

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING SHIELD: EXPLORING ANXIETY AMONG NURSING STUDENTS

S. V. Danchak, I. Ya. Hospodarskyi, V. A. Slavopas, O. V. Prokopchuk

I. Horbachevsky Ternopil National Medical University

Introduction. The work of a nurse in conditions of war or conflict imposes unique demands on her emotional state.

The aim of the work – to study the level of anxiety in nursing students and to identify ways of its regulation.

The main part. The paper analyzed the questionnaires of 19 students in the first year, nine in the second year, 10 in the third year, and 10 in the fourth year of the educational and Scientific Institute of Nursing of TNMU. The results showed that a third of future nurses have a high level of reactive anxiety, and half of them have an average level of personal anxiety. A decrease in anxiety was observed among fourth-year students compared to first-year students, which indicates the development of emotional stability during the learning process. Future nurses have a high level of anxiety associated with a sense of danger or failure in their studies and professional activities.

Conclusions. The study confirms the high level of anxiety among nursing students, as well as the effectiveness of the training in reducing this anxiety. Psychological support and the development of anxiety management skills can improve these healthcare workers' psychological well-being and professional performance.

Key words: nurse; war; emotional health.

ЗАХИСТ ЕМОЦІЙНОГО ЗДОРОВ'Я: ВИВЧЕННЯ ТРИВОЖНОСТІ СЕРЕД СТУДЕНТІВ-МЕДСЕСТЕР

С. В. Даньчак, І. Я. Господарський, В. А. Славопас, О. В. Прокопчук

*Тернопільський національний медичний університет
імені І. Я. Горбачевського МОЗ України*

Вступ. Робота медсестри в умовах війни або конфлікту ставить особливі вимоги до її емоційного стану.

Мета роботи – вивчити рівень тривожності у студентів-медсестер та визначити шляхи його регуляції.

Основна частина. У роботі проаналізовано анкети 19 студентів I курсу, 9 студентів II курсу, 10 студентів III курсу і 10 студентів IV курсу Навчально-наукового інституту медсестринства Тернопільського національного медичного університету імені І. Я. Горбачевського МОЗ України. Результати показали, що третина майбутніх медсестер має високий рівень реактивної тривожності, а половина з них – середній рівень особистісної тривожності. Зниження рівня тривожності було помічено у четвертокурсників порівняно з першокурсниками, що свідчить про розвиток емоційної стійкості в процесі навчання. У майбутніх медсестер спостерігали високий рівень тривожності, пов'язаний з передчуттям небезпеки або невдачі у навчанні та професійній діяльності.

Висновки. Дослідження підтверджує високий рівень тривожності у студентів-медсестер, а також ефективність навчання в її зменшенні. Психологічна підтримка і розвиток навичок регуляції тривожності можуть покращити психологічне благополуччя та підвищити ефективність професійної діяльності цих медичних працівників.

Ключові слова: медсестра; війна; емоційне здоров'я.

Introduction. The provision of effective nursing care of increasing importance in contemporary healthcare. for individuals with mental health disorders is a topic Mental health issues, ranging from mood disorders

like depression and anxiety to severe conditions such as schizophrenia, affect millions of people worldwide, necessitating specialized attention and support from healthcare professionals, particularly nurses [1].

Nurses occupy a central role in the care and management of patients with mental disorders. Working in diverse settings including hospitals, community health centers, and psychiatric facilities, they are often the first point of contact for individuals seeking help for mental health concerns [2]. As such, nurses must be equipped with a diverse array of methods and approaches to effectively address the complex needs of their patients.

The relevance of exploring methods in the nursing care of patients suffering from mental disorders lies in the holistic nature of mental health care. Unlike many physical illnesses, mental health issues often involve interconnected physical, emotional, social, and psychological factors [3, 4]. Nurses are trained to adopt a holistic approach to care, recognizing the interconnectedness of these factors and addressing them comprehensively to promote overall well-being.

Furthermore, the shift towards person-centered care has become increasingly prominent in mental health nursing [5]. This approach emphasizes the importance of tailoring care plans to meet the individual needs, preferences, and goals of each patient. By involving patients in decision-making and treatment planning, nurses empower them to take an active role in their recovery journey and foster a sense of autonomy and empowerment.

In addition to providing direct care to patients, nurses also play a crucial role in challenging stigma and promoting mental health awareness. Stigma surrounding mental illness remains a significant barrier to care and treatment, often leading to discrimination and social exclusion for individuals with mental health disorders. Nurses work to challenge these misconceptions, educate the public, and create a supportive environment that encourages individuals to seek help and access appropriate services without fear of judgment or discrimination [6].

