EVALUATION OF THE ANXIETY OF NURSING STUDENTS AT A FOUNDATION UNIVERSITY IN TURKEY

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Abstract:

Aim: This study was conducted to evaluate the occupational anxiety of students studying in the

classes of the nursing department.

Method: In the present study, a survey method was used, and the study was designed in a descriptive and cross-sectional model. The population of the study consists of students studying in the 1st and 4th-grades of a foundation university's nursing department in the 2019-2020 academic year. In consequence of stratified and cluster sampling, 153 students were included in the sample, and the data of 125 students who agreed to participate in the study were evaluated. Study data "Socio-demographic questionnaire" and "State-Trait Anxiety Inventory" were designed as web-based, and transferred to the sample group via the social media they prefer. Results: According to the data obtained, 38.7% of 1st-grade students and 57.1% of 4th-grade students think that the respect and perception of the society for the profession are media, and 51.6% of 1st-grade students and 54% of 4th-grade students like their profession. The students mostly stated that they were anxious, and 1st-grade students stated that they were most anxious due to violence and difficulties of the profession, and senior students mostly stated that they were anxious about the difficulties of the profession and the possibility of not being appointed. When the State-Trait Anxiety Scale scores are examined, the anxiety of the 1st-grade students was higher than the 4th-grade students, and a significant difference was determined.

Conclusion: The occupational anxiety of the students of the nursing department is at a high level, and the occupational anxiety of the students who have just started vocational education is higher than the seniors.

Educators should be aware of the occupational anxiety of students and the level of anxiety according to the class, and nursing education programs and the teaching-learning process should be arranged in a way to help reduce professional anxiety.

Key Words: Nursing Student, The Occupatıonal Anxıety, University, Education

INTRODUCTION

The origin of the word anxiety is "anxietas" in ancient Greek and means "anxiety, fear, wonder"(1). Anxiety is the presence of feelings of apprehension and uneasiness. The person expecting an incomprehensible and unknown danger causes anxiety, and the anxiety encountered creates tension and uneasiness in the person. The inability of the person to control threatening factors from inside or outside causes anxiety (2, 3). Anxiety is an uncomfortable and unpleasant mood that may accompany the feeling of danger, tension, and aggression that may occur suddenly in association with an explicable or inexplicable dangerous situation for the person(4). When the person feels threatened, he/she feels fear if the source of the threat is known, and anxiety if the source is uncertain. Anxiety is an emotion that lasts longer and is more intense than fear (5, 6).

The feeling of anxiety can cause different results, especially by being affected by the situation and place variables and depending on the anxiety level of the person, it can show effects in different or all areas of life. Physical and psychological symptoms caused by anxiety can vary according to the defence styles used by the person in anxiety(5). Stimulating, protecting, and motivating features of anxiety is its positive side. The occupation is defined as a field of occupation, which consists of systematic knowledge and skills that a person gains at the end of a certain education, gains in return for providing goods or services to society, and has certain rules (7, 8).

The choice of profession is defined as "the individual evaluating the occupations that are suitable for him/herself and taking into account his/her own needs, turning more towards the desired direction" according to Kuzgun. "Needs, feelings, attitudes, values, interests, and abilities" of the individual plays an important role in career choice (7). In a study conducted with students studying in different departments of the university, it was determined that female students attach more importance to social and feminine and masculine values than male students, the significance levels of the values between departments do not differ, the gender variable does not play an important role in choosing values and professions. In other saying, individuals should set value priorities, choose a profession by paying attention to trends that fit their values, and it is important to get into a job. (9).

Occupational anxiety is defined as the anxiety felt by students who are trained in a profession about the situations they will encounter in their professional life after their education is completed. Students' occupational anxiety level affects their learning desire and performance. While a decrease in the desire to learn and staying passive in the education process can be observed in students with low occupational anxiety, occupational anxiety above normal causes students to doubt themselves, and inconsistencies are observed in

their performance. Students with intense occupational anxiety may experience problems such as not knowing what to do when they start their professional life and difficulty in making decisions (2, 7).

