Prevalence and Factors Associated with Depression among Nursing Students

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Abstract: _Background: Depression has been recognized as a major morbidity among nursing students and the various factors that have been seriously affected their academic performance and quality of life. Aims: The aim of this study was to identify the prevalence & Factors associated with depression among nursing students. Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study with 160 proficiency certificate level nursing students was carried out in two nursing colleges of Butwal, Rupandehi, Nepal. A pretested self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data. The collected data was analyzed by using descriptive statistical. Results: The findings revealed that mean age of the respondents was 19 years. The prevalence of the depression among nursing students was 63%. More than three-fifth (62%) of the respondents stated away from home as the social factors associated with depression. Regarding the Psychological factors (62%) of the respondent stated that stress was the factors associated with depression. More than four-fifth (88%) of the respondents stated that work load was the factors associated with depression. Majority of the respondents (83%) stated that clinical assignment was the factors associated with depression. Majority of the respondents (74%) stated that pressure from teachers, was the factors associated with depression. Conclusion: The study findings concluded that the overall prevalence of depression among nursing students was 63% and the major factors associated with depression were staying away from home, stress, work load, clinical assignment and pressure from teachers. Hence, counseling in the entry phase may help them tackle the preparatory worries & adjustment difficulties._

Keywords: Depression, Nursing student, Prevalence, Factors, counseling

1. Introduction

Depression is a mental disorder where the affected person experiences depressed mood, loss of interest and enjoyment and reduced energy leading to diminished activity for at least 2 weeks. As people with depression also suffer from somatic disorder, they have difficulty in carrying out their usual tasks such as school work, domestic and social activities. Depression has been recognized as a major morbidity among medical students and the various factors that have been seriously affected their academic performance and quality of life. It affects not only their health and academic achievement, but also has serious consequences as suicide. The magnitude of depression among them is also high. According to the precipitation of the World Health Organization (WHO), depression is estimated to become the second leading cause of dysfunction by the year 2020. It is estimated that there are more than 1,000 college based suicide every year and that one in every 12 college students has made a clear plan to attempt or to commit suicide. It is a well-recognized fact that the prevalence rate for mental illness in the communities of Nepal as well as in other countries shows that about 20% of the general population suffers from mental illnesses at any point of time. It is found that 154 million people suffer from depression and 25 million people from schizophrenia (Sigdel& Pokhrel 2015).

Being in the medical field, nurses are faced with heavier academic pressure, psychological stress and future medical practice. They are at a higher risk for depression as other professions in the same field. Nursing students are likely to become nurses, with occupational stress and the ambiguities of the profession, who most directly and frequently interact with patients and affect those patients by their behavior and attitudes. Therefore, their wellbeing cannot be taken lightly. Some studies have indicated that depression may decrease the function of nurses and disturbs the nurse patient's relationship (Xu et al; 2014).

It is well recognized that nursing professionals experience high levels of stress, anxiety, and depression in comparison to other professions from medical and non-medical fields. Stress and anxiety may lead to burnout and to other psychological problems such as anxiety and depression. Previous research has identified nursing students as having elevated stress levels compared to college students studying on non-nursing programs. Earlier work has reported that the main stressors for nurses and nursing students included: adjusting to a rigorous program of theory, long hours of study, and the pressures of student clinical practice. Prolonged Exposure to stress may lead to numerous stress symptoms and consequences in nursing students who have somatic symptoms, anxiety disorder, depressive symptoms, and cognitive symptoms, which may have a negative impact on academic success. Long-term exposure to stressors may lead to anxiety and dissatisfaction at work and possibly depression (Yousef et al; 2017).

Suicide is one of the most dreaded complication and emergency situation associated with it. Work-related and academic stress is one of the important psychosocial risk factor for depression. Hence, occupational mental health and affective well-being among student health professionals have been studied for last two decades. Nursing students, in particular, pass through many stressful situations during various stages of their academic course (Risal et al; 2016).

The process of nursing professional training may cause emotional stress on nursing students, potentially resulting in

depressive symptoms. As the problems of nurse shortage and increase of nursing student graduates who tend not to pursue nursing career continue to exist, it is important for nursing educators to investigate the factors causing depressive symptoms, and further develop strategies to manage their stress and depressive problems (Chen et al; 2015).

Nursing students are valuable human resources. Detection of potential depression among nursing students is crucial since depression can lead to low productivity, minimized quality of life, and suicidal ideas. Identifying factors affecting depression among students can help nursing educators to find ways to decrease depression (Ross et al; 2005).

