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Perceived Social Support among Nursing Collegian

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Abstract

Objectives: The study aims at assessing the students - instructor relationship within educational environment and evaluating the emotional perception toward relationship among nursing students and their instructors.

Methodology: A descriptive survey study design that is initiated for the period of January 1st to June 1st, 2022; The sample of the study includes 200 students who are studying nursing at College of Nursing, University of Baghdad, the researcher used the convenient sampling method (non-probability sample) in which the students were selected purposively. Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support is adopted and used for the current study. The scale consists of 12 items and evaluates three sources of social support: family, friends, and significant others. The data have been collected through the utilization of the self-administrative report as a mean of data collection. Statistical analyses were conducted by using statistical package for social science (IBM SPSS Statistics) version 26.0.

Results: The study found that students perceive moderate social support (51.70 ± 14.816) from various sources; family, friends, and significant others. The correlation coefficient reveals that there is no significant association has been reported among perceived social support and nursing collegians' variables of gender, class level, and study type.

Conclusions: Based on the study findings, the study concludes that cultural and social systems have contribution in perceiving social support among students which they perceive moderate level of social support from family, friends, and significant others.

Recommendations: The study is recommends the necessity of replication the study with more variables related to academic stress, and health that may be linked to perceived social support and with large representative sample.

Keywords: Perceived Social support, nursing collegians

Introduction

Perceived social support refers to how persons view the available sources represented by friends, family members and others and how they can provide a psychological and overall support at times of needs. Social support is usually associated with well-being status as level of care, love, and introduces positive experiences [1].

Studies found that high level of perceived social support influence the nursing collegians by increase their perseverance and lower their weakening [2], [3], & [4]. Social support is studied by researchers as an element of coping with comparing to other variables of individuals [5]. Social support is considered as more beneficial coping methods as reducing stress, lowering social exhaustion level, and increase ability for improving mood [6]&[7]. It has been found that peer support (a type of social support) is essential for nursing collegians that help in enhancing their teaching in the clinical setting and also reduces their stress and anxiety [8].

Social support is used as indicator for academic success and adaptation of collegian students. It is also predict a good perceived health in females and low physical symptoms in males. However, high perceived social support predict low stress among students in the university [9]. On the other hand, a study found that high perceived social support level can be influencing factor in lowering alcohol and smoking abuse [10].

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The university students obtaining the social support from various sources; the main source is the family of students that considered the better source for social support, most of nursing collegian refer that they obtain much of social support from their mothers. However, other nursing collegians reported that they obtain their social support from close friends. The findings imply the various sources of social support that supplies students. [9]

It has found by studies that there is positive link between level of social support and psychological health. It was beneficial for persons in reducing the level of stress as well as acting as coping method that help them confronted with stressful life events. The reported link clarifies that perceived social support works as protective factor in development of psychological health in adolescents, and increases their ability in adulthood. It is also found that positive social support provided by family members linked to increased health indicators related to satisfaction with life. [11]

The nursing collegians are experiencing to various type of stressors including academic related stress such as lack of professional knowledge, workload, and taking care of patients [12]. Therefore, current study is focusing on exploring and highlighting the factors related to social support that may have influence on the students' health to develop recommendation which increase the body of knowledge for nursing research and provide a database for future researches.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims are to assess the level of perceived social support among nursing collegians and find out the association among perceived social support and demographic variables of the students.

Methodology

A descriptive study design that is initiated for the period of January 1st to June 1st, 2022; an assessment approach is applied in order to achieve the earlier stated objectives.

The ethical consideration of research is achieved by obtaining the agreement from the Ethical Committee for Scientific Research at College of Nursing, University of Baghdad. In addition, the agreements of the students were asked for participation in research by filling the participation consent in covering letter of the questionnaire.

For the purpose of administrative and arrangements issues for conducting the research, the permission was asked from Deanship/ Student's' Affairs Department at College of Nursing, University of Baghdad.

The setting of the study includes the students of morning and evening studies at College of Nursing, University of Baghdad.

The sample of the study includes 200 students who are studying nursing at College of Nursing, University of Baghdad, the researcher used the convenient sampling method (non-probability sample) in which the patients were selected purposively. According to Soper [13], the sample size that must achieve the parameters of anticipated effect size of 0.15, the desired statistical power level of 0.80, one predictor, and a probability level of 0.05; the minimum required sample size would be 54.

The questionnaire of the study is adopted to fit the current study which consists of two parts; the first part is contained the covering letter and the socio-demographic variable of the students that are: gender, class level, and study type; the second part is concerned with Student-Instructor Scale.

