are measured for inclusion in students' report cards at the end of a teaching period [27]. The utilization of non-cognitive assessment can be used to predict those learners who would need additional help in their academic pursuits. In some instances, students may not provide accurate responses, or they may be biased when they are asked specific questions regarding, for example, their social status, gender, and ethnicity. Despite the inaccuracies in responses to some non-cognitive assessment tools, the use of the appropriate non-cognitive tools is extremely critical [28]. Non-cognitive assessment should be encouraged at all levels in the education system. When educators are aware of their students' learning preferences and motivations, these educators will be in a position to cater to the needs of their students. Educators who teach or facilitate pedagogical practices in conjunction with students learning preferences will provide an environment which will enable students to accomplish course objectives while at the same time the educators' goals will be achieved [29].

3 METHODOLOGY

The appropriateness of the Research methodology is critical to obtain valid data to adequately answer research questions [30]. This study utilized a qualitative approach with a case study design. An open-ended survey was the instrument that was used to garner responses from twenty secondary school teachers in seven administrative regions in Guyana. The instrument consisted of five open ended questions to which teachers shared their nuanced responses and provided rich data to answer the research questions. The open-ended survey questions were validated by two senior education stakeholders at the tertiary level in the area of curriculum and instruction. The twenty participants were purposively selected so as to capture the views of the teachers from a wide cross section of Guyana. Data were collected through open ended online survey so as to enable the participants from the remote regions in Guyana to participate in the study. The data collected were analyzed through thematic analysis.

3.1 Ethical Considerations

Teachers from seven regions in Guyana were contacted to seek their willingness to participate in this research. The context of the study was clarified for the participants in order for these participants to have a comprehensive idea of the purpose and significance of the research. Teachers who agreed to participate in this research were required to give informed consent. The ethical principles of confidentiality and participants' withdrawal from the study also guided the conduct of this study. The names, gender and age of the participants were not required. The characteristics of participants' that were critical for this research were that all the participants were secondary school Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate [CSEC] teachers who hailed from seven different regions in Guyana.

The number of teachers from the seven regions who participated in the open-ended survey can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of teachers who participated in the study by region

Administrative Regions	Number of Teachers
1	2
2	2
3	2
4	5
5	6
6	2
9	1
Total	20

Table 1 highlights the number of teachers by region in Guyana who participated in the study.

4 PRESENTATION OF DATA AND RESULTS

4.1 Codes, Themes and Sub-themes Generated from Teachers' Responses

The researchers utilized the six-phase approach to thematic analysis as postulated by [31] with the use of qualitative analysis software to develop codes and extract themes from the responses given by teachers from the seven administrative regions in Guyana as indicated in Table 1. The results reflect the generated themes and sub-themes that served to answer the specific research questions of the study and are discussed under the discussion section.

4.1.1 Research Question 1

What are the perceptions of teachers on non-cognitive skills as integral to students' academic performance? The question that was asked in the open-ended survey to answer the first research question is stated as follows; **Do you view non-cognitive skills as integral to students' academic performance and why?** The generated code and formulated themes for Research Question 1 are reflected in Figure 2.