The period of vocational education in human life coincides with the years in adolescence. With the emergence of issues such as graduation, finding a job after graduation, the life process of students who receive vocational education is the times when worries are most intense (10). The person's plans about their occupation, the place where he/she will work, the fear of not finding a job, and the people he/she is responsible for are factors that cause anxiety (11).It aims to prepare students with an undergraduate nursing education program to fulfil their professional duties and responsibilities in the health system. In accordance with this purpose, it aims to make students' transition to the nursing profession successful. Therefore, undergraduate nursing students should have clinical competencies to meet the needs of patients. The development of nurses' clinical competencies is related to the quality of clinical education, and many factors affect the quality of clinical education (12). Nursing students' subjective experiences and perceptions in their first meet with their educators in the classroom and clinical settings are influenced by their expectations (social, personal, professional, reputational, and prior expectations), judgments, and decisions. Nursing students are most under the influence of their expectations when they first meet with their vocational teachers (13).

Three main themes are important in the experiences of nursing students. The first of these is the first meet of students with their teachers and is influenced by students' attitudes and expectations. The second of these is the definition of the student's role in clinical practice. It is necessary to avoid misleading students. For this, priorities in clinical practice, the role of the nurse, and interventions should be determined. The third is that common ground should be prepared, and cooperation should be established between the university and clinical settings. Correct understanding of nursing students' expectations and perceptions of the nursing profession can help improve the quality of their education and develop realistic study plans (14).

Stress and anxiety are the main problems that nursing students experience during their education. Some studies suggest that among students studying in health departments, nurses are most under stress (15). Conditions such as education system that supports the intensity of the course load, exams, and competition among students increase stress and anxiety, and variables such as first time presence in the clinical setting and clinical performance are important to stress sources for nursing students (16, 17, 18). The nursing profession is a profession that has become extensive and complex due to the treatment process and patient care, and the need to be more efficient is constantly imposed. On the grounds of it is a social profession, nurses who have more social interactions need to develop therapeutic interactions. For this, nurses need to be confident. Determining the emotional and balanced development of students in nursing education as an educational goal will enable them to cope with the different stress factors they may encounter throughout their professional careers and support them to be successful throughout their life (19).

Conditions such as nursing students not feeling ready for the application, fear of making mistakes, witnessing the patients' experiences during their illness, having communication problems, communicating with doctors, being unfamiliar with the hospital setting, being observed and evaluated are among the factors that cause stress (16). In the study results about nursing students, the development of nursing students' competencies and clinical learning outcomes are affected by psychological factors. High perception of nursing students' competencies and psychological capital will increase their chances of having higher qualifications in their profession (20).Nursing students encounter patients, patients' relatives, nurses, doctors, administrators, and other healthcare professionals in the clinical setting in different situations and the need to establish new relationships can increase their anxiety about their professional performance (21). It is known that nurses experience clinical performance anxiety when they are responsible for the care of especially complicated patients (22). In other saying, nurses' interpersonal and clinical interaction skills are associated with social anxiety. The increase in anxiety level of nursing students is caused by negative thoughts about their past performance experiences, and they believe their social competence is low. To cope with their anxiety, they avoid social situations in which they do not feel safe. Anxiety causes academic failure, low performance in clinical skills, and difficulty in social adaptation (23, 24, 25). In a study conducted, it plays a mediating role in the relationship between depressive symptoms and social anxiety and insomnia. This situation partially explains insomnia seen in socially anxious people. In another saying, social anxiety is associated with insomnia and can lead to the occurrence of depression (26).

Anxiety is associated with negative labels made on cognitive function. Increased anxiety levels can cause physiological symptoms such as blurred vision, eye twitching, drowsiness, numbness, shortness of breath, and muscle tension. The cognitive characteristics of these individuals include unrealistic evaluations such as I will/could not be able to perform enough; anxiety symptoms will be/are noticed by the environment; other people will judge/judge me (27, 28).

