## Original Article

# Evaluation of General Mental Health of Nursing Students of Lorestan University of Medical Sciences

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Mental health includes an inner sense of wellbeing, ensure self-efficiency, competitive capacity, intergenerational dependence and self-actualization the potential intellectual ability, emotional and...of course, considering the cultural differences, it is not possible to give a comprehensive definition of mental health. However, all comments agree that absence the mental disorders alone, is not the mental health and it is important as physical health. Nursing is component of other fields that students are suffering from anxiety according to importance future job, facing stressful conditions in internship periods and anxiety from standing in like place in future. In this paper we want to study about mental health of nursing students of Lorestan University of medical sciences in 2010- October.

**Methods:** In this Cross-Sectional descriptive study, 100 nursing students selected by randomized manner. We used GHQ questionnaire (28 questions) for this study. After collection, data was analyzed by SPSS version 17.

**Results:** The results are as follows: The mean student's age was 21.41±0.82. 35% of students were male and 65% were female. After review and rating, the average participants score was 22.9. P value between gender and mental health was 0.001 and P value between educational years and mental health was 0.001, too.

**Conclusion:** According to the results, the mental health of nursing students is in a threatening situation, especially in females. There was a significant relationship between gender and mental health (p<0.5) There was a significant relationship between educational years and mental health (p<0.5), too. Therefore it`s necessary to identification detrimental factors to upgrade mentally health and social performance and remove this factors.

**Key words:** Gender, Educational years, Mental health, Nursing students

## INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization definition, "health is State of complete physical, mental, and social well being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. " and "mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community [1]" Mental health as something more than an absence of a major mental health condition can be affected by the social, cultural, physical and education conditions [2,3]. Maintaining good mental health is important to improve one's life and present an enriching life [3]

Starting student life at university is an important stage in the life, because students should get ready to work and live as a productive member of the society. College can be a stressful experience for students. [4]

Nursing is an applied science. An applied science approach reveals the relationship between theory and application, and

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comes to life with implementation of the theory. Student nurses are faced not only with academic stress but concerns of possibly hurting the patients as a result of the interventions they perform during the clinical internship period [5]

Nursing students also contend with problems associated with patients, educators, and the hospital environment during clinical practice. Thus, these aspects contribute to the stress related to being a nursing student [6]

In this study, we aimed to studding about mental help of nursing students of Lorestan University Medical Sciences in October_2015

## METHOD

### Participants
The sample comprised of 100 undergraduate students that selected by randomized manner. All participants were at average intelligence and middle socio-economic class.

### Instrument
1. The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) was used to assess general health. The GHQ is one of the most widely used psychometric measures in health and psychiatry and has a good reliability and validity (Goldberg & Williams, 1998). Each item is assessed on a four-point Likert-type scale, which assesses how a person has been feeling over the past few weeks. Higher scores indicated greater degrees of mental illness. It consist of four sub-scales of psychosomatic symptoms, anxiety and sleep disorder symptoms, social dysfunction scale and depression symptoms scale, each scale consist of 7 items. The total score of 28 items was used as a mental health score. A total score above 22 is indicating of pathological symptoms. Validity and reliability of the test had confirm in different studies; for example, Tajalli, Sobhi, and Ganbaripanah, 2010, reported Alpha coefficients for the present study was 0.88 for the total scale and for the sub-scales were 0.79, 0.85, 0.58 and 0.81, respectively. Sub-scales of psychosomatic symptoms, anxiety and sleep disorder symptoms, social dysfunction scale and depression symptoms scale, each scale consist of 7 items. The total score of 28 items was used as a mental health score. A total score above 22 is indicating of pathological symptoms. Validity and reliability of the test had confirm in different studies; for example, Tajalli, Sobhi, and Ganbaripanah, 2010, reported Cronbach's alpha 0.94 for this scale. Alpha coefficients for the present study was 0.88 for the total scale and for the sub-scales were 0.79, 0.85, 0.58 and 0.81, respectively. [7]

2. A researcher-made checklist was given to people with a score of 28 or more to study disadvantages in mental health.

The validity and reliability of this checklist was confirmed by t_test and professors and experts.

