

Impact of social phobia upon self-esteem of nursing collegians' in Iraq

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المستخلص

الهدف: التعرف على تأثير الرهاب الاجتماعي في الثقة بالنفس لطلبة كليات التمريض في العراق.

المنهجية: أجريت دراسة عرضية في جامعة بغداد، جامعة كركوك، جامعة ذي قار، وجامعة الكوفة/ كليات التمريض للمدة من الثامن من شباط ولغاية الخامس والعشرين من أيلول لعام ٢٠١١. تكونت العينة من جميع طلبة المرحلة الأولى (٣٣٠ طالب) من عينة عشوائية من كليات التمريض، وذلك بتقسيم العراق إلى ثلاث مناطق (شمال، جنوب، منطقة الفرات الأوسط) فضلاً عن بغداد. جمعت البيانات من خلال ملئ البيانات الذاتي بطريقة لجمع العينة بإستعمال إستبانة مكونة من ثلاثة أجزاء، الجزء الأول، يتضمن الخصائص الديموغرافية ويحتوي ٧ فقرات والجزء الثاني، يتضمن إستبانة مقياس تقدير الذات والجزء الثالث يختص بإستبانة الرهاب الاجتماعي والمتضمن مقياس الرهاب الاجتماعي ومقياس قلق التفاعل الاجتماعي. حُددت ثبات الإستبانة من خلال إجراء الدراسة المصغرة وحُدد صدقها من خلال مجموعة مكونة من ١٧ خبير. تم وصف وتحليل البيانات بإستعمال أساليب الإحصاء الوصفي والإستنباطي.

النتائج: أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن هنالك ارتباطاً كبيراً بين بتقدير الذات كانت نسبة التأثير ٨٠ % أما فيما يتعلق في اضطراب الرهاب الاجتماعي: فان مقياس قلق التفاعل الاجتماعي فكانت نسبة التأثير ١٥% وفيما يتعلق بمقياس الرهاب الاجتماعي، كانت نسبة التأثير ٥,٨ وان الرهاب الاجتماعي له تأثير كبير في الثقة بالنفس لطلبة كليات التمريض.

التوصيات: أوصت الدراسة إلى توفير فرص للطلاب للمشاركة في المنظمات والمؤتمرات والمشاريع لرفع مستوى الثقة بالنفس وإعداد وتنفيذ البرامج التعليمية للمدرسين في المدارس الثانوية حول كيفية خفض الرهاب الاجتماعي بين طلبتهم.

Abstract

Objective(s): The aim of this study is to assess the impact of social phobia upon self-esteem of nursing collegians.

Methodology: A Cross-sectional study is carried out at University of Baghdad, Karkuk, Thi-Qar, and Kufa, colleges of nursing from Feb 8th, 2011 to Sep. 25th, 2011. A sample of all first class nursing collegians (N=330) were selected from a probability sample of nursing colleges by dividing Iraq to three geographical areas (South, North, and Middle Euphrates) in addition to Baghdad. The data were collected through the use of self-administered technique as a mean for data collection, by using a questionnaire that consists of three parts: First part was the socio-demographic data form; the second one contains the Index of Self-esteem Scale (ISE); and the third one that is concerned with Social Phobia instrument which includes Social Phobia Inventory (SPI) Scale, and Social Interaction Anxiety (SIA) scale. Reliability of the questionnaire was determined through a pilot study and the validity was achieved through a panel of (17) experts. The data were described statistically and analyzed through use of the descriptive and inferential statistical analysis procedures.

Results: The study results show the effect of the index of self-esteem scale was 80 %, whereas the effect of the Social Interaction Anxiety was 15%, followed by the Social Phobia Inventory (5.8%). Social phobia has a significant impact upon nursing collegians' self-esteem.

Conclusion: The study concluded that most of the nursing collegians have low self-esteem and this level was probably affected by the variable of social phobia.

Recommendations: The study recommended providing opportunities for students to participate in organizations, conferences, and study projects to elevate their level of self esteem and constructing and implementing educational programs for secondary schools teachers about how to decrease social phobia among their pupils.