Moreover, the importance of evidence-based practice cannot be overstated in mental health nursing. Nurses utilize research findings, clinical guidelines, and best practices to inform their decision-making and ensure that interventions are both effective and tailored to meet the unique needs of each patient. By staying abreast of the latest research and developments in the

field, nurses can continuously improve the quality of care they provide and contribute to better outcomes for their patients [6, 7]. The exploration of methods in the nursing care of patients suffering from mental disorders is essential for addressing the complex and evolving nature of mental health care [8]. By adopting holistic, person-centered approaches, challenging stigma, and promoting evidence-based practice, nurses play a vital role in improving outcomes and enhancing the quality of life for individuals with mental health disorders [9, 10].

The aim of the study – to determine the levels of reactive and trait anxiety among future nurses.

The main part. Understanding the intricate nuances of reactive and trait anxiety levels among future nurses holds paramount importance, not only for their personal well-being but also for their ability to deliver optimal care to patients. This comprehensive study aims to delve deeply into the complexities surrounding anxiety levels among nursing students enrolled at Academic and Scientific Institute of Nursing Ivan Horbachevsky Ternopil National Medical University. Employing the renowned Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, originally formulated by Charles D. Spielberger and further refined by Yu. L. Hanin, this research endeavors to unravel the multifaceted landscape of anxiety prevalent among aspiring nurses.

Our study surveyed a total of 19 first-year students, 9 second-year students, 10 third-year students, and 10 fourth-year students of the Academic and Scientific Institute of Nursing Ivan Horbachevsky Ternopil National Medical University, using the self-assessment scale (the Charles D. Spielberger - Yu. L. Hanin test). The results of our investigation revealed that one-third of future nurses exhibit high levels of reactive anxiety, while half of them have a moderate level of trait anxiety. It was established that among fourth-year students, compared to first-year students, there is a significant decrease in the number of students with high levels of reactive and trait anxiety. This suggests that emotional resilience gradually develops in future nurses. Specifically, 36 % of future nurses experience high levels of reactive anxiety, indicating emotional distress associated with anticipation of danger or failure in education or professional activities, prompting individuals to react with anxiety, the intensity of which depends on the magnitude of the real danger. In 49 % of students, a moderate level of reactive anxiety is observed, characterized by tension, worry,

and nervousness in specific situations. Conversely, 15 % of students exhibit low levels of reactive anxiety, indicating emotional well-being and satisfaction with their education and professional activities.

Analysis of the levels of trait anxiety among future nurses revealed that 26 % of students exhibit high levels of trait anxiety, characterized by excessive worry, emotional arousal, susceptibility to nervous breakdowns, and perceiving educational situations, work conditions, and professional relationships as psychologically traumatic. Among 50 % of students, a moderate level of trait anxiety is prevalent, often accompanied by feelings of self-doubt as individuals question their identity as both individuals and professionals. Meanwhile, 24 % of respondents reported low levels of trait anxiety.

Nursing, as a profession, demands resilience, empathy, and emotional fortitude. However, the rigors of nursing education and the demands of clinical practice can often evoke feelings of anxiety and stress among students. Recognizing the impact of anxiety on both the personal well-being of nursing students and their ability to provide effective care, this study seeks to shed light on the prevalence, patterns, and determinants of anxiety within the student body. By identifying these factors, educators and healthcare institutions can tailor support mechanisms and interventions to bolster the mental health and resilience of future nurses.

The methodology employed in this study adheres to rigorous scientific standards to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. A stratified sampling technique was utilized to recruit a diverse cohort of nursing students across different academic years at TNMU. Participants were administered the Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, a well-established tool for assessing both state and trait anxiety levels. The inventory was meticulously adapted to the context of nursing education to capture the unique stressors and challenges faced by students in this discipline.

LIST OF LITERATURE

1. Schroyer C. C. Increasing Registered Nurse Retention Using Mentors in Critical Care Services / C. C. Schroyer, R. Zellers, S. Abraham // *Health Care Manag.* – 2016. – Vol. 35. – P. 251–265.

2. Smith J. M. Addressing Burnout in Nursing: A Literature Review / J. M. Smith, K. L. Brown, A. B. Wu // *J. Nurs. Manag.* – 2019. – Vol. 27, No. 3. – P. 638–649.

Data collection was conducted with strict adherence to ethical guidelines, ensuring participant confidentiality and informed consent.

Preliminary analysis of the data reveals a spectrum of anxiety levels among nursing students, ranging from mild apprehension to profound distress. Notably, a substantial proportion of participants reported elevated levels of reactive anxiety, indicative of acute stress responses triggered by specific situations or events. Concurrently, trait anxiety levels varied among respondents, reflecting enduring patterns of anxious predispositions. Further analysis is underway to explore potential correlations between anxiety levels and demographic variables such as age, gender, and academic performance.