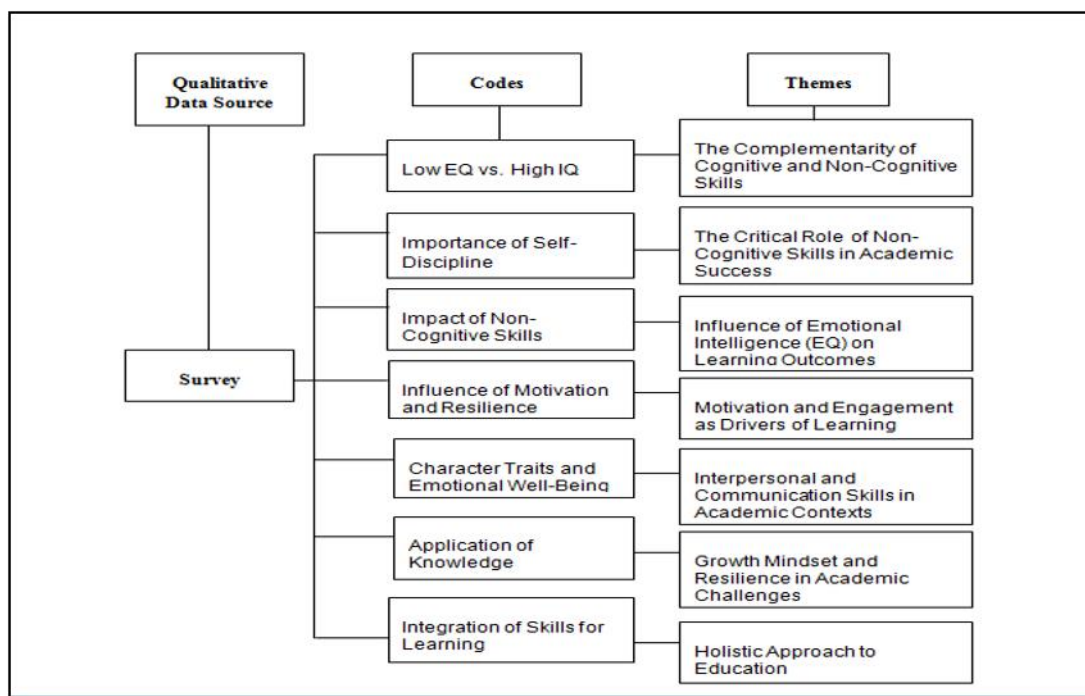


Figure 2 designed by Lydia Narain, 2025.

Figure 2: Generated Codes and Themes Formation

The following Table 2 shows the question asked the number of responses to each part of the question and the sub-themes that were formulated.

Table 2: Themes Emanating from Responses

Question	Analyses of Responses	Sub-Themes
Do you view non-cognitive skills as integral to students' academic performance and why?	20- Total Responses. All teachers said "Yes" to the first part of the question. The "why" is answered from the Sub-themes generated.	Domains Integration Self-Discipline Effective Communication Knowledge Application Motivation Reasoning and Problem Solving Time Management Making Judgments Build Confidence Emotional Well-being Teamwork/Group-work

4.1.2 Research Question 2

How do teachers perceive non-cognitive skill assessment incorporation into the curriculum to a greater extent? The question that was asked in the open-ended survey to answer the second research question is stated as follows; **Do you believe that non-cognitive skills assessment should be incorporated to a greater extent in the curriculum and why?** The generated code and formulated themes for Research Question 2 are reflected in Figure 3.

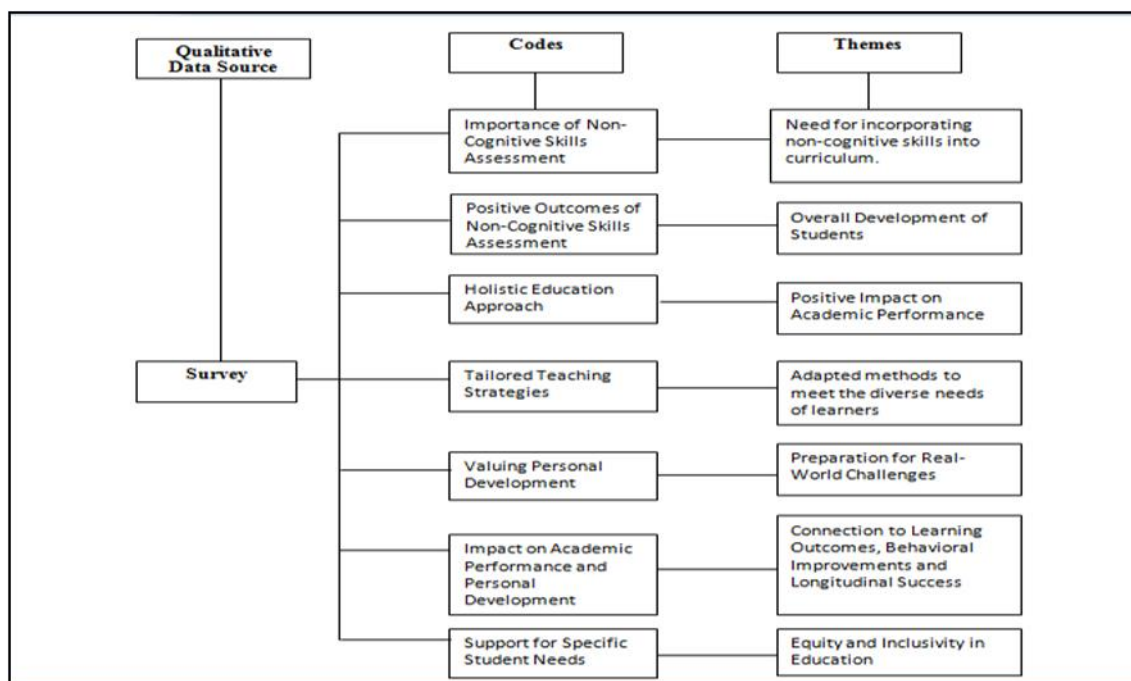


Figure 3 designed by Lydia Narain, 2025.