The performance of the attention of the person and dividing it into the stimuli around them (loud noises, disturbing people, etc.) can maximize the cognitive impairment. Nursing students' anxiety can turn into acute anxiety when they are in a limited clinical setting (29). Studies show that nurses have death anxiety, and this anxiety may develop early in their education. (30) Nursing students state that they experience high levels of anxiety during the process of combining their theoretical knowledge with clinical experience (with the effect of clinical experiences, such as being seen as a responsible nurse, fear of making mistakes,) (31, 32). The stress encountered by nursing students in the clinical environment continues to increase as the education progresses and may cause them to quit education. Students who feel inadequate in clinical practice may have a different attitude towards the profession (31, 33). Those who start the profession with a sense of occupational illiteracy, may cause dissatisfaction with the performance, decrease in the quality of care, and early leaving the profession. An increase of 1 point in the satisfaction of students who are satisfied with the education they received reduces the probability of intending to quit by 3%, and willingness to continue postgraduate education reduces the probability of intending to quit by 26%. Continuing anxiety of students

starting the profession causes intense wear in the first year of the profession, and approximately 30% of them leave (34).

MATERIALS and METHODS

This study is a descriptive and cross-sectional study.

Study Design

To minimize the face-to-face interaction of people in our country to prevent the epidemic, a web-based questionnaire was designed by the researchers to include the participants in the study. The responses given to the questionnaire were obtained by responding online via desktop, tablet, or laptop and mobile devices (Whatsapp, Mail, Instagram, etc.).

Study Population and Sample

This study was conducted with stratified and cluster sample selection from the 1st and 4th grade students of the Nursing Department studying at a foundation university in the 2019-2020 Academic Year. The total number of students in the sample was 153, however, due to the refusal of 28 students to participate in the study, a questionnaire was conducted with a total of 125 students, with the voluntary participation of 87 women and 38 men.

Data Collection

The study was conducted with a total of 125 participants between 01/01/2020 and 01/07/2020. In the introduction of the questionnaire sent to the participants, there is information about the purpose and content of the study and that participation in the study is voluntary. The identity information of the participants was not recorded in the questionnaire. Inclusion criteria are being a 1st or 4th nursing student at the chosen foundation university and volunteering to participate in the study. "Socio-Demographic Questionnaire" and "State-Trait Anxiety Inventory" prepared by the researchers in line with the literature were used as data collection tools. Filling out data collection forms takes an average of 10 minutes.

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory was developed by Spielbertger et al. in 1970. It was translated into Turkish by Öner and Le Compte in 1985. The scale, which was translated into Turkish in 1975 and tested for validity and reliability, consists of twenty-item state anxiety and trait anxiety scales. A total of 20 to 80 points are obtained from both scales. The lowest score indicates the low anxiety level; the highest score indicates the highest anxiety level (35).

Study Ethics

Ethics Committee permission was obtained at Hasan Kalyoncu University to conduct the study. In the web-based form, the purpose of the study was written, and volunteerism was taken as a basis. This study was planned and conducted in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration Principles.

Evaluation of Data

SPSS 24.0 (Statistical Package of Social Sciences for Windows) statistical package program was used to analyze the data obtained in the study. For statistical calculations, t-test, chi-square frequency, and mean tests were used in independent groups. Statistical significance level was taken as $p < 0.05$. The reliability of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory used in the questionnaire was tested with the Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test. Cronbach Alpha Test has more than one reliability analysis in social sciences. The most popular of these techniques is the Cronbach Alpha method. According to Cronbach Alpha, for a scale to be considered reliable, its Alpha value must be at least 0.70 and above. Scales with a Cronbach value of less than 0.70 are included in the low reliable or unreliable scale class.

