Academic Competence and Anxiety Level among Students during Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Practicum

Ellen Padaunan*
Universitas Klabat
ellen@unklab.ac.id

Grace Fresania Kaparang
Universitas Klabat

Mutiara Wahyuni Manoppo
Universitas Klabat

Abstract
Clinical practice is intended to expose students to real cases in the field, thus achieving job-ready clinical skills upon completion, and this practice that demand a low level of error because it is done directly on humans can result in anxiety. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between the competence of undergraduate nursing students and their level of anxiety when facing the practice of mental nursing clinics in mental hospitals. This is correlational participated by 91 students through convenience sampling techniques. Data collection for academic competence was taken from the final score of mental nursing, while the assessment of anxiety levels was to use the DASS 42 questionnaire which was only in the anxiety section. Univariate analysis data showed all participants (100%) were academically competent as measured by graduation results according to the University standard. As for anxiety, the majority of respondents (n=29, 31.9%) experienced severe anxiety, followed by 24 respondents (26.4%) who experienced panic and 24 other respondents (26.4%) experienced severe anxiety. Next, data analysis using the Spearman Rank test showed a value of \( p=0.318 (>0.05) \) which implies that there is no relationship between academic competence and student anxiety levels in mental nursing clinical practicums. Recommendations for institutions to be able to pay attention to the condition of students because it seems that someone feels panic and severe anxiety, while for respondents who experience anxiety, they could find solutions and communicate them to the clinical instructor.

Keywords: academic competence, anxiety, psychiatric nursing clinical practice

INTRODUCTION

The realization of optimal health degrees as an element of welfare is the ideal of the Indonesian nation as stated in the 1945 Constitution, and in its embodiment, the role of nurses who are health workers with the largest proportion (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2021) is the spearhead of the implementation of this embodiment. The government considers that there is a need for a "Professional Nursing Professional Standard hereinafter referred to as the Professional Standard" which is "a minimum limit on the ability in the form of professional knowledge, skills, and behaviors that nurses must master and possess to be able to practice nursing in the community independently created by professional organizations." which is contained in the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia of 2019 concerning the Implementing Regulation of Law no. 38 of 2014 concerning Nursing (Ministry of Health, 2019).

In response to the ideals of this nation, the nursing professional organization, namely the Indonesian National Nurses Association (PPNI) also strives to establish this professional standard in order to "prepare quality human resources in accordance with the demands of the job market, business world and industry" and "ensure that the community receives competent and safe nursing services and care" (PPNI, 2016).

Nursing is "an activity of providing care to individuals, families, groups, or communities, both sick and healthy" (Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019). Furthermore, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia (2019) also defines that nursing practice is carried out in the form of nursing care. In practice, nurses have a high
intensity to directly engage with patients and this requires special competencies (Kompasiana, 2021). More specifically, there are five areas of nurse competence needed, namely: Practice based on Ethics, Legal, and Cultural Sensitivity; Professional Nursing Practice; Leadership and Management; Education and Research; and Personal and Professional Quality Development (Nurya, 2022). Furthermore, in the area of professional nursing practice, a nurse is required to be able to apply various sciences (biomedicine, humanities, nursing, public health, and other related) in managing nursing problems in a "holistic, integrated and continuum" manner (Nurya, 2022).

From her role of directly meeting with patients and the breadth of areas of competence that nurses must achieve, making efforts to ensure competence must be truly carried out, and "education is one of the suggestions to maintain the quality of professional nurses" (Manoppo, 2021) so that it is regenerated over time. At the Faculty of Nursing, Klubat University, her vision is to "become a private Faculty of Nursing that produces the best professional nurses in North Sulawesi" as well as "ready for Global competition by 2030" and one of its missions is to "educate and prepare competent professional nurses who refer to national standards" (Faculty of Nursing, Klubat University, 2022). Thus, academic competence is one that is echoed to emphasize the process of forming nursing students into competent nurses.

In the academic area, the reality is that for nursing, theory cannot stand alone without clinical practice. In fact, clinical practice as an inseparable part of nursing education is an obligation that must be carried out by nursing students (Amalo et al., 2020). Furthermore, clinical practice in nursing provides an opportunity for students to implement theoretical knowledge of concrete actions to hone their skills and achieve professionalism (Munadiroh, 2015). Inclincal learning, this learning method supports patient-focused learning and real situations, namely the interaction between teachers, students, and patients (Munadiroh, 2015).

Studies show that clinical practicum is viewed by nursing students as one of the most anxious aspects of the curriculum (Wang et al., 2019). Nursing students experience anxiety during clinical practicum and this can hinder their learning process in clinical practicum and their work after graduation (Lai et al., 2022). Several studies such as those conducted by Purnamasari (2019) which examined the anxiety of clinical practice students stated that out of 96 respondents studied, 47 respondents with mild anxiety (48.9%) were found. Another study, namely from Sumoked et al., (2019) showed that of the 73 respondents of practical students, most of them had moderate anxiety with 47 students (64.4%), 13 respondents had mild anxiety (17.8), and 13 people had severe anxiety (17.8%). Next, a similar point was found by Malfasari et al., (2018) saying that anxiety is a significant problem that affects students of clinical practice at all levels. Anxiety causes many negatives such as physical, emotional, and cognitive symptoms that are detrimental to academic success with a decrease in clinical practice performance in hospitals. The decrease in the performance of practical students will endanger patients because students will be in direct contact with patients.