Keywords: Impact, Social Phobia, Social Anxiety, Anxiety, Phobia, self-esteem

Introduction:

The university is the most important stage of education, since it represents the crest of the educational pyramid and is designed to prepare individuals in an organized and directed for life, so that higher education level receives a lot of care and concern in most developed countries alike, to the important serious role⁽¹⁾ Self-esteem seems as an important component of a person's psychological status⁽³⁶⁾. The concept of self-esteem in psychiatry literature, in broadest terms, has been a judgment that shows ,how a person, value, self respect and worth⁽¹⁷⁾. The Rosenberg mention about self esteem individuals with a positive internal orientation were found to have high self-esteem while those with a negative internal orientation were found to have low self esteem⁽²⁴⁾. Individual with a high estimate of the self away from social phobia, where some consider that estimate. Where some considered that the estimate is high with more tools that can be used by the individual for the case of consensus, he can count confront failure and to enter into new situations without feeling sad and bust, while a low rating with it feel defeated even before they enter new situations or difficult because it is expected to failure already⁽²¹⁾. The American psychologist, Abraham Maslow (1943) classified the range of human needs into a hierarchy of priorities in this system, (physiological need, safety need, social, and finally reach our potential (self-actualize), in the absence of these elements, people become increasingly susceptible to loneliness, social phobia and depression⁽¹⁵⁾. Anxiety is a normal being response and a necessary part of our evolutionary structure. Its function is to attentive us to threats to our physical safety and well-being, including our self-esteem; thus crossing a busy road and being asked a tricky question in a lecture may both trigger the fear response. Individuals vary in their experience of anxiety, which may present as physical symptoms such as increased heart rate and breathing, worrying thoughts or images, feeling nervous or stressed, and changes in behavior such as faster speech or

avoiding a situation⁽²²⁾. Students leaving home to enter university, immediate, personal support may be difficult to achieve. Indeed, loneliness has been identified a significant problem for many first year students⁽²⁴⁾. Furthermore,⁽²³⁾ (1987) found, via a longitudinal study of freshmen (1st year students) that loneliness at the start of a semester was predictive of higher rates of depression later in the academic year. Student mental health has been the focus of attention from various quarters in recent years. Social phobia also known as social anxiety disorders, the person become severely anxious to the point of panic or incapacity when confronting people⁽³¹⁾. Social phobia is a highly prevalence mental health problem which is under recognized in both psychiatric and primary care setting⁽¹⁴⁾. Although poorly recognized, recent epidemiological studies show that social phobia is highly prevalent and ranks as the third most common mental health problem after major depression and alcohol abuse⁽²⁵⁾. It is considered to be the third largest psychological problem in the United States, affects around 15 million American adults⁽³²⁾. The experience of social phobia is common amongst healthy people^(9, 12). Lying on the extreme end of the social anxiety continuum, social anxiety disorder directly affects about 12% of the population⁽¹⁸⁾. Extreme levels of social phobia are characterized by persistent fear and avoidance of social situations in which embarrassment, negative evaluation, or criticism may occur⁽⁴⁾. In high level of social phobia problem individuals experience deficits distress in many social situations and they often exhibit performance deficits and ineffective communication patterns interpersonal interactions⁽¹²⁾, the social phobia in early adolescent is considered a key risk period for the onset social phobia, an anxiety disorder of which the principal symptoms is persistent and intensive anxiety arising in one or more situation where there are other citizens around adolescence coincides with increasing demands for social interaction with peers and in formal social⁽¹⁹⁾. Social phobia estimated that 45-70 % of socially phobic individuals meet criteria for other disorder⁽²¹⁾. Many investigations concerning the

relationship between self-esteem and health have focused on the influence of self-esteem on health-related behaviors. The well-established relation between self-esteem and social phobia may be an important factor in understanding the self-esteem health relationship⁽¹⁶⁾. Bernard et al.⁽⁷⁾, found high correlations among self esteem, self-efficacy, ego strength, hardiness, optimism, and maladjustment, and all of these constructs were significantly related to health. Studies have shown that increasing anxiety decreases self-esteem⁽²⁹⁾.