Table 1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Socio-Demographic Characteristics		1st-grade		4th-grade		p/t
		n	%	n	%	
Age	18-22	59	95.2	18	28.6	0,000 / -
	23 and above	3	4,8	45	71.4	10,468
Gender	Female	45	72.6	41	65.1	0,076
	Male	17	27.4	22	34.9	/ 901
Graduated High School Type	Medical-Vocational High School	12	19.4	37	58.7	0,000 /
	Anatolian High School	43	69.4	7	11.2	
	Vocational High School	2	3.2	4	6.3	,254
	Others	5	8.1	IS	23.8	
Longest Living Settlement	Province	49	79	41	65.1	0,045 /-
	District	9	14.5	17	27	
	Village	4	6.5	5	7.9	1,415

Lives with Who	With My Family	43	69.4	42	66.7	0,489 / - ,355
	With My Friends	6	9.6	6	9.5	
	In-state dormitory	13	21	IS	23.8	
Family structure	Elementary family	55	88.7	52	82.5	0,018 / - 1.221
	Extended family	5	8.1	7	11.1	
	Single parent family	2	3.2	2	3.2	
	Fragmented family			2	3.2	
Family type	Democratic-egalitarian	47	75.8	50	79.4	0,024 / 1.031
	Democratic-non-egalitarian	10	16.1	12	19.0	
	Democratic and non-egalitarian	5	8.1	1	1. 6	
Income state	Income less than the expense	14	22.6	18	28.6	0,293 / 0.378
	Income equal to expenses	34	54.8	30	47.6	
	Income more than the expense	14	22.6	IS	23.8	
Education background of the mother	Illiterate	9	14.5	11	17.5	0,094 / 0,987
	Literate	8	12.9	4	6.4	
	Primary school graduate	17	27.4	26	41.3	
	Secondary school graduate	7	11.3	8	12.6	

	High-school graduate	11	17.7	8	12.6	
	University graduate	10	16.1	6	9.6	
Education background of the father	Illiterate	3	4<1>.</1> <2>8</2>	1	1. 6	0,200 / 0.488
	Literate	8	12.9	7	11.1	
	Primary school graduate	11	17.7	18	28.6	
	Secondary school graduate	10	16.1	12	19	
	High-school graduate	12	19.4	11	17.5	
	University graduate	18	29.0	14	22.2	
Occupation of father	Officer	IS	24.2	12	19	0,078 / - 0.933
	Employee	10	16.1	10	15.9	
	Shopkeeper	18	29	17	27	
	Self-employment	IS	24.2	18	28.6	
	Farmer	4	6.5	6	9.5	
Working status of the mother	Working	9	14.5	8	12.7	0,857 / - 0.806
	Not working	53	85.5	55	87.3	
Total		62	100	63	100	

It was determined that 95.2% of the 1st-grade students (n=59) who participated in our study were between the ages of 18 and 22, and 71.4% of 4th-grade students (n=45) are aged 23 and over, and there is a

significant difference between the age and the class in which students study (p <0.005). 72.6% of 1st-grade students (n=45) and 65.1% of 4th-grade students (n=41) are women. It was determined that 69.4% of 1st-grade students (n=43) were graduated from Anatolian High School, and 58.7% of 4th-grade students (n=37) were graduated from Health Vocational High School, and there is significance in the type of high school the participants graduated from (p <0.005). It was determined that 79% of 1st-grade students (n=49) and 65.1% of 4th-grade students (n=41) were the city centre as the place where the participants lived the longest. It was determined that 69.4% of 1st-grade students (n=43) and 66.7% of 4th-grade students (n=42) lived with their families. It was determined that 88.7% of 1st-grade students (n=55) and 82.5% of 4th-grade students (n=52) were elementary families. It was observed that the families of 16.1% of 1st-grade students (n=10) and 19% of 4th-grade students (n=12) were democratic but not egalitarian. It was determined that 22.6% of 1st-grade students (n=14) and 23.8% of 4th-grade students (n=15) family's income is more than the expense. It was determined that mothers of 14.5% of 1st-grade students (n=9) and 17.5% of 4th-grade students (n=11) were illiterate. It was determined that the fathers of 29% of 1st-grade students (n=18) and 22.2% of 4th-grade students (n=14) were university graduates. It was determined that the fathers of 29% of 1st-grade students (n=18) and 27% of 4th-grade students (n=17) were a shopkeeper. It was determined that mothers of 14,5% of 1st-grade students (n=9) and 12,7% of 4th-grade students (n=8) were working **(Table 1).**

