

Social Anxiety and Self Esteem among Nursing Students: A Descriptive Correlational Study

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ABSTRACT

Social Anxiety Disorder is a term synonymously used for Social phobia; it can be defined as “a marked persistent fear of one or more social or performance situations involving exposure to un-familiar people or possible scrutiny by others”. Mainly the fact and underlying etiological determinants are the potential criticism, humiliation, or negative evaluation by others that is considered the source of anxiety among individuals who are experiencing social phobia in one or other occasions. Excessive self-consciousness and self-criticism are factors that pave way to severe sort of phobic avoidance. Significant distress or interference in living activities or cardinal performance oriented functions is finding to be the key to the diagnosis of social phobia.

Keywords: Social anxiety disorder, Fear, Self esteem

INTRODUCTION

According to Anxiety and Depression Association of America about 15 million American adults have social anxiety disorder with a prevalence of 6.8%. The typical age of onset is 13 years of age, 36 percent of people with social anxiety disorder report symptoms for 10 or more years before seeking help. The anxiety can interfere significantly with daily routines, occupational performance or social life, making it difficult to complete school, interview and get a job, and have friendships. Social anxiety disorder usually begins in childhood or adolescence and children are prone to clinging behavior, tantrums and even mutism [1-3].

Social phobia is found very common among the academic society and student population having education ranging from primary schools to post graduation rendering institutes, about 19 to 22% of undergraduate students suffered from the same and the incidence rate of social phobia during lifetime has increased from 4.2 to 16% in general population [4].

Self-esteem has been regarded as a judgment of oneself as well as an attitude toward the self. It encompasses beliefs (for example, “I am competent”, “I am worthy”) and emotions such as the feeling of triumph, despair, pride and shame [5]. “The self-concept is what we think about the self; self-esteem is the positive or negative evaluations of the self, as in how we feel about it” It has been reported that self-esteem begins to form in early childhood and factors that can influence it include: thoughts and perceptions of oneself, reaction from other people, experience at home, school, work and in the community, illness, disability or injury, culture or religion, role and status in society. Others are

media, feedback, consequences/happenings, handling, success and popularity [6].

About 30% of student nurses suffer from anxiety especially in specific situations including: test, examination and presentations. The unfavorable effects of social experienced by nursing students will gradually pave way to the development of disturbance in the level self-esteem over a period of time which in turn may adversely affects their academic performance in future, as nursing is a skill and practice oriented profession rather than acquiring theoretical knowledge it marks a unfavorable note of this relationship [4].

The aspects of self-esteem and social phobia in Nursing are areas where there is dearth of research. In Sociology and Psychology, self-esteem reflects a person’s over all emotional evaluation of his or her own worth [7]. Inferentially, one’s judgment of himself/herself (in a self-conscious state) perception of people’s negative evaluation leads to perceived inadequacy in social performance. This occurs alongside doubts for gaining satisfactory

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commendation/impression in real or imagined social evaluation circumstances. Without this, social phobia does not ensue and a healthy self-esteem is formed.

REVIEW OF SOME RELEVANT LITERATURE

Author and References	Study description	Findings
Rakhee and Aparna [6]	Descriptive study on prevalence of anxiety among higher secondary students in Trivandrum (n=100)	The study reveals that 56.8% of population had one or other anxiety disorders. Among that 15.6% subjects had social anxiety
Reghuram and Jasveena [8]	Correlational study on social anxiety and professional adjustments among nursing students (n=1000)	The study finding reveals that 27.4% of subjects have moderate social anxiety and 76.8% having average professional adjustments and there was no significant correlation between social anxiety and professional adjustments [8]
Andy et al. [9]	Correlational study to assess self-esteem influence social phobia among undergraduate nursing students	The prevalence of social phobia was higher (31.1%) among subjects with low self-esteem [9]
Izgcic et al. [7]	Correlational study on social phobia among university students and its relation with self-esteem and body image	Life time prevalence of social phobia among university students was 9.6%. The result shows that persons with social phobia have lower self esteem
Zan and Khudhair [5]	Impact of social phobia upon self-esteem of nursing students	The study reveals that the effect of index of self-esteem scale was 80%, whereas the effect of the social interaction anxiety was 15%. Social phobia has a significant impact upon nursing student's self-esteem