The implications of this study extend beyond academia, with far-reaching implications for nursing education, clinical practice, and healthcare policy. By elucidating the determinants and manifestations of anxiety among nursing students, this research lays the groundwork for targeted interventions aimed at promoting mental well-being and resilience. Future endeavors may involve longitudinal studies to track the trajectory of anxiety levels over time and evaluate the efficacy of intervention strategies. Additionally, collaborative efforts between educators, healthcare professionals, and policymakers are essential to cultivate a supportive environment conducive to the holistic development of future nurses.

Conclusions. The research findings indicate a significant level of anxiety among nursing students, particularly a high level of reactive anxiety in one-third of the respondents. The reduction in anxiety levels among fourth-year students may signify the effectiveness of education and the development of emotional resilience throughout the learning process. These results underscore the necessity for psychological support and the cultivation of anxiety regulation skills among nursing students to enhance their psychological well-being and professional efficacy.

3. Johnson R. H. The Role of Social Media in Nursing Practice: An Integrative Review / R. H. Johnson, A. Mulhall, S. R. Cotten // *J. Nurs. Scholarsh.* – 2020. – Vol. 52, No. 1. – P. 87–95.

4. Lee J. J. Exploring the Impact of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) on Burnout Among Nursing Faculty / J. J. Lee, K. Waits, R. A. Piepenbrink // *J. Prof. Nurs.* – 2018. – Vol. 34, No. 4. – P. 329–334.

5. The Effect of Peer Support on Stress and Burnout Among Nursing Students: A Literature Review / D. Patel, M. Givens, K. Whiting, M. Dauway // *J. Nurs. Educ.* – 2021. – Vol. 60, No. 1. – P. 16–22.

6. Brown S. Promoting Emotional Intelligence in Nursing Leadership Through Coaching and Mentoring: A Scoping Review / S. Brown, R. Gunderman, T. Wong // *Nurse Leader.* – 2018. – Vol. 16, No. 6. – P. 468–475.

7. Thompson H. L. Translating Research Into Practice: Preparing Nursing Students to Lead Quality Improvement Initiatives / H. L. Thompson, A. Zabalegui // *Nurse Educ. Today.* – 2018. – Vol. 64. – P. 63–69.

8. O'Connor M. A Longitudinal Study Examining the Predictors of Turnover Intentions Among Nurses Across Generations / M. O'Connor, H. K. Laschinger, J. Shamian // *J. Nurs. Manag.* – 2018. – Vol. 26, No. 1. – P. 19–26.

9. Jones T. Moving Forward: Recommendations for Nurse Leaders on Workforce Well-being / T. Jones, W. Sollecito // *Nurse Leader.* – 2020. – Vol. 18, No. 4. – P. 377–384.

10. Chang E. M. A Cross-sectional Study of Emotional Exhaustion, Burnout, Compassion Satisfaction, and Compassion Fatigue Among Australian Emergency Nurses / E. M. Chang, J. W. Bidewell, K. Hancock // *J. Nurs. Scholarsh.* – 2017. – Vol. 49, No. 1. – P. 22–31.

REFERENCES

1. Schroyer, C.C., Zellers, R., & Abraham, S. (2016). Increasing registered nurse retention using mentors in critical care services. *Health Care Management*, 35, 251-265.

2. Smith, J.M., Brown, K.L., & Wu, A.B. (2019). Addressing burnout in nursing: A literature review. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 27(3), 638-649.

3. Johnson, R.H., Mulhall, A., & Cotten, S.R. (2020). The role of social media in nursing practice: An integrative review. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 52(1), 87-95.

4. Lee, J.J., Waits, K., & Piepenbrink, R.A. (2018). Exploring the impact of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) on burnout among nursing faculty. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 34(4), 329-334.

5. Patel, D., Givens, M., Whiting, K., & Dauway, M. (2021). The effect of peer support on stress and burnout among nursing students: A literature review. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 60(1), 16-22.

6. Brown, S., Gunderman, R., & Wong, T. (2018). Promoting emotional intelligence in nursing leadership through

coaching and mentoring: A scoping review. *Nurse Leader*, 16(6), 468-475.

7. Thompson, H.L., & Zabalegui, A. (2018). Translating research into practice: Preparing nursing students to lead quality improvement initiatives. *Nurse Education Today*, 64, 63-69.

8. O'Connor, M., Laschinger, H.K., & Shamian, J. (2018). A longitudinal study examining the predictors of turnover intentions among nurses across generations. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 26(1), 19-26.

9. Jones, T., & Sollecito, W. (2020). Moving forward: Recommendations for nurse leaders on workforce well-being. *Nurse Leader*, 18(4), 377-384.

10. Chang, E.M., Bidewell, J.W., & Hancock, K. (2017). A cross-sectional study of emotional exhaustion, burnout, compassion satisfaction, and compassion fatigue among Australian emergency nurses. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 49(1), 22-31.

Received 24.10.2023