

**Assessment of Social Phobia among Nursing Students in Koya Technical
Institute at Erbil Polytechnic University/Iraq**

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Abstract

This study was carried out to assess the social phobia level among nursing students in Koya Technical Institute at Erbil Polytechnic University/Iraq. A quantitative design, a descriptive study was conducted on 100 students selected from Koya Technical Institute in Koya District-Erbil-Iraq. A questionnaire was designed as a tool of the study to collect data through self-report by students. The Cronbach's alpha technique was used in order to find the internal reliability for the social phobia questioner. It was .864 which indicates a good level of internal consistency of the scale. Frequency and Chi-square test were used for data analysis. The results show that most of the study sample was between 18-20 years old, female, single, and somewhat sufficient in economic status and they are mostly from rural area. The social anxiety as estimated on Social Phobia Inventory reveals that, 26 % are having mild social anxiety, 24 % of subjects have moderate social anxiety, and 8 % of subjects have severe social anxiety while only 4 % of subjects have very severe social anxiety. There were non-significant correlations between severity of social phobia and socio-demographic characteristics of all nursing students. In conclusion, the highest percentage of the study sample had social phobia ranging from mild to very severe, but less than half of the students have not experienced social phobia.

Keywords: Assessment, Social phobia, students, Erbil polytechnic University

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Introduction □

Social phobia also known as social anxiety disorder is the fear of interaction with other people that brings on self-consciousness, feelings of being negatively judged and evaluated, and, as a result, leads to avoidance ⁽¹⁾. Social phobia is an excessive fear of situations in which a person might do something embarrassing or be evaluated negatively by others ⁽²⁾. A study done in Brazilian university students revealed that the prevalence of social phobia was 11.6 % and it shows that social phobia can be precipitated by stressful or humiliating experiences, death of a parents, separation or chronic exposure to stress, or it may have an insidious onset (3). Social phobia occurs in 3-4 % of the whole population (age of onset in children under 5 years, and puberty to 35 years, also the sex ratio is Female 2.5 :1 Male. It is associated with panic disorder and other anxiety disorders ⁽³⁾. Social phobia may have been shy adolescents; this should be distinguished from anxious (avoidant) personality disorder ⁽³⁾. According to the study has been done in Turkey, it shows that the highest lifetime prevalence of it was found in the group aged 21 to 24 years (11%), and lowest lifetime prevalence was found in the group age 25 years and over 5.5% ⁽⁴⁾.

Academic social phobia anxiety is an important educational problem that affects millions of students in colleges and schools over the world each year. Since social phobia is present among most people especially the first years of college's student, this subject was studied previously in other country or city in Iraq, in 2011 a study is carried out in college of nursing among first year students at University of Baghdad, Kirkuk, Thiqr, and Kufa. The study results shows the social phobia inventory was

(5.8 %) and social phobia has a significant impact upon nursing collegians self-esteem⁽⁵⁾. Therefore, this study was conducted to assess the level of social phobia among nursing students and find out the association between levels of social phobia with their demographic characteristics of the studied samples.□

Methods

This quantitative design descriptive study was conducted between January 5th, 2016 to June 12th, 2016 on 100 students in Koya Technical Institute at Erbil polytechnic University in Koya District-Erbil- Kurdistan Region-Iraq. A questionnaire format was developed for purpose of data collection. It contained of two parts, the part one consisted of some socio-demographic characteristics of the study sample which consist of 5 items students, and part two consisted of a Social Phobia Inventory (SPI) self-rating scale. It includes 17 questions and each questions has (5) responses , the client select one response that are more suitable with his emotional state. Less than 20 is indicate no social phobia, from 21-30 is indicate mild social phobia, from 31-40 is indicate moderate social phobia, from 41-50 is indicate severe social phobia and from 51 or more is indicate very sever social phobia level⁽⁶⁾□

The study purpose was explained for students and verbal consent was taken. The students informed that they have right for withdrawal from the study at any time. The data were collected using self report. In order to analysis the results of the study data were entered in SPSS (version 22). Initially, The Cronbach's alpha technique was used in order to find the internal reliability for the social phobia scale. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .864 which indicates a good level of internal consistency for the scale. Then, descriptive statistics and Chi-square test was used for interpretation of data.□