Methodology: A descriptive (Cross-sectional) was carried throughout the present study to identify the impact of social phobia upon self-esteem of nursing collegians in Iraq during the period from Feb. 8th, 2011 to Sep. 25th, 2011. Study sample probability sampling used through dividing the

Iraq to three geographical area (South region, North region, and Middle Euphrates region), in addition to Baghdad, it was included in the present study as a separate region was selected randomly by writing the college name for each region (each college on a separate paper) and mix the papers before the randomly selection. In addition to Baghdad College because there is only one college in Baghdad, it was included in the present study as a separate region. The result of the sampling of colleges was: The College of nursing from Kirkuk, Thi-qar, Kufa University, and University of Baghdad. All first class students nursing collegians (N=330), from the randomly selected nursing colleges who were attending the class room during the time of the data collection were included in the present study sample (see Table1)

Table 1. Distribution of the Nursing Collegians' Sample according the Regions of Iraq:

List	Setting (Collegians)	Total number	Selected sample
1	Kirkuk university/college of nursing	112	86
2	Thi-qar university/college of nursing	49	44
3	Kufa university/college of nursing	132	90
4	Baghdad university/college of nursing	123	110
Total	Numbers of students	416	330

Instruments

An assessment tool was adopted and developed by the investigator to measure the impact of the social phobia upon self esteem. The investigator translated the scales (Social Interaction Anxiety scale)⁽²⁰⁾, from English to Arabic. Translation validity was achieved through the process of forward and backward translation, then forward to the experts to review the translation. Whereas the Social Phobia Inventory⁽³⁾, Index of Self-Esteem⁽²⁾. The investigator obtained both copies in English and Arabic and uses it directly after simple modification. The final study instrument consisting of three parts: Part I: The first section was socio-demographic characteristics sheet consisted of 7 items, which included, residence, gender, age, and marital status, nature of residence, family income and absenteeism from attendance in the classroom. Part II: Self Esteem Scale (Index of Self Esteem (ISE)). Part III: Social Phobia instrument: a- SPIN & b- SIAS. The

researcher of use two scales according to previous studies ,(SPIN& SIAS), are used simultaneously to measure complementary aspects of social phobia⁽²²⁾.

Data collection

The data were collected through the utilization of the developed questionnaire (Arabic version) and by means of self-administrated questionnaire with the subjects' who were included in the present study before data collection, the investigator met the nursing collegians at the classroom to clarify the study student and get their agreement to participation in the study , then a copy of the questionnaire was distributed for each student to complete they receded by the investigator, this process was applied at all colleges that were included in the present study. The data collection process has been performed from April.11th 2011 until May, 4th, 2011.

Data Analyses

In order to achieve the early stated objectives, the data of the study were analyzed through the

use of statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) version 16 through descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

Results:

Table 2. Distribution of the Study Sample by their Different Socio-demographic characteristics

List	Socio-demographic characteristics	Groups	Frequency	Percent
1.	Residence	Rural	44	13.3
		Urban	286	86.7
2.	Gender	Male	85	25.8
		Female	245	74
3.	Age years	<20	169	51.82
		20-21	139	41.52
		22 more	22	6.67
4.	Marital status	Single	302	91.5
		Married	27	8.5
5.	Nature of residence	With Family	178	54
		Student hosing	146	44
		Other	6	1.8
6.	Family Income	sufficient	136	41.2
		Barely sufficient	139	42.2
		In sufficient	55	16.7
		yes	89	27
7.	Absenteeism (from attendance)	no	241	73

This table shows that the majority of the study sample (86.7%) is from urban residential area. The above table also shows that the majority of the study sample (74%) is females. shows that more than half of the study sample is within the less than 20 years old category. This table shows that the majority of the study sample (91.5%) is singles. This table shows that the highest

percentage of the study sample (42.2%) are within the barely sufficient family income also it shows that more than half of the study sample (54%) are within their family, whereas (44%) of them are living in the students campus . Finally the table showed that about one quarter of the study sample (27 %) has absenteeism from daily attendance.