Objectives
- To identify the socio-demographic information of the nursing students.
- To assess the prevalence of depression among nursing students.
- To identify the factors associated with depression among nursing students.

2. Methodology

Study Design: A cross-sectional descriptive study design

Population and Setting: The population of the study was all the PCL nursing students of 2nd and 3rd year studying in Advance Study of Health Science and Lumbini Hospital and Technical College Pvt. Ltd of Rupandehi District, Nepal.

Sample Size: 160

Sampling Technique: Simple random sampling method was used to select nursing college and Non probability purposive sampling technique was used to select the nursing students from Advance Study of Health Science and Lumbini Hospital and Technical College Pvt. Ltd.

Research Instrument: In order to measure research variables, the researcher developed Self administered questionnaire related to Socio-demographic Information, Factors associated with depression and Becks depression inventory tools were adapted to measure the depression level of respondent.

Data Collection Procedure: Data was collected after obtaining permission from the Institutional Review Committee and all the concerned authorities of respective colleges. The selected nursing students were informed about the purpose of the study. The written Informed Consent was taken from each respondent. The nursing students were assured for the confidentiality of the information. Code number was used for maintaining anonymity.

Data Analysis Procedure: Data were checked, coded and entered into the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 16. Data were analyzed by using Descriptive statistics such as Frequency, Percentage, and Mean. All data were presented into different tables.

3. Results & Findings

The findings of the study showed that the mean age of the respondents was 19 years. Regarding the ethnicity more than half (57%) of the respondents belonged to Brahmin/Chhetri &88% of the respondents belonged to Hindu religion. Regarding the marital status majority (91%) of the respondents belonged to unmarried. and (8%) only married. Regarding the types of family more than four-fifth (88%) of the family was nuclear and (11%) only joint. Regarding the annual income of the family members of the respondents half (50%) of income belonged to 10, 00000-18, 00000 (50%). Only (10%) belonged to 28, 00000-36, 00000. Majority (94%) of the respondents stated that they read nursing by self interest and (5%) read nursing by family pressure (Table 1).

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Information of the Respondents, n=160

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age (in years)		
15-24	159	99.4
25-34	1	0.6
Mean age: 19yrs		
Ethnicity		
Brahmin/Chhetri	92	57.5
Janajati	65	40.6
Dalit	3	1.9
Religion		
Hindu	142	88.8
Buddhist	16	10
Christian	2	1.2
Marital Status		
Married	13	8.1
Unmarried	147	91.9
Family Types		
Nuclear	141	88.1
Joint	19	11.9
Annual income of family members		
10,00000-18,00000	81	50.6
19,00000-27,00000	44	27.5
28,00000-36,00000	17	10.6
<37,00000	18	11.2
Interest of reading nursing		
Self	151	94.4
Family pressure	9	5.6

Out of the 160 respondents, it was found that the overall prevalence of depression was 63%. Only (18%) of the respondents had mild mood disturbances followed by (11%) border line clinical depression, (22%) moderate depression, (7%) severe depression and (3%) extreme depression (Table 2).

Table 2: Prevalence Level of Depression n=160

Prevalence Level	Frequency	Percentage
Normal	59	36.9
Mild Mood Disturbances	29	18.1
Borderline Clinical Disturbances	19	11.9
Moderate Depression	36	22.5
Severe Depression	12	7.5
Extreme Depression	5	3.1

More than three-fifth (62%) of the respondents stated that Social factors, staying away from home was the factors associated with depression followed by (35%) family problems and (1%) only family history of depression. Regarding the Psychological factors, (62%) of the respondent stated that stress was the factors associated with depression followed by (20%) sleep problem and (17%) only anxiety. Only (37%) of the respondents stated that lack of professional knowledge and skills, was the factors associated with depression. Only (27%) of the respondents stated that peer pressures was the factors associated with depression. More than four-fifth (88%) of the respondents stated that work load was the factors associated with depression. Majority of the respondents, (83%) stated that clinical assignment was the factors associated with depression. Majority of the respondents (74%) stated that pressure from teachers, was the factors associated with depression (Table 3).

