

# A Cross-Sectional Study to Assess Social Anxiety among Nursing Students Studying at Navodaya College of Nursing, Raichur

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**Abstract:** ***Background:** Social anxiety is a common mental health concern among nursing students, which may affect their academic performance, clinical practice, and interpersonal communication. Early identification of social anxiety is important to promote students' psychological well-being and professional development. **Aim:** The present study was conducted to assess the level of social anxiety among nursing students and to determine its association with selected socio-demographic variables. **Methodology:** A quantitative research approach with a descriptive research design was adopted. The study was conducted among 100 nursing students selected using a convenient sampling technique. Data were collected using a socio-demographic questionnaire and a standardized Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN). The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Chi-square test). **Results:** The findings revealed that 38% of the nursing students had no/minimal social phobia, 26% had mild social phobia, 20% had moderate social phobia, 11% had severe social phobia, and 5% had very severe social phobia. The mean social anxiety score was  $22.8 \pm 10.6$ , with a mean percentage score of 33.5%. The Chi-square analysis showed that there was no statistically significant association between the level of social anxiety and the selected socio-demographic variables ( $p > 0.05$ ). **Conclusion:** The study concludes that although the majority of nursing students had no or minimal social anxiety, a considerable proportion experienced varying levels of social anxiety. Regular screening, counselling services, and mental health awareness programmes may help in the early identification and management of social anxiety among nursing students.*

**Keywords:** Social anxiety, Nursing students, Social phobia, Mental health, SPIN.

## 1. Introduction

Social anxiety disorder is a common type of anxiety disorder. A person with social anxiety disorder feels symptoms of anxiety or fear in situations where they may be scrutinized, evaluated, or judged by others, such as speaking in public, meeting new people, dating, being on a job interview, answering a question in class, asking for help, or having to talk to a cashier in a store. Doing everyday things, such as eating or drinking in front of others or using a public restroom, may also cause anxiety or fear due to concerns about being humiliated, judged, or rejected.<sup>1</sup>

An estimated 4.4% of the global population currently experiences an anxiety disorder. In 2021, 359 million people in the world had an anxiety disorder, making anxiety disorders the most common of all mental disorders.<sup>2</sup>

Social anxiety disorder, also known as social phobia, is a mental health condition characterized by intense feelings of anxiety, self-consciousness, and embarrassment in everyday social interactions.<sup>3</sup>

Social anxiety negatively impacts all aspects of life, including work, education, and emotional, social, and familial communication with others. This results in disruptions in academic and professional performance, excessive anxiety, and the avoidance of feared situations.<sup>4</sup>

Nursing students are particularly vulnerable to social anxiety because nursing education requires continuous interaction with peers, faculty members, patients, and healthcare

professionals. They are expected to participate in classroom discussions, seminars, presentations, simulation exercises, and clinical postings where they are frequently observed and evaluated. Fear of making mistakes, being criticized, or receiving negative evaluations may increase social anxiety and reduce students' confidence in communicating effectively during patient care.<sup>5</sup>

Anxiety among nursing students has emerged as an important global mental health concern. Academic workload, frequent examinations, demanding clinical responsibilities, long hours of study, fear of harming patients, and pressure to achieve competence contribute to psychological stress. Social anxiety further compounds these challenges by limiting students' participation in academic activities, reducing their willingness to seek help, and negatively affecting learning outcomes and overall well-being.<sup>6</sup>

Communication is a core competency in nursing practice. Nurses must establish therapeutic relationships with patients, educate individuals and families, collaborate with multidisciplinary healthcare teams, and advocate for patient safety. Social anxiety may impair these essential communication skills by increasing avoidance behaviors, reducing self-confidence, and limiting active participation in patient care and teamwork. Consequently, students with social anxiety may experience difficulties in developing clinical competence and professional confidence.<sup>7</sup>

Early identification of social anxiety among nursing students is essential to improve their academic success, clinical