In this checklist, ten items were answered with yes, no That included not familiar with the university environment at the time of arrival, Separation and away from the family, Not interested in the field of study, Incompatibility with other people in the living environment, Inadequate amenities and economic facility, Inappropriate treatment of clinical instructors, Inappropriate treatment and nurses not cooperating with them, Relationships between nurses and other members of the medical staff, Working conditions and pressures from nursing jobs in the future and Concerned about not getting a social position appropriate to nursing science.

### Procedure
This questionnaire was distributed among randomly selected students. Then, researcher-made checklist was given to people with a score of 28 or more to study disadvantages in mental healt. Finally, the data were analyzed by SPSS17 software.

## RESULTS

The mean age of students is $21.41 \pm 0.82$. The average score of the participants was 22.92, 74% of them scored 28 and less, while the rest of the score was above 28. 65.38% of those who scored above 28 were female and 34.61% were male.57.69% were native, 3.84% were tenants and 38.46% were residents of the dormitory. 7.69% under the age of 20 years, 84.61% are between 20 to 25 years old and 7.69% over 25 years of age.11.11% of the first year students, 25% of the second year students, 27.77% were the third year students and 36.11% were the students of the last year. The average score of participants in the field of physical symptoms was 6.36, in the field of anxiety 6.81, in the social function was 6.79 and in the domain of depression was 2.94. In the area of physical signs, 31% scored out of normal range, 58.6% female and 90.3% of them were 20 to 25 years old. Also, 35.48% were graduate students and 54.83% were native.

In the field of anxiety, 34% of the subjects had normal scoring score, which was 58.82% female and 88.23% 20-25 years old, 35.29% were the last year students and 55.88% were native. In the area of social performance, 36% of the subjects also scored scores outside the normal range, 52.77% were male and 83.33% were 20-25 years old, 36.1% were graduate students and 50% were native.

In the area of depression, 5% of the participants scored an out-of-grade score, of which 60% were male and all

## Table 1: Effective causes of reducing mental health level of students:

| Items | Causes | Positive answer (%) |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Not familiar with the university environment at the time of arrival | 46.5 |
| 2 | Separation and away from the family | 58.33 |
| 3 | Not interested in the field of study | 76.92 |
| 4 | Incompatibility with other people in the living environment | 19.23 |
| 5 | Inadequate amenities and economic facility | 23.07 |
| 6 | Inappropriate treatment of clinical instructors | 30.76 |
| 7 | Inappropriate treatment and nurses not cooperating with them | 73.07 |
| 8 | Relationships between nurses and other members of the medical staff | 84.61 |
| 9 | Working conditions and pressures from nursing jobs in the future | 61.53 |
| 10 | Concerned about not getting a social position appropriate to nursing science. | 92.30 |

were between 20 and 25 years old, and 40% were students at the end of the year, and 80% were dormers.

After examining the effective causes for reducing mental health among the 26 percent who scored above 28, we arrive at the results that Table 1 shows:

## DISCUSSION

According to the results, 26% of nursing students were suspected of having psychiatric disorders Which is close to the result stated in Jacob Nami et al and based on that More girls than boys suffer more symptoms of mental disorders[7]. While this study in the anxiety and physical symptoms was more involved girls and boys are involved in depression and social impairment. Avoiding the family and staying in a dormitory are important factors in the field of depression.

In all four areas of mental health, students in the first year have a better position than the last year students.

Among the causes of mental disorders, the failure to achieve a social status commensurate with nursing science and nursing relationships with other members of the treatment team was more important.

Given the above, it is important to achieve skills in dealing with possible causes of mental disorders. As in a study, life skills training can be useful for increasing mental health of university students [4].

Finally, it is suggested that in the future, more extensive research is done to identify the effective causes of lowering the mental health of nurses and nursing students and to study appropriate strategies to remove these causes.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study showed that 74% of nursing students had general mental health and 24% of students were suspected of mental disorders. It is suggested that more studies be conducted in suspected individuals for the definitive diagnosis of mental disorders.

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