

## **Description of Nursing Students' Anxiety Levels When Entering Clinical Practices in the Private University in Tangerang**

**Maria Puji Kris Natalia, Marina Sulisty Puspaningrum, Michael Momuat,  
Belet Lydia Ingrit\*, Komilie Situmorang**

*Universitas Pelita Harapan, Indonesia*

*\* Correspondent Author: [belet.ingrit@uph.edu](mailto:belet.ingrit@uph.edu)*

### **ABSTRACT**

Clinical practice is an integral part of nursing education that helps students to use critical thinking in problems solving. Anxiety can happen because students feel incompetent and lack the skills. This research aimed to describe nursing students' anxiety level when entering clinical practice at the hospital in a private university in Tangerang. This study used a descriptive research method with total sampling 331 students. Zung Self-rating Anxiety Scale (ZSAS) questionnaire was used as an instrument. The results showed that students with mild anxiety levels were 286 people (86,4%), moderate anxiety were 39 students (11,8%), severe anxiety were five students (1,5%), and panic anxiety was only one student (0,3%). The anxiety level of nursing students is the majority at a mild level of anxiety. Further research needed to decrease anxiety in students when they doing clinical practice in a hospital.

**Keywords:** Anxiety, Clinical Practice, Nursing Students

Received March 17, 2021; Revised April 7, 2021; Accepted April 28, 2021



STRADA Jurnal Ilmiah Kesehatan, its website, and the articles published there in are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

---

**BACKGROUND**

Nursing clinical practice is an integral part of nursing education that helps students to take action following the theories that have been learned in university (Iqbal et al., 2017). But sometimes in clinical practice, the student feels anxiety to be incompetent, and lack skills and knowledge of professional nursing to care for patients directly. Many nursing students said they felt anxious before entering their first clinical practice (Khalaila, 2014). Anxiety is an emotional and subjective experience that cannot be directly observed or an emotion without a specific subject. The cause is unknown and usually associated with all new experiences, and can be communicated interpersonal (Stuart, 2013).

Anxiety is an important responsibility that can shows in stressful situations (Choi et al., 2016). Quek, T et al. in 2019 said that anxiety is a negative effect experienced by an individual when experiencing pressure caused by many demands and stress (Quek et al., 2019).

According to Nabolsi et al. (2012), clinical practice is a basic component for new nursing students to have the knowledge, skills, and necessary attitudes for their future nursing roles (Nabolsi et al., 2012). Rathnayake & Ekanayaka (2014), stated that clinical practice is a form of learning application obtained by students during class and in the laboratory and will go through a learning evaluation process to obtain a complex education (Rathnayake, Res and Ekanayaka, 2016).

Bayoumi, Elbasuny, Mofereh, Assiri, and Fesal (2012) stated that there are several causes of anxiety, such as patient response which is sometimes positive and sometimes negative when students doing their nursing implementation, thinking that the implementation will hurt the patient and even danger to the patient's life (Mohamed Bayoumi et al., 2012).

A research conducted by Silwal (2019) in Nepal, stated that the first clinical in nursing students is the most stressful period that can causes anxiety (Silwal et al., 2019). In 2013, Chernomas and Saphiro researched on nursing students in Canada (Chernomas and Shapiro, 2013). This study identified the causes of anxiety in students. One of the causes is the first clinical in the early years of education. This study found that 61% of students did not experience anxiety. However, about 8% of students had mild anxiety, 15% had moderate anxiety, 8% had severe anxiety, and 8% had very severe anxiety. A research conducted by Rochmawati & Abdussamad (2017) stated that the anxiety of nursing undergraduate students in Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang entering clinical practice for the first time in the hospital, out of 64 students there were 6 students (9.4%) who did not experience anxiety, 13 students (20.3%) experienced mild anxiety, 39 students (60.9%) experienced moderate anxiety, and 6 students (9.4%) experienced severe anxiety (Rochmawati and Abdussamad, 2019).

Through short interviews with 15 first grade-nursing students, they said that the causes of anxiety were feeling less confident about meet the patients and their families directly, fear of being scolded by nurses or patients, and fear of being rejected by patients. Besides that, some students also said that they do not feel good in indigestion, sweaty hands and tremors when taking action on patients due to anxiety experienced. Based on this phenomenon, the researcher was interested in examining the anxiety level of nursing students when entering clinical practice at one of the private universities in Tangerang.