Figure 3: Generated Codes and Themes Formation

The following Table 3 shows the question asked and the number of responses to each part of the question and the sub-themes that were formulated are reflected in Table 3.

Table 3: Themes Emanating from Responses

Question	Analyses of Responses	Sub-Themes
Do you believe that non-cognitive skills assessment should be incorporated to a greater extent in the curriculum and why?	20- Total Responses. All teachers said "Yes" to the first part of the question. The "why" is answered from the sub-themes generated.	Holistic Development Long-Term Success Improved Classroom Behaviour Well Rounded Students Preparation for Life Challenges Less Arrogance and Violence Tailor Teaching Strategies Guide Interventions Recognizing Diverse Intelligence Supporting Specific Needs

4.1.3 Research Question 3

What are teachers' views on the importance placed on non-cognitive skills when compared to cognitive skills? The question that was asked in the open-ended survey to answer the third research question is stated as follows; **As an experienced educator, do you believe that non-cognitive skill assessment is given adequate attention when compared to cognitive skill assessment and why is this so?** The generated code and formulated themes for Research Question 3 are reflected in Figure 4.

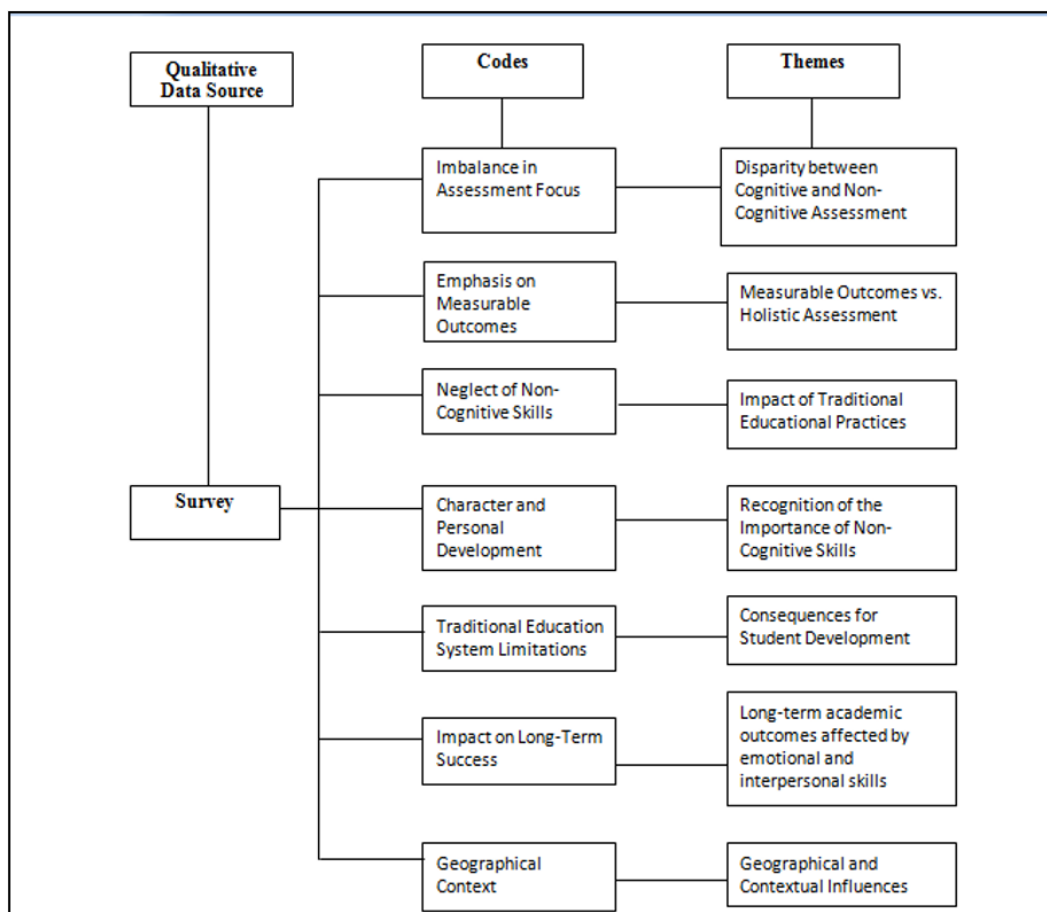


Figure 4 designed by Lydia Narain, 2025.