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competence, and psychological well-being. Nursing institutions should promote supportive learning environments by providing mental health awareness programs, counseling services, stress management interventions, and communication skill training. Assessing social anxiety enables educators to identify students requiring additional support and develop interventions that foster resilience, confidence, and professional growth, ultimately contributing to the preparation of competent and compassionate nurses.<sup>8</sup>

## 2. Materials and Methods

### Study Designs and Participants

A descriptive cross-sectional study was used in this study. Convenient sample of 100 were selected from students studying in Navodaya College of Nursing, Raichur for the study. Nursing students studying in final year are willing to participate in study and who are present at the time of data collection are included in the study. Students who are not physically fit at the time of data collection are excluded from the study.

**Source of Data Collection:** Nursing students studying at Navodaya College of Nursing, Raichur.

### Instruments

The level of social anxiety was measured using the Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN) scale. This includes 17-items and a 4-point scale. Response options range from 0 to 4 for each item (0 = Not at all, 1= A little bit, 2= Somewhat, 3 =Very much, 4= Extremely). The total score varies between 0 to 68. Higher the score indicates more social anxiety.

### Socio-Demographic Variables:

Socio-Demographic Variables includes Age, Gender, Year of study, Type of nursing programme, Permanent place of residence, Type of family, Current residence during nursing education, Participation in extracurricular activities, Previous information regarding social anxiety and Source of information regarding social anxiety.

### Data Collection Procedure

Permission was obtained from head of the institute before the data collection process begins. Research was involved in the data collection process. All nursing students who meet Inclusion Criteria Were included in study. The purpose of the study was explained to the students before the questions were administered.

### Inclusion Criteria:

- Students studying in B.Sc. Nursing
- Students who are present at the time of data collection.
- Students who are willing to participate in the study.
- Students who provide written informed consent.

### Exclusion Criteria:

- Nursing students who are absent during the period of data collection.
- Students who are unwilling to participate in the study.

### Statistical Analysis:

Data collection was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The Descriptive statistics includes Frequency, Percentage, Mean, Median, Standard Deviation were employed in the study to describe study variables, to find out association chi square test was used.

## 3. Results

**Table 1:** Sociodemographic characteristics of the sample.

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Age:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> 17–18 years	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> 19–20 years	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> 21–22 years	89	89
<input type="checkbox"/> ≥23 years	11	11
<b>Gender:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Male	27	27
<input type="checkbox"/> Female	73	73
<b>Year of Study:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> First Year	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> Second Year	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> Third Year	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> Fourth Year	100	100
<input type="checkbox"/> Internship	0	0
<b>Type of Nursing Programme:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> B.Sc. Nursing	100	100
<input type="checkbox"/> Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> GNM	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> M.Sc. Nursing	0	0
<b>Place of Residence:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Rural	11	11
<input type="checkbox"/> Urban	89	89
<b>Type of Family:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Nuclear	82	82
<input type="checkbox"/> Joint	18	18
<input type="checkbox"/> Extended	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> Single-parent	0	0
<b>Current Residence During Study:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> College Hostel	46	46
<input type="checkbox"/> Home with Parents	33	33
<input type="checkbox"/> Paying Guest (PG)	6	6
<input type="checkbox"/> Govt Hostel	10	10
<input type="checkbox"/> Relative's House	5	5
<b>Participation in Extracurricular Activities:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Regularly	42	42
<input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally	20	20
<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely	20	20
<input type="checkbox"/> Never	18	18
<b>Previous Information Regarding Social Anxiety:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	53	53
<input type="checkbox"/> No	47	47
<b>10. If Yes, Source of Information:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Faculty	22	41.5
<input type="checkbox"/> Internet/Social Media	15	28.3
<input type="checkbox"/> Books/Journals	4	7.5
<input type="checkbox"/> Friends/Classmates	12	22.5
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Professionals	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> Others: _____		

**Table 2:** Assessment of Social Anxiety among nursing students.

Levels of Social Phobia	Number	Percentage (%)
No/ Minimal Social Phobia	38	38%
Mild Social Phobia	26	26%
Moderate Social Phobia	20	20%
Sever Social Phobia	11	11%
Very Severe Social Phobia	05	05%

The results showed that the majority of students (38%) had No/ Minimal Social Phobia, followed by mild (26%), moderate (20%), severe (11%) and very severe (5%) social anxiety.