**METHODS**

This research used a quantitative descriptive approach. The sampling technique used was 331 students consist of 53 male and 278 female students. The instrument used to

measure the anxiety level variable was the Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale questionnaire, which was a standard questionnaire in English translated into Indonesian using the back translate technique by following the World Health Organization guidelines (Setyowati, Chung and Yusuf, 2019). Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale questionnaire contains 20 question items that consist of 15 unfavourable questions and 5 favourable questions. The questions were about the signs and symptoms felt by students during their first clinical practice. Students only need to determine how often they experience these signs and symptoms with a score of (1): always, (2): often, (3): sometimes, (4): very rare. This instrument has been tested for its reliability and validity with Cronbach's Alpha 0.82 (Dunstan, Scott and Todd, 2017). This tools assessment score between 20 until 80, for mild anxiety score was 20-44, for moderate anxiety score was 45-59, for severe anxiety score was 60-74 and for panic level score was 75-80.

The data collection procedure was taken after getting the approval from Research Ethics Committee with number 131/KEP-FON/III/2020. The researcher then distributed the questionnaire link in google form to students in first grade. The next step was processing the data. The researcher used univariate analysis. This study was conducted at the Faculty of Nursing at a private university in Tangerang, which conducted in April-May 2020.

## RESULTS

The following table describes the demographic data consisting of age, gender and educational background of nursing students at first grade when entering clinical practice.

Table 1. Demographic Data Characteristics of nursing student when entering a clinical practice at a private university in Tangerang, May 2020 (n=331)

Characteristics	n	%
<b>Age</b>		
17-21 years	331	100
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	53	16
Female	278	84
<b>Educational background</b>		
Senior High School	303	91,5
Health Vocational High School	20	6
Another Vocational High School	8	2,5

Table 1 showed that the age frequency distribution among respondents is in the range of 17-21 years, female has more number, namely, 278 students (84%) while males only 53 students (16%). Based on the educational background, the Senior High School is more than the others, they are 303 students (91.5%). The rest is from Health Vocational High School (6 %) and another vocational high school (2.5 %).

Table 2. Anxiety Level of nursing student when entering a clinical practice at a private university in Tangerang, May 2020 (n=331)

Anxiety Level	n	%
Mild (Male 47, Female 239)	286	86,4
Moderate	39	11,8

---

(Male 4, Female 35)		
Severe	5	1,5
(Male 2, Female 3)		
Panic (female)	1	0,3

---

Table 2 showed that the frequency distribution of the anxiety level of nursing students when entering clinical practice at a private university in Tangerang is more dominant in the mild anxiety level, namely, 286 students (86.4%), but there is still an anxiety level at a severe level of 1.5% (5 people) and panic level 0.3% (1 person).

## DISCUSSION

The number of respondents who participated in this study was 331 people who were divided into seven large groups with 53 male respondents and 278 female respondents. From the study, it can be seen that most respondents are female with a percentage of 84% while male is only 16%. This is common considering that women currently dominate the nursing profession. Women have a higher level of patience, thoroughness and diligence than men, but this can also cause anxiety at different levels (Malfasari et al., 2018).

Malfasari said that there is a significant relationship between hospital environment and nursing student anxiety. They recommended continuing research to cope with student anxiety when doing clinical practice in the hospital ward (Malfasari et al., 2018). This study found that the anxiety levels of both male and female students were in the mild anxiety range. Male responses when attending clinical practice were mostly at the mild level with 47 respondents (89%). The results of the data on female respondents who on average were at a mild level of anxiety with the largest percentage, namely, 239 people (86%), but among female respondents there was still a severe level of anxiety, namely, 3 people (1.7%) and even a panic level that is one student (0.3%). This result is in line with Purnamasari's research (2019) said that students are more likely to have severe anxiety with perception worse than students who experience mild anxiety with good perception (Purnamasari, 2014). The range for age in this study was 17-21 years. Wijayanti said that anxiety in this age is as a form of adaptation to fulfilling development tasks and process to be growth (Wijayanti, 2015). In this age, students will learn new things that make them feel anxious to different levels. Rochmawati & Abdussamad (2017) also said that the age and growth rate of respondents can affect their level of anxiety (Rochmawati and Abdussamad, 2019). Different with Purnamasari's research in 2019 said that no significant relationship between age and anxiety (Purnamasari, 2014).