Figure 4 Generated Codes and Themes Formation

The following Table 4 shows the question asked and the number of responses to each part of the question and the sub-themes that were formulated.

Table 4: Themes Emanating from Responses

Question	Analyses of Responses	Sub-Themes
As an experienced educator, do you believe that non-cognitive skill assessment is given adequate attention when compared to cognitive skill assessment and why is this so?	20- Total Responses. Eighteen teachers said "No" and 2 teachers said "Yes" to the first part of the question. The "why" is answered from the sub-themes generated.	Non-cognitive Skills are Overlooked. Cognitive Assessment is Prioritized Traditional Education System Education System focuses on Measurable Academic Outcomes Not part of the Written Curriculum Teachers do not spend time on non-cognitive aspects. Teachers are not trained to Assess these, Skills. More Difficult to Evaluate Cannot be Accurately Assessed

5 DISCUSSION

The perspectives of secondary school teachers from seven administrative regions in Guyana on Non-cognitive Skills and Students Academic Performance are reflected in the themes and sub-themes that have been generated from the raw data obtained from participants. The research questions that this study sought to answer were: - *What are the perceptions of teachers on non-cognitive skills as integral to students' academic performance? How do teachers perceive*

non-cognitive skill assessment incorporation into the curriculum to a greater extent? What are teachers' views on the importance placed on non-cognitive skills when compared to cognitive skills? In order to answer these research questions, the responses of the teachers were examined.

Firstly, research question 1 which asked; *“What are the perceptions of teachers on non-cognitive skills as integral to students' academic performance?”* In order to provide answers to this research question, teachers were asked the question: - *Do you view non-cognitive skills as integral to students' academic performance and why?* Teachers from seven administrative regions in Guyana are of the perception that non-cognitive skills are integral to students' academic performance. Teachers are of the belief that Self Discipline as a non-cognitive skill is critical for students at the secondary level in the accomplishment of objectives in all subject areas [32]. While self discipline is developed over time due to consistent practice, it must be enforced by teachers to enable learners to make maximum use of time in completing various tasks in improving these learners' academic performance [33]. In this manner there will be proper time management, a skill which can be honed and transferred to other aspects of the education process such as the completion of various forms of assessments towards improved academic performance [34]. Teachers indicated that non-cognitive skills would enable learners to communicate with their peers and teachers when they have questions to ask in the different subject areas. In this manner, teamwork will be established and learners will be able to complete group work, which is a major assessment strategy that is practiced during the course of study. Students who are able to communicate effectively with their teachers and peers are able to develop their reasoning and critical thinking skills which can be applied when they are answering questions to both standardized and non-standardized assessments and may lead to improved academic performance [35].

Additionally, learners need to be motivated in many ways to propel them to achieve course objectives. Motivation can be both intrinsic and extrinsic in nature. There are students who need extra guidance and support to enable them to achieve course objectives; hence they need to be extrinsically motivated. When students are non-cognitively assessed, teachers would be in a position to be aware of those students who are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated and provide the stimuli needed to motivate learners. Motivation is extremely critical in teaching and learning as students are motivated to learn based on their preferred pedagogical learning strategies [36]. Students preferred learning strategies can only be known if they are assessed non-cognitively where their thoughts and feelings can be expressed. When students are comfortable during the learning process, they will be able to be more open and receptive and the likelihood of course objectives to be achieved would be greater than if students are uncomfortable with the pedagogical practices of teachers. The ability of students to make informed decisions and proper judgments in providing answers to questions are influenced by non-cognitive skills in the application of knowledge. In the event of students having to be involved in oral presentations, their confidence would allow them to present with ease and excellence which would ultimately influence their academic performance. Thus, students' self-confidence skills can be built and lead to the achievement of cognitive objectives [37]. Learners who are emotionally intelligent will be able to regulate their emotions in many situations which will allow them to focus on the task at hand and focus their attention on the accomplishment of educational objectives during the course of learning [38]. Hence, based on the responses of the teachers, it can be stated that teachers do believe that non-cognitive skills are integral to students' academic performance.