Table-2 Comparison of students' course and occupational anxiety

Students' Course and Occupational Anxiety		1st-grade		4th-grade		P/t
		N	%	N	%	
Course situation	Poor	1	1. 6	2	3.2	0.802 / 1.618
	Medium	39	62.9	26	41.3	
	Good	19	30.6	33	52.4	
	Better	3	4.8	2	3.2	
Is there anyone you care for?	Yes			3	4.8	0.000 / 12.918
	Partially	3	4.8	49	77.8	
	No	59	95.2	11	17.5	
The reason to	Family Promotion	13	21	21	33.3	
	Easy Employment	22	35.5	21	33.3	

prefer this occupation	Because I Love This Occupation	27	43.5	21	33.3	0,921 / 1.577
	Very Bad	17	27.4	7	11.1	0,005 / 4.000
	Bad	14	22.6	17	27	

Students' Course and Occupational Anxiety Respect and Perception of Society		1st-grade		4th-grade		P/t
		N	%	N	%	
	Medium	24	38.7	36	57.1	
	Good	6	9.7	2	3.2	
	Better	1	1. 6	1	1. 6	
Loving Your Occupation	Yes	32	51.6	34	54	
	No	13	27	14	22.2	0,646 / 0.393
	I am on the fence	17	21.4	IS	23.8	
Occupational Anxiety	I Never Live	8	13	3	4.8	
	I Don't Live	16	25.8	17	27	
	Medium	22	35.4	23	36.5	0.231 / -1.288
	I live	IS	24.2	18	28.5	
	I Live a Lot	1	1. 6	2	3.2	
Cause of Occupational Anxiety	Not Be Appointed	3	4.8	13	20.6	
	Disestimation	2	3.2	9	14.3	
	Violence	18	29	2	3.2	
	The difficulty of the Occupation	11	17.7	19	30.2	0,277 / 2.452

		1st-grade		4th-grade		P/t
	Others	4	6.4	3	4.8	
	I have no anxiety	24	38.7	17	27	
Working Setting **Anxiety**	**Yes**	28	45. 2	39	61.9	0,142 / 1.889
	No	34	54.8	24	38.1	
Students' Course and Occupational **Anxiety**		**1st-grade**		**4th-grade**		**P/t**
		N	**%**	**N**	**%**	
Patient Empathy **Anxiety**	**Yes**	17	27.4	18	28.6	0,776 / 0.142
	No	45	72.6	45	71.4	
Insufficient Knowledge Anxiety	**Yes**	27	43.5	41	65.1	0,067 / 2.455
	No	35	56.5	22	34.9	
The anxiety of **Not Appointment**	**Yes**	33	53.2	49	77.8	0,000 / 2.962
	No	29	46.8	14	22.2	
Anxiety of Regret	**Yes**	22	35.5	28	44.4	0,061 / 1.019
	No	40	64.5	35	55.6	
Anxiety about Problems with Management	**Yes**	19	30.6	30	47.6	0,002 / 1.959
	No	43	69.4	33	52.4	
Total		**62**	**100**	**63**	**100**	

It was determined that 62.9% of the 1st-grade students (n=39) participating in our study had a moderate course situation, and 52.4% of the 4th-grade students (n=33) participating in our study had a good course situation. It was observed that 95.2% of 1st-grade students (n=59) do not have anyone responsible for their care, 77.8% of 4th-grade students (n=49) had someone partially responsible for their care and that there is a significant difference between having someone responsible for care (p <0.005). 38.7% of 1st-grade students