At the educational level, it was found that the educational background of Senior High School was the most with a percentage of 91.5%. The highest level of anxiety was found on Health Vocational High School background education, while from Health Vocational High School there just four respondents from 20 students who experienced moderate anxiety, while the rest were at a mild anxiety level. For other vocational education backgrounds, there were five respondent found with moderate anxiety from eight respondents. Nuryandari, Wibawa & Angraini (2012) stated that student knowledge level will affect the level anxiety, because there is still a lack of knowledge of clinical practice considering that the educational background of health vocational schools is more exposed to nursing learning. While for high school and other vocational schools there is little or no exposure to nursing even clinical practice (Nuryandari, Wibawa and Angraini, 2012).

The level of anxiety as measured by using the Zung Self-Anxiety Rating Scale showed that the results of 331 respondents obtained, about 286 respondents (86.4%) were at a mild

level of anxiety, 39 respondents (11.8%) at moderate level anxiety, 5 respondents (1.5%) at the severe level of anxiety, and 1 respondent (0.3%) at the panic level. Based on the results, it was found that most students experienced a mild level of anxiety. This result was considered well remaining that 96% of students who have high school and other vocational education backgrounds have never been exposed to nursing and have no clinical experience. This study results are different from the research results by Malfasari, Devita, Erlin & Ramadania (2017) which showed that the anxiety level of nursing students when entering clinical first was dominant in severe and very severe anxiety with a percentage of 66 students (90.4%) for severe anxiety and very severe anxiety was 7 students (9.6%) (Malfasari et al., 2018). This finding has a significant difference with this study because they use a difference in measuring tools for the anxiety variable and the methodology used.

Research by Rathnayake & Ekanasikan (2016) about clinical anxiety in Sri Lanka showed that out of 92 nursing students; 40.25% of students did not experience anxiety (normal), 9.8% experienced mild anxiety, and 21.7% experienced moderate anxiety, 12% experienced severe anxiety, and 16.3% experienced severe anxiety in attending clinical (Rathnayake, Res and Ekanayaka, 2016). In addition, research from Godino et al. in 2019 conducted in Lima, Peru on 1193 nursing student respondents using with different measuring instruments showed almost similar results, that students showed anxiety levels in normal to moderate range (Diaz-Godiño J et al., 2019).

Although some students consider clinical as something stressful, research by Nuryandari, Wibawa & Angraini (2017) on nursing students who attended clinical first showed a good anxiety level, while 119 students (39.8%) showed a bad level of anxiety (Nuryandari, Wibawa and Angraini, 2012). Research by Silwal (2019) supports the results of this study which showed that average students are in the range of not anxiety to mild anxiety with 61% no anxiety, 8% mild anxiety, 15% moderate level, 8% severe level, and 8% very severe anxiety (Silwal et al., 2019).

Bayoumi (2012) used the same tools instrument (ZSAS) for 30 nursing students who follow clinical practice with the same results as this study (Mohamed Mohamed Bayoumi et al., 2012). Some student had mild to moderate anxiety levels with a percentage of 53.3%, while for the severe level only 6.7%. Wijayanti (2015) through his research using the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HARS) questionnaire on 63 nursing students stated that the level of anxiety in clinical practice in respondents was more dominant at mild anxiety levels as many as 38 students (56.7%), while the level of moderate anxiety level were 29 students (43.3%) (Wijayanti, 2015). Rochmawati & Abdussamad (2017) also said that student can feel anxiety in the first time doing clinical practice (Rochmawati and Abdussamad, 2019). This study stated that the age and growth rate of respondents could affect their anxiety level.

## CONCLUSION

Based on this research, it can be concluded that students know about their feelings and the anxiety level in the first time clinical practice. It is expected that students can make preparations to cope with the anxiety experienced when entering clinical practice at the hospital so that the clinical can run well and optimally. It is hoped that this research can also provide information data to educational institutions regarding the level of anxiety experienced by students, so that educational institutions can design or carry out programs in curriculum or laboratory activities that help students overcome or minimize the anxiety when entering clinical practice at the hospital for the first time