Table 3. The level of self-esteem among nursing collegian

List	Index of Self Esteem Scale	Mean	S.D
1.	I feel that people would not like me if they really knew me well	3.65	0.96
2.	I feel that others get along a lot better than I do	3.24	1.07
3.	I feel that I am a beautiful person	3.51	1.06
4.	When I am with others I feel they are glad I am with them	3.55	1.03
5.	I feel that people really like to talk with me	3.61	1.08
6.	I feel that I am a very competent person	2.75	1.05
7.	I think I make a good impression on others	2.55	1.05
8.	I feel that I need more self-confidence	3.96	1.34
9.	When I am with strangers I am very nervous	3.46	1.23
10.	I think that I am a dull person When I am with strangers	3.74	1.05
11.	I feel ugly	3.72	1.06
12.	I feel that others have more fun than I do	2.57	1.31
13.	I feel that I bore people	3.73	0.97
14.	I think my friends find me interesting	2.73	1.19
15.	I think I have a good sense of humor	3.05	1.21
16.	I feel very self-conscious when I am with strangers	3.43	1.27
17.	I feel that if I could be more like other people	3.34	1.35
18.	I feel that people have a good time when they are with me	3.86	1.13
19.	I feel like a wall flower when I go out	3.86	1.08
20.	I feel I get pushed around more than others	3.82	1.35
21.	I think I am a rather nice person	2.52	1.10
22.	I feel that people really like me very much	3.54	1.05
23.	I feel that I am a likeable person	3.46	1.08
24.	I am afraid I will appear foolish to others	3.32	1.33
25.	My friends think very highly of me	3.45	1.06
Total average mean		3.37	1.100

SD=standard deviation

This table reveals in light of mean of scores 3 that the subjects responses regarding to the index of self-esteem scale items are affected at all items (means of scores more than 3) except at the items number 6, 7, 12, 14, and 21, the

subjects responses were not affected (means of scores less than 3). This result indicates that self-esteems of nursing collegians are affected significantly in most self-esteem items.

Table 4. The level of social phobia among nursing collegians

Social Phobia Inventory Scale		not at all		little bit		somewhat		very much		extremely		M	S.D
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
1	Fear of people in authority	127	38.5	93	28.2	74	22.4	20	6.1	16	4.8	1.10	1.13
2	Bothered by blushing	97	29.4	79	23.9	68	20.6	65	19.7	21	6.4	1.49	1.27
3	Fear of parties and social events (Fear)	216	65.5	57	17.3	38	11.5	12	3.6	7	2.1	0.59	0.97
4	Avoid talking to strangers (avoid)	107	32.4	89	27.0	65	19.7	51	15.5	18	5.5	1.34	1.23
5	Fear of criticism (Fear)	101	30.6	74	22.4	65	19.7	71	21.5	19	5.8	1.49	1.28
6	Avoid embarrassment(Avoid)	56	17.0	81	24.5	67	20.3	96	29.1	30	9.1	1.88	1.25
7	Distressed by sweating(physiology)	91	27.6	94	28.5	62	18.8	58	17.6	25	7.6	1.49	1.26
8	Avoid parties(Avoid)	157	47.6	56	17.0	59	17.9	44	13.3	14	4.2	1.09	1.25
9	Avoid being the center of attention (Avoid)	111	33.6	74	22.4	61	18.5	66	20.0	18	5.5	1.41	1.28
10	Fear of talking to strangers (Fear)	136	41.2	82	24.8	55	16.7	38	11.5	19	5.8	1.15	1.23
11	Avoids speeches (Avoid)	89	27.0	90	27.3	60	18.2	70	21.2	21	6.4	1.52	1.26
12	Avoid criticism (Avoid)	87	26.4	53	16.1	46	13.9	114	34.5	30	9.1	1.83	1.37
13	Distressed by palpitations (Physiology)	100	30.3	79	23.9	60	18.2	75	22.7	16	4.8	1.47	1.26
14	I Fear of others watching (Fear)	89	27.0	85	25.8	53	16.1	75	22.7	28	8.5	1.6	1.32
15	Fear of embarrassment (Fear)	55	16.7	53	16.1	42	12.7	145	43.9	35	10.6	2.15	1.29
16	Avoid talking to authority (Avoid)	149	45.2	63	19.1	50	15.2	47	14.2	21	6.4	1.17	1.31
17	Distressed by trembling or shaking (Physiology)	73	22.1	79	23.9	46	13.9	110	33.3	22	6.7	1.78	1.29
Total average mean												1.45	1.25