(n=24) and 57.1% of 4thgrade students (n=36) stated that the respect and perception of the society towards the nursing profession is medium level. 51.4% of 1st-grade students (n=32) and 54% of 4th-grade students (n=34) stated that they like their occupation. It was determined that 35.4% of 1st-grade students (n=22) and 36.5% of 4th-grade students (n=23) encountered moderate anxiety about their occupation. 29% of 1st-grade students (n=18) stated that the reason for their anxiety about their occupation was violence, 30.2% of 4th-grade students (n=19) stated that the reason for their anxiety about their occupation is the difficulties of the occupation. It was determined that 54.8% of 1st-grade students (n=34) did not encounter anxiety about the work setting, and 61.9% of 4th-grade students (n=39) encountered anxiety about the work setting. 72.6% of the 1st-grade students (n=45) and 71.4% of the 4th-grade students (n=45) stated that they did not encounter anxiety about empathy with the patient. It was determined that 56.5% of 1st-grade students (n=34) did not encounter insufficient knowledge anxiety about the occupation, and 65.1% of 4th-grade students (n = 41) encountered insufficient knowledge anxiety about the occupation. It was observed that 53.2% of 1st-grade students (n=33) and 77.8% of 4th-grade students (n=49) experienced anxiety about not being appointed and that there was a significant difference in anxiety about not being appointed (p <0.005). It was determined that 64.5% of 1st-grade students (n=40) and 55.6% of 4th-grade students (n=35) encountered anxiety of regret. It was determined that 69.4% of the 1st-grade students (n=43) and 52% of the 4th-grade students (n=33) did not encounter anxiety about having problems with management **(table-2).**

Table-3 Students' Scale Total Score Status

Students' scale total score status	1st-grade	2nd grade	
	Average	Average	p/t
Status scale total score average	48,1774 ± 4,754	41,000 ± 12,279	0.000/4.322
Continuity scale total score average	49.08 ± 3,980	46,161 ± 9,028	P=0,000/2,330

p < 0,005

The status scale score average of the 1st-grade students participating in our study is 48.1774 ± 4.754. The total point average of 4th-grade students obtained from the status scale is 41.000 ± 12.279. The status scale score average of the 1st-grade students is 49.08 ± 3.980. The total point average of 4th-grade students obtained from the status scale is 46.161 ± 9.028. Due to the high average score in both scales, it was determined that the situation anxiety of 1st-grade students was higher than 4th-grade students. It was observed that continuity anxiety of 1st-grade students was higher than 4th-grade students. A significant difference was found in both parts of the scale p <0.005. **(Table-3)**

Reliability test was applied to 40 questions of the scale and 6 questions about anxiety, Cronbach alpha value was found to be **0.869** and due to over **0.70** means reliable the scales and questions were found to be reliable.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

When the gender distribution of the students who participated in the study was examined, no significant difference was found between the 1st-grade and 4th-grade students. In consequence of the research of Uyguç (2003), it was determined that gender variable does not affect the choice of profession, Çakmak & Havendanlı (2005) and Akgün (2007) were determined that the anxiety levels of students studying in different branches differ according to the gender variable and determined that the anxiety levels of female students are much higher than male students. According to this, although there are more female students in the nursing department, we can say that male students prefer the nursing occupation, which they see concerning their values (7, 9, 11).