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support [14] is adopted and used for the current study. The scale consists of 12 items and evaluates three sources of social support: family source include items (3, 4, 8, and 11), friends source include items (6, 7, 9, and 12) and significant other source include items (1, 2, 5, and 10). Each item in the scale was divided into seven level of Likert scale and rated from 1 to 7 as follow: very strongly disagree=1, strongly disagree=2, moderately disagree= 3, neutral= 4, mildly agree=5, strongly agree=6, and very strongly agree= 7. The overall level of perceived social support is estimated by calculation the range score for the total score which divided into three levels: low= 12 – 36, moderate= 36.1 – 60, and high= 60.1 – 84, the higher score indicates high perceived social support. Regarding sources of social support in the scale, the level of each domain is estimated by calculation the range score for the total score of each domain which divided into three levels: low= 4 – 12, moderate= 12.1 – 20, and high= 20.1 – 28.

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The data have been collected through the utilization of the self-administrative report as a mean of data collection. The questionnaire was distributed after being willing to answer the questionnaire and participate in the study.

Statistical analyses were conducted by using statistical package for social science (IBM SPSS Statistics) version 26.0. Data analysis was employed through the application of descriptive and inferential statistical approaches to achieve the objectives of the study.

Results

Table 1: Distribution of Sample according to their Socio-demographic Characteristics

Variable		No	%
Gender	Male	47.5	47.5
	Female	52.5	52.5
	Total	***200***	***100***
Class level	Freshman	27	13.5
	Sophomore	61	30.5
	Junior	64	32
	Senior	48	24
	Total	***200***	***100***
Study	Morning	113	56.5
	Evening	87	43.5
	Total	***200***	***100***

No: Number, %" Percentage

This table shows that 52.5% of the students are females; the class level refers that 32% are juniors, 30.5% are sophomores, and 24% are seniors; 56.5% of them are from morning study at college.

Table 2: Perceived Social Support among Nursing Collegians (N=200)

Perceived social support	Mean	Standard Deviation	Assessment
Family source (Fam)	18.84	4.676	Moderate[*]
Friend source (Fr)	13.82	5.848	Moderate[*]
Significant other source (SO)	19.04	6.324	Moderate[*]
Overall	51.70	14.816	Moderate[**]

[*]*Low= 4-13, Moderate= 12.1-20, High= 20.1-28*
[**] *Low= 12-36, Moderate= 36.1-60, High= 60.1-84*

This table indicates that nursing collegians perceived moderate social support (51.70 ± 14.816) from various sources; family, friends, and significant others.

Table 3: Correlation among Perceived Social Supports among Nursing Collegians and their Variables (N=200)

Spearman Correlation		Gender	Class level	Study type
Family source	Correlation Coefficient	-.051	.070	-.004
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.474	.264	.961
Friend source	Correlation Coefficient	-.043	.052	.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.549	.467	.741
Significant other source	Correlation Coefficient	-.032	.090	.005
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.651	.203	.947
Overall social support	Correlation Coefficient	-.053	.083	.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.457	.242	.837

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The spearman correlation coefficient reveals that there is no significant association has been reported among perceived social support and nursing collegians' variables of gender, class level, and study type.

Discussion

The descriptive analysis of the students show that are females from morning study at second and third class levels as the highest percentages seen with sophomores and juniors. The finding related to female gender may reveal that females are more engaged in nursing study considering that opportunity to get an appointment which usually is central appointment in Iraq. The finding related to the class level may interpreted by the sampling method and those who engaged in the study were distributed over the four class levels but the highest percentages were shown with second and third class level. The finding related to morning studies is explained by the higher number of stents that are accepted in the study according to the policy of university concerning acceptance plan of students number as well as the evening study is canceled in the College of Nursing recently.

The mean scores indicates that nursing collegians perceived moderate social support (51.70 ± 14.816) from various sources; family, friends, and significant others. Such findings refer to positive indicator for students' health. Various studies reported that perceived social support from family, friends and significant others are beneficial for health of students and can promote their mental health as well as protect them from mental disorders related to anxiety, depression, and feeling loneliness [15, 16, & 17]. The level of social support perceived by those students indicates in how they believe they can perceive support from their social system with different sources of family, friends, and significant others that contribute in their health and developing their personality to extent they have ability to cope with stressful life events and getting positive relationship and satisfying life [18].

The analysis of spearman correlation coefficient revealed that there is no significant association has been reported among perceived social support and nursing collegians' variables of gender, class level, and study type. Regarding class level and study type, the finding reveal the there is no influence of theses variables on students' perceiving social support and may there another factors that influencing. No evidence has been found for supporting these findings. A study reported that there was no significant gender difference for perceived social support among adolescents and saw that males and females are perceive the same level of social support from different sources. The finding is supported by a study in Malaysia which found no significant difference perceived social stress with regard to gender of students. Similarly, study conducted among university students in India found no gender differences for perceived social support from family but a significant difference was found out for the perceived social support from friends [19].

Limitation of the study

The current study infers limitations related to single setting of the study and sampling methods that may influence the generalizability of findings.

Conclusions

Based on the study findings, the study concludes that cultural and social systems have contribution in perceiving social support among students which they perceive moderate level of social support from family, friends, and significant others.

Recommendations

The study is recommends the necessity of replication the study with more variables related to academic stress, and health that may be linked to perceived social support and with large representative sample.

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