**REFERENCES**

- Chernomas, W. M. and Shapiro, C. (2013) 'Stress, Depression, and Anxiety among Undergraduate Nursing Students', *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship*, 10(1), pp. 255–266. doi: 10.1515/ijnes-2012-0032.
- Choi, S. O. *et al.* (2016) 'Factors influencing the state anxiety of nursing students before initial clinical experience', *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, 9(41), pp. 1–8. doi: 10.17485/ijst/2016/v9i41/103902.
- Diaz-Godiño J *et al.* (2019) 'Estilo de vida, depresión, ansiedad y estrés como factores de riesgo en apendice de Enfermería: un analisis de regresión logistica de 1193 estudiantes en Lima, Perú', *Revista de Salud Pública y Ambiental*, 2019, p. 7. Available at: <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/jep/2019/7395784/>.
- Dunstan, D. A., Scott, N. and Todd, A. K. (2017) 'Screening for anxiety and depression: Reassessing the utility of the Zung scales', *BMC Psychiatry*, 17(1), pp. 1–8. doi: 10.1186/s12888-017-1489-6.
- Iqbal, S. *et al.* (2017) 'Nursing Students' Anxiety Related to Clinical Experiences', *Research Journal of Education*, 3(9), pp. 111–115. Available at: <http://arpgweb.com/?ic=journal&journal=15&info=aims>.
- Khalaila, R. (2014) 'Simulation in nursing education: An evaluation of students' outcomes at their first clinical practice combined with simulations', *Nurse Education Today*, 34(2), pp. 252–258. doi: 10.1016/j.nedt.2013.08.015.
- Malfasari, E. *et al.* (2018) 'Lingkungan Rumah Sakit dan Tingkat Kecemasan Mahasiswa Saat Melakukan Praktek Klinik', *Jurnal Persatuan Perawat Nasional Indonesia (JPPNI)*, 2(2), p. 117. doi: 10.32419/jppni.v2i2.89.
- Mohamed Mohamed Bayoumi, M. *et al.* (2012) 'Evaluating Nursing Students' Anxiety and Depression during Initial Clinical Experience', *International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences*, 2(6), pp. 277–281. doi: 10.5923/j.ijpbs.20120206.12.
- Nabolsi, M. *et al.* (2012) 'The Experience of Jordanian Nursing Students in their Clinical Practice', *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46(August 2015), pp. 5849–5857. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.527.
- Nuryandari, Wibawa, Z. and Anggraini, W. (2012) 'Hubungan Antara Tingkat Pengetahuan Dengan Sikap', pp. 27–32. Available at: [http://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/bitstream/123456789/25972/1/Welly\\_Anggun\\_Nanka\\_Limo-fkik.pdf](http://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/bitstream/123456789/25972/1/Welly_Anggun_Nanka_Limo-fkik.pdf).
- Purnamasari, I. (2014) 'Hubungan persepsi mahasiswa keperawatan dengan kecemasan selama mengikuti pembelajaran klinik di rumah sakit', *Jurnal Keperawatan Widya Gantari*, 1(1), pp. 130–135.
- Quek, T. T. C. *et al.* (2019) 'The global prevalence of anxiety among medical students: A meta-analysis', *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(15). doi: 10.3390/ijerph16152735.
- Rathnayake, S., Res, N. – and Ekanayaka, J. (2016) 'Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Undergraduate Nursing Students in a Public University in Sri Lanka', *International Journal of Caring Sciences*, 9(3), pp. 1020–1032. Available at: [www.internationaljournalofcaringsciences.org](http://www.internationaljournalofcaringsciences.org).
- Rochmawati, D. H. and Abdussamad, N. W. (2019) 'Hubungan Antara Respon Koping Dengan Kecemasan Mahasiswa S1 Keperawatan Saat Pertama Kali Praktik Dirumah Sakit', *Jurnal Keperawatan Jiwa*, 5(2), p. 103. doi: 10.26714/jkj.5.2.2017.103-106.

- Setyowati, A., Chung, M. and Yusuf, A. (2019) 'Development of self-report assessment tool for anxiety among adolescents: Indonesian version of the Zung self-rating anxiety scale', 10, pp. 3–6. doi: 10.4081/jphia.2019.
- Silwal, M. *et al.* (2019) 'Anxiety and Stress among B.Sc. Nursing First Year Students in a Selected Nursing College at Lekhnath, Pokhara, Nepal', *Journal of Gandaki Medical College-Nepal*, 12(1), pp. 47–52. doi: 10.3126/jgmcn.v12i1.22613.
- Stuart (2013) *Psychiatric Nursing*. 10th edn. Jakarta: EGC.
- Wijayanti, E. T. (2015) 'Hubungan Tingkat Kecemasan Dengan Mekanisme Koping Mahasiswa Semester II D-III Keperawatan Dalam Menghadapi Praktek Klinik Keperawatan Di Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri', *Efektor (E)*, 1(27), pp. 19–24. Available at: <https://ojs.unpkediri.ac.id/index.php/efektor-e/article/view/202>.