f. =frequency, %=percentage, M = mean, SD=standard deviation

Table 4 shows the results reveal in light of mean of scores 2 that the subjects responses regarding to the social phobia scale items are not affected at all items (means of scores less than 2), except the item number 15 the subjects responses were affected (means of scores more than or equal 2).

Table 5. The level of social interaction anxiety among nursing collegians

List	Social Interaction Anxiety Scale	Mean	S.D
1.	I get nervous if I have to speak with someone in authority (teacher, boss))	0.62	0.90
2.	I have difficulty making eye-contact with others	1.75	1.33
3.	I become tense if I have to talk about myself or my feelings	1.7	1.34
4.	I find difficulty mixing comfortably with the people I work with	1.32	1.28
5.	I find it easy making friends of my own age	2.02	1.49
6.	I tense up if I meet an acquaintance in the street	0.91	1.20
7.	When mixing socially, I am uncomfortable	0.74	1.00
8.	I feel tense if I am alone with just one person	1.85	1.39
9.	I am at ease meeting people at parties, etc	1.92	1.39
10.	I have difficulty talking with other people	1.01	1.15
12.	I worry about expressing myself in case I appear Awkward	2.12	1.39
11.	I find it easy to think of things to talk about	2.06	1.29
13.	I find it difficult to disagree with another's point of View	1.47	1.35
14.	I have difficulty talking to an attractive person of the opposite sex	1.69	1.48
15.	I find myself worrying that I won't know what to say in social situations	1.85	1.31
16.	I am nervous mixing with people I don't know well	1.29	1.22
17.	I feel I'll say something embarrassing when talking	1.06	1.17
18.	When mixing in a group, I find myself worrying I will be ignored	1.10	1.20
19.	I am tense mixing in a group	0.83	1.09
20.	I am unsure whether to greet someone I know only slightly	0.83	1.09
Total average mean		1.41	1.25

SD=standard deviation

Table (5) reveals in light of mean of scores 2 that the subjects responses in regarding to the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale items are not affected at all items (means of scores less than 2)

except in items number 5, 11, and 12 the subjects responses were affected (means of scores more than or equal 2).

Table 6. Distribution of the Studied Sample through Two Classified Groups Affected and not Affected Groups among Different Study Measured Scales

Scales	Items	Percent
Index Self-esteem scale	affected	80
	not affected	20
Social Phobia inventory	affected	5.8
	not affected	94.2
Social Interaction Anxiety	affected	15
	not affected	85

This table shows that the major effect present in the index of self-esteem scale (80%). While in regard to the social anxiety disorders scales, the major effect present in the social

interaction anxiety (15%) followed by the social phobia inventory (5.8%). But generally the non-affected persons have higher percentage than those who are affected.

Table 7. Pearson Correlation Coefficient among different study scales

Scales	Correlation	SPI	SIA	ISE
Social phobia inventory SPIN	Pearson correlation	1	.461**	-0.349**
Social interaction anxiety SIA	Pearson correlation	.461**	1	-0.380**
Index self esteem(ISE)	Pearson Correlation	-0.349**	-0.380**	1

The results indicate that there are significant positive relationships between all the studied scales at p-value ≤ 0.05 between the

self-esteem scale from one side with the social interaction anxiety and social phobia scales the relationship from another side was negative.