Secondly, to address Research Question 2 which asked: - *How do teachers perceive non-cognitive skill assessment incorporation into the curriculum to a greater extent?* In order to provide answers to this research question, teachers were asked the question: - *Do you believe that non-cognitive skills assessment should be incorporated to a greater extent in the curriculum and why?* Teachers responded in the affirmative by indicating that 'Yes' they do believe that non-cognitive skills assessment should be incorporated into the curriculum to a greater extent. Teachers stated that when students' non-cognitive skills are assessed during the course of study and more so as a prerequisite to pedagogical implementation in different subject areas, the teachers would be in a better position to cater for the needs of students. When the learning needs of students are catered for, the students will be more confident and capable of applying their knowledge and skills to attain set objectives through critical thinking and understanding [39]. It is integral to cater for the multiple intelligence of students and differentiate the pedagogical practices to cater for students' unique learning needs in the mainstream classroom. In a classroom, there are students who may have similar learning needs, and the teachers can implement pedagogical practices based on students' preferences and motivations [40]. There are several tools that can be used by teachers to assess students' non-cognitive skills. There are studies that have utilized non-cognitive assessment tools that have been statistically analysed and that are valid and reliable to measure for example “diagnosis of study skills” among other non-cognitive assessment tools as suggested by [41].

To add, teachers believed that non-cognitive assessment while practiced to some extent in the early childhood and primary levels, have not been implemented in their views at the secondary level. Teachers stated that non-cognitive assessment and supported development of these skills would not only be beneficial to students but contribute to the holistic development of students towards long-term success. Students will be better prepared for the challenges of life with optimism and there will be less arrogance and violence when there are well-rounded students. Teachers believed that there would be improved classroom behaviours as students will be better able to conduct themselves when they

are aware of the consequences of their action in terms of their self-awareness. The incorporation of non-cognitive assessment in the curriculum to a greater extent according to the participants in this study will enable teachers to tailor their teaching strategies to support the specific needs of learners and as such guide the interventions that are implemented by teachers in the different subject areas [29]. Teachers are of the view that through non-cognitive assessment the diverse intelligence of students is recognized and teachers will be in a better position to address students' weaknesses and support and encourage students' strengths. Teachers are also able to improve their competencies in the implementation of pedagogical practices that will enable students to understand concepts and achieve objectives and ultimately improve teachers' morale as well [42].

Thirdly, to address Research Question which asked: - *What are teachers views on the importance placed on non-cognitive skills when compared to cognitive skills?* In order to provide answers to this research question, teachers were asked the question: - *As an experienced educator, do you believe that non-cognitive skill assessment is given adequate attention when compared to cognitive skill assessment and why is this so?* Eighteen teachers stated that non-cognitive skill assessment is not given adequate attention when compared to cognitive skill assessment, while two teachers indicated that in their subject areas, they have been conducting non-cognitive assessments and are aware of their students' strengths, weaknesses, motivations, and preferences. The teachers who stated that from their experiences non-cognitive skill assessment has not been prioritized or given adequate attention in comparison to cognitive skills, these findings are similar to what was indicated by [43]. Teachers also shared the sentiments that the traditional education system in Guyana does not cater to non-cognitive skill assessment to a great extent and focus is more on measurable academic outcomes. Teachers indicated that since non-cognitive skill assessment is not a part of the written curriculum, teachers do not spend time on the non-cognitive skill assessment aspect. It was also stated that non-cognitive skills are more difficult to evaluate and cannot be accurately assessed, hence teachers need more training to assess students' non-cognitive skills. Teacher training is therefore needed when considering the assessment of different skills with the utilization of specially designed validated and reliable non-cognitive skill assessment instruments. Teacher training should be a continuous process to cater for the incorporation of the 21st Century Education Skills in the pedagogical practices that are implemented by teachers [44].

6 CONCLUSION

In summary, this study titled "Non-cognitive Skills and Students Academic Performance: Perspectives of Secondary School Teachers in Seven Administrative Regions in Guyana" yielded data that education stakeholders in the context of Guyana can use to make informed decisions. The twenty teachers who participated in this research from seven administrative regions in Guyana indicated that the traditional educational system that Guyana embraces which is reflective of the British Educational System is evolving, but there is still adherence to the curriculum framework in core subject areas such as Mathematics, Social Studies, English Language and Science especially at the secondary level. Non-cognitive skills assessment should be conducted as a prerequisite to pedagogical practices to cater for students' learning needs. The educational system does not focus on non-cognitive skills adequately and these skills are considered as integral in the drive to improved academic performance of students in the different subject areas. Non-cognitive skills are given attention at the early childhood level and should be reinforced at the primary and secondary levels as learners prepare for tertiary education and the ultimate advancements in their academic performance.

STATEMENTS ON COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The author has no conflict of interest to disclose.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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