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Result

The socio-demographic characteristics of the study sample are presented in the table (1). Regarding the age group, the highest percentage of the study sample was in the age group between 18-20 years old (68%), most of the study sample were female (51%). The highest percentage (93%) was single. More than half of the study samples had somewhat sufficient economic status, and more than half of the study sample was living in the rural area.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of 100 students

Socio-demographic characteristics		F	%
Age Group / years	18-20	68	68
	21-23	27	27
	24-26	5	5
Gender	Male	49	49
	Female	51	51
Marital status	Single	93	93
	Married	7	7
Economic status	Sufficient	34	34
	Somewhat sufficient	60	60
	Insufficient	6	6
Residential area	Urban	43	43
	Rural	57	57

The highest percentage (35%), of the study sample were extremely feel anxiety and would do anything to avoid being criticized and lowest percentage answered they didn't afraid of people in authority which represents (2%) (Table 2).□

Table 2: Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN) scale answers of students

Social phobia items	Non		Mild		Moderate		Severe		Extremely	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.I am afraid of people in authority	68	68	19	19	8	8	3	3	2	2
2.I am bothered by blushing in front of people	32	32	22	22	21	21	13	13	12	12
3.Parties and social events scare me	70	70	10	10	15	15	1	1	4	4
4.I avoid talking to people	16	16	18	18	29	29	19	19	18	18
5.Being criticized scares me a lot	28	28	27	27	18	18	11	11	16	16
6.Fear of embarrassment causes me to avoid doing things or speaking to people	34	34	17	17	23	23	17	17	9	9
7.Sweating in front of people causes me distress	30	30	35	35	20	20	8	8	7	7
8.I avoid going to parties	42	42	17	17	16	16	15	15	10	10
9.I avoid activities in which I am the center of attention	32	32	14	14	27	27	15	15	12	12
10.Talking to strangers scares me	47	47	21	21	18	18	7	7	7	7
11.I avoid having to give speeches	24	24	21	21	20	20	23	23	12	12
12.I would do anything to avoid being criticized	16	16	14	14	18	18	17	17	35	35
13.Heart palpitations bother me when I am around people	36	36	25	25	13	13	18	18	8	8
14.I am afraid of doing things when people might be watching	26	26	18	18	25	25	11	11	20	20
15.Being embarrassed or looking stupid is among my worst fears	25	25	10	10	25	25	17	17	23	23
16.I avoid speaking to anyone in authority	35	35	18	18	22	22	12	12	13	13

17. Trembling or shaking in front of others is distressing to me	25	25	33	33	13	13	16	16	13	13
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The below table shows the occurrence of social phobia as estimated on Social Phobia Inventory reveals that, 38% had no social phobia, 26 % were having mild social anxiety, 24 % of subjects had moderate social anxiety, 8 % had severe social phobia level and only 4% of subjects had very severe social phobia level (table 3).

Table 3: Severity levels of social phobia among 100 students

Severity of Social phobia	F	%
None social phobia level (≤ 20)	38	38.0
Mild social phobia level (21-30)	26	26.0
Moderate social phobia level (31-40)	24	24.0
Severe social phobia level (41-50)	8	8.0
Very Severe social phobia level (≥ 51)	4	4.0
Total	100	100

As illustrated in the table 4, that there were non-significant associations between severity of social phobia and socio-demographic characteristics of all nursing students.

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Table 4: Association between socio-demographic characteristics of the 100 nursing students and severity levels of social phobia

Severity of Social phobia		None	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Very Severe	Ch-square
		F	F	F	F	F	
Age Group / years	18-20	27	18	17	4	2	0.770
	21-23	8	7	6	4	2	
	24-26	3	1	1	0	0	
Total		38	26	24	8	4	
Gender	Male	11	14	10	4	2	0.347
	Female	27	12	14	4	2	
Marital status	Single	33	24	24	8	4	0.293
	Married	5	2	0	0	0	
Economic status	Sufficient	13	7	11	2	1	0.695
	Somewhat sufficient	23	16	13	5	3	
	Insufficient	2	3	0	1	0	
Residential area	Urban	14	11	14	4	0	0.194
	Rural	24	15	10	4	4	