The age of the students and the high school they graduated from a show a significant difference between the 1st-grade and 4th-grade students. Uyguç (2003) was determined that students' income level affects the level of importance attached to values and that high-income students pay more attention to hedonistic values (such as life being exciting and comfortable, being independent). According to this, it is thought that the number of Anatolian high school graduates is more in the 1st-grade, while the number of students graduating from the health vocational high school is higher in 4th-grade students and considering that the first-grade students are between the ages of 18-22 and the average high school education is completed at the age of 18, it is thought that there are students who took the university exam more than once (9). The distribution of those who stated that their income level is more than the expenses is around 20% and does not differ significantly according to the class they attend. Çakmak & Havendanlı (2005) and Akgün (2007) were determined that the income levels of students studying in different branches do not affect the level of anxiety. According to this, it was determined that approximately 50% of the students who prefer to study nursing at the foundation university, whose income is equal to or whose income is less than the expense, prefer to study. We can say that this may be due to the idea that 1st-grade and 4th-grade students can find employment more easily in the nursing occupation while making their department preferences (7, 11).It was determined that when students have positive attitudes towards their future occupation, their anxiety decreases, and there is a statistically low level of negative relationship (36). In this study, 93.5% of 1st-grade students and 93.7% of 4th-grade students evaluated their lessons as medium and good; 43.5% of 1st-grade students and 33.3% of 4th grade students stated that they preferred the occupation because they liked; 50% of 1st-grade students and 61.9% of 4th-grade students stated that the perception of respect in the society is medium, good and very good; 51.6% of 1st-grade students and 54% of 4th-grade students stated that they like their occupation

The pessimism of the senior students receiving vocational education about finding a job increases their anxiety levels (36). In this study, 30.2% of the senior students stated that they had occupational anxiety due to the difficulties of the occupation and 20.6% of them not being appointed. According to this, it was

determined that the need for nurses in the province where the study was conducted, and the advantages provided by the foundation university to its graduates cause less anxiety among students about finding employment, whereas the difficulties and anxiety of the profession are greater. 61.9% of the senior students were stated work setting anxiety, 65.1% insufficient knowledge anxiety, 77.8% anxiety about not being appointed, 44.4% anxiety of regret, and 47.6% anxiety about having problems with the management We can say that there is a significant difference with 1st-graders only in the anxiety of not being appointed, which is consistent with the previous study results. Besides, the rates of anxiety reported by senior students as they are about to start their occupation are substantial.

Çakmak & Havendanlı (2005) were determined that there is a significant difference between the anxiety levels of different department students according to their grade levels and that the anxiety level of the students attending the 1st-grade is higher, although this difference is at every grade level. In this study, it was determined that the anxiety of 1st-grade students was higher than the anxiety of 4th-grade students (11). The satisfaction of nursing students with the clinical setting affects the continuation of their occupation in the early stages of their professional life more than working hours and wages (34). Therefore, occupational anxiety of nursing students should be reduced. Managing nursing students' anxiety during clinical education ensures that learning and clinical performance are optimized (25). Educators have important roles in reducing nursing students' occupational anxiety. It is important to support the development of students' skills to manage the difficulties they encounter in the vocational education process (16). Characterization of the hospital setting with time pressure, ambiguous information, conflicting goals, high risks, and dynamic conditions requires nurses to have problem-solving skills (23). In another saying, providing holistic care to patients is possible only if nurses can solve social problems. Therefore, the basic competence of nurses is seen as a problem-solving skill, and a vocational education should be provided to improve it (21). In a study conducted in China, senior nursing students were the most successful group in solving social problems. It was determined that the most effective teaching-learning strategies in developing social problem-solving ability are self- and problem-based-learning (37). Patterson (2016)stated as a result of his study that the EFT technique was effective in reducing the anxiety level of nursing students.

Consequently, it should be recognized that increased stressors in nursing students 'clinical experience may increase students' anxiety levels and increase the intention to quit during the education process or in the first years of the occupation.

SUGGESTIONS

For nursing education institutions and educators;

Care should be taken

- to include students' sources of professional stress and coping methods in the nursing education program,

- for nursing department educators to be aware of the effect on students' anxiety level,

- to ensure that the teaching-learning process in the theoretical and clinical education of nursing students can reduce and control their anxiety level,

- to ensure that nursing students start their occupation with the awareness that they have both theoretical and clinical competencies.

For researchers;

- A comparison of nursing education programs and students' occupational anxiety levels,

- Examining the effect of nursing educators and teaching-learning processes on students' professional anxiety levels,

- Examining the effects of activities aimed at reducing the anxiety levels of nursing students can be made.

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