Discussion:

Regarding to the residence, it was found that the majority of the study sample (86.7%) are from urban residence. From the investigator point of view, this result may be due to the urban residential area students are more likely to continue in their education than those in rural residential area and that refer to educational and economic factors of their family, in addition to the higher density of population in urban than in rural residential area. This result is supported by ⁽¹⁷⁾; their findings indicate that the majority of the studied sample is living at urban. The study results show that the majority of the study sample (74%) is females. From the investigator point of view, this result comes because the

acceptance plan for the colleges of nursing in Iraq is more focused on females than males (75% females, 25% males) because of the shortage in female nursing staff in the country. This result is supported by ⁽¹⁰⁾, they studied the college students' social anxiety at University of Chinese Academic associated with stress & mental health, and their findings indicate that the majority of the study sample was females. This result agrees also with ⁽²⁸⁾, they investigated the interrelation of social anxiety with anxiety, depression, locus of control, ways of coping and ego strength amongst university students in the London University, their findings show that the majority of the study sample also was females. Concerning

the subjects age, the result show that more than half of the study subjects (51.82%) are within the first category less than 20 years old, this result may be due to the average age of the students in the first class is under the 20 yrs old⁽²⁸⁾. assessed the social phobia and its impact in Indian university students, their findings show that the majority of the study sample is less than 20 years old which agrees with the present study findings⁽⁷⁾, revealed that the minimum age of the respondents was 18 years with a mean age of 22.9 (SD: 3.28), which is also consistent with the current results. Concerning the family income, the study results show that the highest percentage of the study sample (42.1%) are within the barely sufficient level, the results which is supported by Bella et al.⁽⁷⁾, they studied the social phobia in Nigerian university students, their findings indicate that the majority of the study sample are within the moderate family income. Regarding to the daily attendance and absenteeism, the study result show that (27%) of the study sample have absenteeism from daily attendance to their colleges which is supported by the study of Ghaedi⁽¹³⁾ who evaluated the quality of life in college students with and without social phobia in Iran. They revealed that the social phobia affecting the student's presence in class room, and cause functional disability and failure in conducting the social role. But the cause of absenteeism in our country may be different. The study results indicate that there are significant positive relationships between all the studied scales ($p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$) self-esteem scale from one side with the social interaction anxiety and social phobia scales from another side the relationship was negative (table 7). This result agrees with Izgic et.al (17); who studied social phobia among university students and its relation to self-esteem and body image in turkey and other study by Mull⁽²¹⁾, their finding indicates that there is a significant negative relationship between the social phobia and the students' self-esteem. This studies with the same results to the current study give an actual and realistic support

for the result, that give an indicator for the current study objective view on the studied phenomenon. Furthermore we can apply generalization for all the nursing collegians within first class in Iraq. Also a significant inverse relationship was found between anxiety and self-esteem. The present findings agree with the finding of Azar et al.⁽⁵⁾ who studied the prevalence of anxiety and its relationship with self esteem among Zabol University students in Iran, and other investigators who have shown that self-esteem decreases with increases anxiety. Whereas study⁽¹¹⁾, they investigate to identify the relationship phobia speaking in front of others with self-esteem. The sample was consisted 567 students from different disciplines and grades in Riyadh were used speaking phobia scale and self-esteem scale. The result showed relationship negative and relation function between the perception of students themselves and have their esteem, and attitudes of fear that requires speaking to others and interacting with them. The investigator considered phobia speaking in front others is a type of social phobia. This result agree with Bakhtiarpoor et al.⁽⁶⁾, the aim of this study was to examine the relationship of the self-focus attention, body image concern and generalized self-efficacy with social phobia in student of Islamic Azad university. There results by using person correlation and multiple regressions showed that self-focused attention and body image concern had apposite correlation with social phobia and generalized self-efficacy had a negative correlation with social phobia. Finally, and when we speaking about the nursing as a professional, we should prepare a professional staff to continue in giving the patients a help, for this we must identify any factors that affect those students participation in the education process, and as we know that the self esteem refers to one of important factors that affect those students educational capacities for delivering an effective role in future as an a major theme for the nurses (researcher view).

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