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A correlational study was conducted on social anxiety and self-esteem among nursing students in selected nursing colleges at Trivandrum district, with objectives to assess self-esteem and social anxiety among nursing students and to determine the correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem. The study followed a quantitative research approach using a descriptive correlational research design. Study was conducted at two prominent nursing colleges of Trivandrum district in State of Kerala. 418 nursing students were recruited using total enumeration sampling technique hence an acquisition of non-probability sampling design. Ethical clearance was obtained from the institutional ethical committee and obtained formal permission from the head of institution from selected nursing colleges. Informed consent was obtained after ensuring confidentiality of the data. Tools and techniques used were a Socio demographic proforma

which collects baseline data regarding subjects, such as; age, sex, year of study, previous pattern of education ,medium of previous pattern of education, Educational level of father ,educational level of mother ,father’s occupation ,mother’s occupation and presence of any comorbidities. Rosenberg self-esteem scale is a standardized tool with ten items self-report instrument for assessing level of self-esteem. The items are answered in four point likert scale ranging from options strongly agree to strongly disagree. The scale ranges from 0 to 30 scores in that 15 to 25 are in normal range; score below 15 suggest low self-esteem. Researcher developed **social anxiety scale** is an instrument used to measure the level of social anxiety a person experiences. This was a 24 item questionnaire with four point likert scale. The scale classifies level of social anxiety with scores 55 to 65 as moderate social anxiety, 65 to 80 as marked social anxiety, 80 to 95 as severe social anxiety and 95 and above

very social anxiety. Both Rosenberg self-esteem scale and social anxiety scale are standardized tools. Rosenberg self-esteem scale has reliability of 0.77 and later has reliability of 0.94. BSc nursing students in selected nursing colleges will be the sample, recruited using total enumeration sampling technique. As per the formula $4pq/d^2$ and prevalence (16%) from a previous study conducted in Bangalore which

determines the sample size as 418. Data was entered and analyzed using SPSS V20.0 and appropriate statistical techniques were used to meet the objectives.

RESULTS

The results are shown in **Tables 1-4**.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects based on socio demographic characteristics (n=418).

Variables	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age		
16-18	118	28%
18-20	201	48%
Above 20	99	24%
Year of study		
First year	122	29.20%
Second year	127	30.40%
Third year	78	18.70%
Fourth year	91	21.80%
Pervious pattern of education		
ICSE	3	0.70%
CBSE	36	8.60%
STATE	379	90.70%
Fathers Education		
Post graduate	10	4.8%
Graduate	137	32.8%
Under graduate	187	45%
Others	73	17.5%
Fathers occupation		
Government	44	10.50%
Private	156	37.30%
Self-employment	202	48.3%
Unemployment	16	3.80%
Mothers education		
Post graduate	25	%
Graduate	168	14.20%
Undergraduate	162	38.80%
Others	63	15.10%

Mothers occupation		
Government	34	8.10%
Private	57	13.60%
Self-employment	65	15.60%
Unemployment	262	62.10%

Table 2. Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects based on level of social anxiety.

Level of social anxiety	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mild social anxiety	294	70.3%
Moderate social anxiety	92	22%
Marked social anxiety	32	7.7%
Severe social anxiety	0	0%
Very severe social anxiety	0	0%

Table 3. Distribution of subjects according to level of self esteem.

Level of self esteem	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Low self esteem	54	12.9%
Normal self esteem	354	84.7%
Good self esteem	10	2.4%

Table 4. Correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem.

Parameters	Correlation coefficient (r)	P value
Social anxiety	0.086	0.079
Self esteem		

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Students from professional Nursing courses are especially demanded at practical skills, such as performing invasive procedures with venous punctures, bandaging, hygiene, and comfort care in patients with different degrees of illness. Throughout the course, nursing students are confronted by situations that generate psychological pressure and anxiety. Nursing as a social profession, needs more social interactions. Nurses should be able to develop therapeutic interaction with patients. This would be possible only when they are confident and concerned for others and free of anxiety disorders. Hence it brings relevance to research upon anxiety related disorders among nursing students. Our study reveals that 70.3% of subjects had mild social anxiety, 22% had moderate, 7.7% had marked and none of them is having severe and very severe social anxiety. Our study reveals that 12.9% of subjects had low self-esteem, 84.7 % had normal and 2.4% had good self-esteem, both self-esteem and social anxiety levels are in accordance with various studies

published worldwide [10-12]. There was no significant correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem among nursing students in this study. Nurses should teach parents and teachers about the identification and management of social anxiety and low self-esteem. Nurses should be able to rule out socially anxious clients and to identify symptoms in clinical practice. Encourage further studies on assessment of social anxiety and self-esteem among various professional students and more research should be conducted on various psychological and nursing interventions for the management of social anxiety and low self-esteem. Improve facilities for identification and supportive management of patients with social anxiety in various settings and also provide opportunities for nurses to attend training programs in Identification and management of social anxiety.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Interaction time with subjects was comparatively less.
- Setting was limited only to private nursing colleges.

- Social anxiety disorder as such couldn't be identified according to ICD/DSM criteria due to time constraints in data collection time period.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Written consent was obtained from college authorities, from Institutional Ethical Committee and informed consent from subjects prior to the study.

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