This is also specific to the Mental Nursing clinical practicum which makes students directly confront patients who have emotional problems from mild to severe suicide. Studies on anxiety and academic competence in the clinical practicum of mental nursing are still not widely studied. The preliminary study was conducted on 25 undergraduate nursing students locally at Klubat University. All of these students reported that they were ready to face the practice of mental nursing clinics, but out of the 25 students, 10 students said that they felt anxiety because they felt that the mental nursing lessons they had learned could not be applied to patients and they felt fear of making mistakes and were afraid to communicate with patients, some felt anxious about tasks and what to do when practicing mental nursing clinics at Home Local pain. Mental nursing is quite emotionally challenging, because patients who experience psychiatric problems can become unstable and unpredictable, and also that patients will communicate problems
that can put a mental burden on practicing students because students can empathize with patients and try to put themselves in the patient’s shoes.

Nursing students during clinical learning can experience anxiety that hinders the clinic’s learning process, especially moderate to panic anxiety. Because the higher the level of anxiety it tends to generate confusion and distortion of perception. These distortions can result in disrupting learning by reducing the ability to concentrate, lowering memory, interfering with the ability to connect one thing with another (Sadock & Sadock, 2010). Furthermore, according to Goff (2011), nursing students who experience high anxiety can affect memory, concentration, and problem-solving ability, and can lead to decreased learning, decreased academic performance and retention. Therefore high levels of anxiety can have a measurable adverse impact on the performance of nursing students in psychiatric nursing clinic practice.

Thus, this study aims to investigate the relationship between academic competence and student anxiety levels in mental nursing clinical practicum.

**METHOD**

This type of research is correlation research with a cross sectional approach. The study population was Bachelor of Nursing students who were working on a clinic at the Mental Hospital in Manado totaling 110 students with a sample of 91 students who were willing to participate and were taken with sampling techniques using convenience sampling. The instrument for measuring the academic competence of undergraduate nursing students is to use the Mental Nursing II assessment checklist with the assessment standards of Klabat University with a score of 100 - 67 included in the competent category and a score of < 66 falls into the category of incompetent. Next, the assessment uses the DASS 42 questionnaire. Statistical analysis using the Spearman Rank test. This research was conducted in August 2021 – July 2022 starting with the licensing of research sites, research preparation, research implementation. Research ethics as a set of rules and ethical principles that are mutually agreed upon concerns the relationship between researchers on the one hand and all those involved in research or research participants on the other. The principle of research in this study is to treat respondents with respect, maintain confidentiality and research is carried out openly (Siswanto et al., 2014).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Result**

All participating respondents were classified as competent. The results of the research that have been based on the standard score of passing the academic competence of undergraduate nursing regulated by the University are >67 percent. In detail, the competent results of these 91 people were obtained with a value that was different from the value of 75-95, and no incompetent score or a score below 66 was obtained. Then, on the anxiety variable, it was found that as many as 29 (31.9%) respondents experienced severe anxiety, panic 24 (26.4 %), moderate anxiety 24 (26.4%) respondents, normal anxiety 10 (11.0 %) respondents and mild anxiety 4 (4.4%) respondents. Based on the results of the study the highest presentation anxiety was severe anxiety with a value of 29 (31.9%). Table 1 summarizes in detail the findings of the univariate analysis.

| Table 1. Overview of academic competence and student anxiety levels |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| **Variable**          | **n** | **%** |
| Academic Competence   |     |     |
| Competent             | 91  | 100 %|
| Anxiety               |     |     |

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Next, the results of the Spearman correlation test obtained a significance value of 0.318 (p > 0.005), based on a value that means that there is no significant relationship between academic competence and anxiety when practicing nursing.

Discussion

In this study, although respondents had a good academic competence score (100% competent), in fact when doing nursing practice they were still very anxious and some panicked.

The anxiety of students practicing clinics in hospitals occurs due to fear and discomfort that causes worry and tension, making students anxious during clinical practice in the hospital. The severity of a person's anxiety level is also influenced by the development, experience, self-confidence, and motivation that exists in each individual (Malfasari et al., 2018). Sophia and Purfeerst (2011) mentioned that the atmosphere and conditions of the hospital environment that are experienced for the first time by a nursing student can make the student become stressed and anxious when doing clinical practice.

This research is not in line with Ramadhani's (2017) said there is a relationship between students' academic competence and student anxiety levels when practicing mental nursing clinics. A lack of excessive fear and distrust in students of their ability to deal with the demands of reality in distant practice grounds will make anxiety levels more severe. Anxiety is neurotic helplessness, insecurity, immaturity, and inadequacy in the face of the demands of reality, difficulties and pressures of daily life (Yusuf, 2009).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results obtained from research that has been carried out, it was concluded that all respondents are classified as academically competent, but in terms of anxiety, those who experienced severe anxiety 29 (31.9%) were the highest proportion of respondents, followed by panic anxiety and moderate anxiety, equally experienced 24 (26.4%) respondents, then normal anxiety 10 (11.0%) respondents and mild anxiety 4 (4.4%) respondents. It was also found that there was no relationship between academic competence and anxiety levels when practicing mental nursing clinics in students. Based on the research that has been carried out and the results that have been obtained, the recommendations that need to be pursued are: bagi researchers are then advised to research about the hospital environment, self-adjustment, motivation that causes anxiety in students who are facing nursing clinical practice. For students who experience anxiety in the face of nursing clinical practice, it is recommended to recognize the signs and symptoms of anxiety they feel and do ways that can reduce the level of anxiety that is being faced by using existing coping mechanisms and continuing to communicate with the supervisor.
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