Discussion

The majority of sample was at young adult age and they are students in the university, this agrees with study which was done by Gultekin⁽⁶⁾. More than half of the study sample were females and its normal phenomena in nursing university and institute as number of female nurses are more than male nurses especially in last five years Adolescent girls who had been inhibited as toddlers were more likely to be impaired by generalized social anxiety than boys⁽⁷⁾. also the results of this study was similar to the study was done by Carl and others (1999), who showed that female nurses were more than male nurses⁽⁸⁾. The highest percentage of the study sample were single, and this could be because all of them were students which is difficult to get married before graduation and also being unemployed, the result of the present study agrees with the study done by Izgic (2004) which shows that the highest percent of the study sample were single⁽⁹⁾. More than half of the participants had a somewhat sufficient in economic status and depend on their family and governmental assistance as they pay salary for students monthly, according to the government policy this result was also supported by the study which was done by Connor⁽¹⁰⁾. Regarding the place of residence, more than half of the study sample was from the rural area, and this is good indicator for the profession as large number of student were living in rural area, this finding concordance by Shah and Kataria (2009)⁽¹¹⁾.

The results revealed that the study sample were extremely feel anxiety and would do anything to avoid being criticized by others (table 3), this feeling of students with avoidant personality experience long-standing feelings of inadequacy and are extremely sensitive to what others think about them, People with social anxiety are irrationally fearful of criticism and rejection and the main focus of cognitive therapy is to convince them that that your fears are unfounded—and that people are much less critical and rejecting than you expect⁽¹²⁾. Also large number of students answered that they were “feeling embarrassed or looking stupid is among my worst fears”, feeling Fear of social situations is common especially in people who tend to think negative thoughts about themselves and who worry what others think of them. Social anxiety usually develops by the mid teenage years and is actually quite common - about one person in ten experiences it at some time or other. About half of these

people will experience anxiety in all social situations, whereas the other half only when it comes to specific situations: public speaking, a presentation or some other event when they're called on to perform ⁽¹³⁾.

The occurrence of social phobia as estimated on Social Phobia Inventory reveals that the nearly of half of the students had no social phobia and this is good indicator(table 3), but less that of half the study sample had between mild and moderate social phobia and only few of them 4% had extremely severe social phobia ,actually social phobia is more common between female and young adult and this is actually could affect negatively on learning process, the result nearly similar to the results of the study done by Reghuram and Mathias (2014), which stated that prevalence of social phobia among nursing students in India was (64.6%) and they having mild social Anxiety, while, 27.4% of subjects have moderate social anxiety and only 1.2% of subjects have severe social anxiety ⁽¹⁴⁾.

There were non-significant associations between severity of social phobia and socio-demographic characteristics of all nursing students, the study results supported by the studies which were done by Uzonwanne; Francis (2014) which showed that there were non-significant relationship between socio-demographic data and severity of social phobia. They found that the highest percentage of the study sample who had social phobia were female gender ⁽¹⁵⁾.

Conclusions

Most of the study sample had not experienced with social phobia but at same time a large number of them had social phobia ranging from mild to moderate. There were non-significant associations between severity of social phobia and socio-demographic characteristics of all nursing students.

Recommendations

1. Early detection any sign or symptoms of social phobia for students and provide the educational programs about it to decrease social phobia among them because any other factors that may affect on learning process.
2. Refereeing the students with social phobia to the psychiatry profession for primary prevention.

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ملخص البحث

جريت هذه الدراسة لتقييم مستوى الرهاب الاجتماعي بين طلاب التمريض في معهد كوية التقنية في جامعة أربيل التقنية - العراق. تصميم كمي ، تم إجراء دراسة وصفية على 100 طالب تم اختيارهم من معهد كوية التقنية في قضاء كوية - أربيل - العراق. تم تصميم استبيان كأداة للدراسة لجمع البيانات من خلال تقرير ذاتي من قبل الطلاب. تم استخدام اختبار التكرار واختبار كاي مربع لتحليل البيانات. تظهر النتائج أن معظم عينة الدراسة كانت تتراوح ما بين 18-20 سنة ، بنات ، اعزب ، الوضع الاقتصادي متوسطة ، ومعظمها من المناطق الريفية. ويكشف القلق الاجتماعي المقدر على جرد الرهاب الاجتماعي أن 26% يعانون من قلق اجتماعي قليلة ، و 24% من الأشخاص لديهم قلق اجتماعي متوسطة ، و 8% من الأشخاص لديهم قلق اجتماعي حاد بينما 4% فقط من الأشخاص لديهم قلق اجتماعي شديد للغاية. كانت هناك ارتباطات غير معنوية بين شدة الرهاب الاجتماعي والخصائص الاجتماعية والديموغرافية لجميع طلاب التمريض. في الختام ، كانت أعلى نسبة من عينة الدراسة رهاب اجتماعي يتراوح من معتدل إلى شديد جدا ، ولكن أقل من نصف الطلاب لم يعانون من رهاب اجتماعي.