Table 3: Factors Associated with Depression
n=160

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Social Factors		
Family problems	57	35.6
Family history of depression	3	1.9
Staying away from home	100	62.5
Psychological Factors		
Stress	100	62.5
Anxiety	28	17.5
Sleep problem	32	20
Lack of professional knowledge and skills		
Yes	60	37.5
No	100	62.5
Peer pressures		
Yes	44	27.5
No	116	72.5
Work load		
Yes	141	88.1
No	9	11.9
Clinical Assignment		
Yes	134	83.8
No	26	16.2
Pressure from teachers		
Yes	119	74.4
No	41	25.6

4. Discussion

Depression is a mental disorder where the affected person experiences depressed mood, loss of interest and enjoyment and reduced energy leading to diminished activity for at least 2 weeks. The literature shows that the prevalence and factors associated with depression among nursing students was high. The main aim of the study is to find out the prevalence and factors associated with depression among nursing students.

In this study found that the majority (99%) of the respondents belonged to 15-24 years of age group. Only (1%) belonged to 25-34 years. The mean age of the respondents was 19 years which is similar to the previous study reported that the majority (96%) of the respondents belonged to 15-25 years of age group (Sigdel& Pokhrel, 2015). Regarding the ethnicity more than half (57%) of the respondents belonged to Brahmin/Chhetri ethnic group followed by Janajati (40%) and (1%) only Dalit. Regarding the religion more than four-fifth (88%) of the respondents belonged to Hindu followed by (10%) Buddhist and (1%) only Christian.

In this study found that the majority (91%) of the respondents belonged to unmarried status and (8%) only married status which is supported by the previous study reported that the majority (90%) of the respondents belonged to unmarried status and (9%) only married status.[1] Regarding the types of family more than four-fifth (88%) of the family were nuclear and (11%) only joint which is supported by the previous study reported that (55%) of the family were nuclear and (43%) only joint family (Sigdel& Pokhrel,2015). Regarding the annual income of the family members of the respondents half (50%) of income belonged to 10, 00000-18, 00000. Only (10%) belonged to 28, 00000-36, 00000 which is contrast by the previous study reported that only (25%) of annual income belonged to <30,000, followed by (27%) belonged to 30,000-60,000, (12%) belonged to 60,000-90,000 and more than two-fifth (35%) belonged to >90,000 (Sigdel& Pokhrel, 2015).

In the present study majority (94%) of the respondents stated that they read nursing by self interest and (5%) read nursing by family pressure which is similar to the previous study reported that the majority (90%) of the respondents stated that they read nursing by self interest and (5%) read nursing by family pressure (Sigdel & Pokhrel,2015).

In this study found that the prevalence of depression among nursing students was 63% which is similar to the six previous study reported that the overall prevalence of the depression among nursing students was 69%, 22%, 26% 95%, 34%, 40%.In this study found that only (18%) of the respondents had mild mood disturbances followed by (11%) border line clinical depression, (22%) moderate depression, (7%) severe depression and (3%) extreme depression which is similar to the three previous study reported that (40%) mild depression, (11%) moderate depression, (17%) severe depression, (34%) mild depression, (26%) moderate depression, (3%) moderately severely depression, (5%) severe depression, (27%) mild depression (9%) moderate depression and (1%) severe depression (Ngasa etal;2017, Risaletal;2016).

In the present study found that the major factors associated with depression were staying away from home, family problem, family history of depression, stress, anxiety, sleep problem, workload, clinical assignment, pressure from teachers which is supported by the previous two study reported that the anxiety, stress and sleep problem are the major variables that can significantly predict depressive symptoms and the prevalence of depression was significantly more among those with family problems and family history of depression (Chen et al;2015, Nagareya & Ravishankar 2015).

5. Conclusion

The study findings concluded that the overall prevalence of depression among nursing students was 63% and the major factors associated with depression were staying away from home, Stress, Work load, Clinical assignment and Pressure from teachers.

6. Limitations of the Study

This study is a pioneer study & other longitudinal studies are required to achieve the better results in Butwal, Rupandehi district, Nepal. The size of the sample was small so we cannot generalize the results among all other certificate level nursing students. This study was a cross-sectional study & done in only two nursing college having certificate level nursing program only so we cannot generalize to other setting. The non-probability purposive sampling technique was used for this study so it further reduced the external validity.

7. Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

8. Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thanks the nursing students and faculties of nursing colleges, Butwal Rupandehi, Nepal who devoted their time to making this study success.

9. Ethical Permission

Formal permission was taken from the concerned colleges authorities by submitting written request letter The written consent was taken from each nursing students & were assured for the for the confidentiality for the information.

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