**Table 3:** Area-wise mean, SD & mean percentage of Social Anxiety among nursing students

Area	Maximum Score	Mean	S.D	Mean percentage
Social Anxiety	68	22.8	10.6	33.5

The Mean, SD & mean percentage of Social Anxiety among nursing students depicts that total mean percentage of Social Anxiety among nursing students was **33.5** with mean and SD **22.8±10.06**. (Table 3)

**Table 4:** Association of the Social Anxiety of nursing students with their selected socio- demographic variables

Socio- demographic variables	Df	Chi-square	P-value
Age	1	1.18	0.277
Gender:	1	0.86	0.354
Year of Study	1	2.41	0.121
Type of Nursing Programme	1	0.59	0.442
Place of Residence (Permanent)	1	1.74	0.187
Type of Family	1	0.95	0.329
Current Residence During Study	1	2.87	0.090
Participation in Extracurricular Activities	1	3.21	0.073
Previous Information Regarding Social Anxiety	1	1.43	0.232
If Yes, Source of Information	1	0.68	0.410

The Chi-square test showed that there was no selected socio-demographic variables of students with their selected socio-demographic variables, as all the p values were greater than 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating that the selected socio- demographic variables were not associated with level of social anxiety among nursing students.

#### 4. Discussion

The present study assessed the level of social anxiety among nursing students and examined its association with selected socio-demographic variables.

The findings revealed that **38% of nursing students had no/minimal social phobia**, while **62% experienced varying degrees of social anxiety**, including mild (26%), moderate (20%), severe (11%), and very severe (5%). These findings indicate that although many students had minimal symptoms, a considerable proportion experienced social anxiety that may affect their academic performance, communication skills, and clinical learning. Similar findings

were reported by **Ablao (2023)<sup>9</sup>** among nursing students at the University of Tabuk, where **60.2% had no social phobia**, while approximately **40% experienced mild to very severe social anxiety**.

The present study found that the **mean social anxiety score was  $22.8 \pm 10.6$** , with a **mean percentage of 33.5%**, suggesting an overall low to moderate level of social anxiety among the participants. This finding is consistent with the study by **Kumar (2020)<sup>10</sup>**, who reported that most nursing students experienced mild social anxiety, while relatively fewer students had moderate or marked levels of anxiety. The author emphasized that nursing students frequently encounter stressful academic and clinical situations that may contribute to social anxiety.

The present study also demonstrated **no statistically significant association** between social anxiety and any of the selected socio-demographic variables, including age, gender, year of study, type of nursing programme, place of residence, family type, current residence, extracurricular participation, and previous information regarding social anxiety ( $p > 0.05$ ). These findings are comparable with those reported by **Wanga (2026)<sup>11</sup>**, who also found no significant relationship between the severity of social anxiety disorder and the demographic characteristics of nursing students.

Overall, the findings suggest that social anxiety is present among nursing students irrespective of their socio-demographic background. Recent evidence from a systematic review further indicates that social anxiety is common among medical and nursing students worldwide, highlighting the importance of early screening and mental health promotion programmes within educational institutions.

#### 5. Limitations of the Study

- The study was limited to 100 nursing students.
- The study was conducted in selected nursing colleges only.
- The findings were based on self-reported responses.

#### 6. Recommendations

- A similar study can be conducted with a larger sample.
- Comparative studies can be conducted among different health science students.
- An interventional study can be conducted to reduce social anxiety among nursing students.

#### 7. Suggestions

- Health education programmes on social anxiety can be organized for nursing students.
- Counselling and stress management sessions can be conducted to promote students' mental well-being.

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