پوخته‌ی توژینه‌وه

ئەم توژینه‌وه‌ی ئەنجامدراوه به مه‌به‌ستی زانیی هه‌سه‌نگاندنی ترسی کۆمه‌لایه‌تی له نیوان خویندکارانی په‌یمانگای ته‌کنیکی کویه له زانکۆی پۆلیته‌کنیکی هه‌ولێر /عیزاق. توژینه‌وه‌که له جۆری چه‌ندیی و وه‌سفی یه ، ئەنجام دراوه له نیوان ۱۰۰ خویندکاری به‌شی په‌رستاری په‌یمانگای ته‌کنیکی کویه له شارۆچکه‌ی کویه/هه‌ولێر. راپرسیه‌ک ئەنجام دراوه بۆ کۆکردنه‌وی زانیاری و داتا ده‌رباره‌ی ترسی کۆمه‌لایه‌تی له نیوان خویندکاران. سه‌ره‌تا بۆ زانیی راسنگۆیی ناوه‌کی راپرسیه‌که ته‌کنیکی کرۆنباخ ئەلفا به‌کارهاتوه ، بریتی بوو له ۰.۸۶۴ که ئەمه‌ش ئاستی باش نیشان ده‌دات له راسنگۆی ناوه‌کی بۆ راپرسیه‌که. پاشان ، ریزه‌ی ئاماری دووباره بوونه‌وه و (Chi_sqaure) به‌کارهاتوه بۆ شیکردنه‌وه‌ی داتاگان. له ئەنجامدا ده‌رکه‌وت ، که زۆربه‌ی به‌شدار بووانی توژینه‌وه‌که ته‌مه‌نیان له نیوان ۱۸ بو ۲۰ ساله له په‌گه‌زی مئ ، سه‌لت، وه ئاستی ئابووریان مام ناوه‌نده که زۆربه‌یان دانیشتووی گوندن . دل‌ه‌راوکی کۆمه‌لایه‌تی یان ده‌توانین بلین ترسی کۆمه‌لایه‌تی وا ده‌رکه‌وت که (۲۶%) له خویندکاران ئاستی نزم یان هه‌بوو له ترسی کۆمه‌لایه‌تی ، وه له (۲۴%) له خویندکاره‌کان ئاستی مام ناوه‌ند یان هه‌بوو له ترسی کۆمه‌لایه‌تی . ته‌نها له (۸%) له خویندکاره‌کان ئاستی سه‌خت یان هه‌بوو ، له کاتیکدا ته‌نها له (۴%) له خویندکاره‌کان ئاستی زۆر سه‌خت یان هه‌بوو له ترسی کۆمه‌لایه‌تی. هه‌یچ په‌یوه‌ندیه‌کی به‌لگه‌داری ئاماری به‌دی نه‌کرا له نیوان ئاستی سه‌ختی ترسی کۆمه‌لایه‌تی و زانیاریه‌که‌سیه‌کانی خویندکارانی به‌شی په‌رستاری. له کۆتای دا، ده‌رکه‌وت که به‌رزترین ریزه‌ی ترسی کۆمه‌لایه‌تی له نیوان خویندکاران له ئاستی زۆر سه‌خت دا بوو . به‌لام نیوه‌ی خویندکارانی به‌شدار بوو هه‌یچ نیشانه‌یه‌کی دل‌ه‌راوکی کۆمه‌لایه‌تیان تیا به‌ دی نه‌کرا.