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RESEARCH ARTICLE

IMPACT OF FEAR OF NEGATIVE EVALUATION AMONG UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS
ON QUALITY OF LIFE

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ABSTRACT

Nursing students are valuable human resources. Detection of potential fear of negative evaluation among nursing students is crucial since it can minimize the quality of life. Fear of negative evaluation is the apprehension and distress arising from concerns about being judged negatively, despairingly or hostilely by others. Quality of life means satisfaction with life or satisfaction of needs.

Aim of the study to examine the impact of fear of negative evaluation (FNE) on quality of life, among faculty nursing students.

Design: This study demonstrates a descriptive co-relational design.

Setting: The study was conducted in Faculty of Nursing, Menoufia University, Egypt Governorate.

Subjects: A convenience sample of all undergraduate nursing students accepts participation enrolled in first and fourth in the above mentioned setting.

Tools: Two tools were used for data collection. Tool 1: consists of two parts; part (a) to collect socio-demographics data and part (b) Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale. Tool 2: Quality of life Scale.

Results: Indicated that the highest percentages of fourth grade students (85.5%) had moderate level of fear of negative evaluation. Conversely, the majority of first grade students (68.7%) had moderate level of fear of negative evaluation. They were highly statistically significant, strong negative correlation between students' overall level of state fear of negative evaluation from one side and their overall level of quality of life ($r = -0.355, p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: the study concluded that fear of negative evaluation have an effect on students quality of life. There was statistical significance difference between first and fourth grade students regarding fear of negative evaluation and quality of life

Recommendation: Designing and implementing an educational program about fear of negative evaluation for nursing students. Further research could be looking to see if the students' attributions affect the fear of negative evaluation. Further research to study the effect teachers' role on allays anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among faculty nursing students.

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INTRODUCTION

During the nurses' educational process, more emphasis is given to the technical dimension, and little concern about mental and psychological health aspects. Abilities would be useful to solve difficult problems as fear of negative evaluation in the students' routines and in their future professional lives (Edwards *et al.*, 2010). Undergraduate nursing students are going through a phase of life that offers possibilities of changes and new expectations. This can generate deep impact on their current and future quality of life. Therefore, the discussion about the education of professional caregivers in the

universities is highly important (Sulimana and Halabib, 2007). Fear of negative evolution is defined as apprehension about other's evaluations, social anxiety and distress over their expectations that would evaluate one negatively. Fear of negative evolution is related to specific personality dimensions, such as anxiousness, submissiveness, and social avoidance. Nurses who score high on the Fear of negative evolution scale are highly concerned with seeking social approval or avoiding disapproval by others, and may tend to avoid situations where they have to undergo evaluations. Fear and anxiety in teenagers is mainly related to academic performance, lack of family support, and a new environment. Fear of negative evolution as social anxiety is a major cause of concern for beginners in nursing profession. Evidence reveals that adolescence is more vulnerable to anxiety, especially

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students. Nursing students experience a variety of stresses during their nursing education programme. Anxiety is a complex combination of the feeling of fear, apprehension and worry often accompanied by physical sensations (Gibbons *et al.*, 2009). Although anxiety and fear are accepted as parts of the learning process, there is little thought given to the impact of social anxiety. One major characteristics of social anxiety is fear of negative evolution and fearing that others will judge you in a negative light. Social anxiety in learning situations such as seminars and presentations can inhibit student participation and impair the quality of student life (Sasat *et al.*, 2002). Fear of evaluation in general is important as social anxiety, including fears of both positive and negative evaluation (Wang and Yan, 2010). Fear of negative evolution may give rise to other anxieties, fears, and pathologies. It effects on particular learning outcomes if it interferes with their participation in essential learning activities (Sulimana and Halabib, 2007). Causes of fear of negative evaluation are simply due to the fear of being negatively evaluated and judgments by others fear of leaving unfavorable impressions on others and negative thoughts of others, fear of making verbal or spelling mistakes, fear of being noted the shortcomings by others, fear of being found fault by others and fear of disapproval by others.

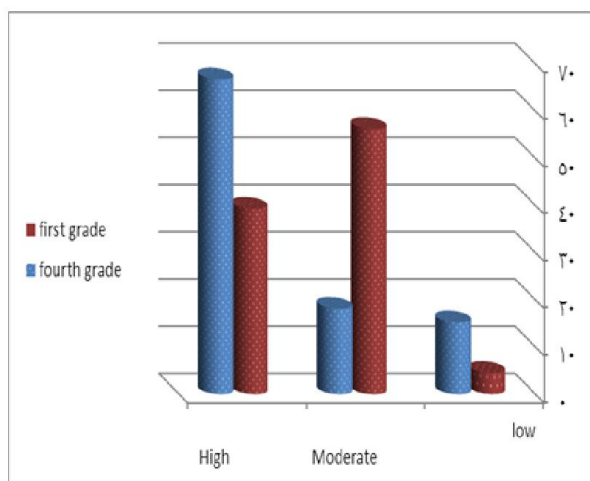


Figure 1. Quality of life

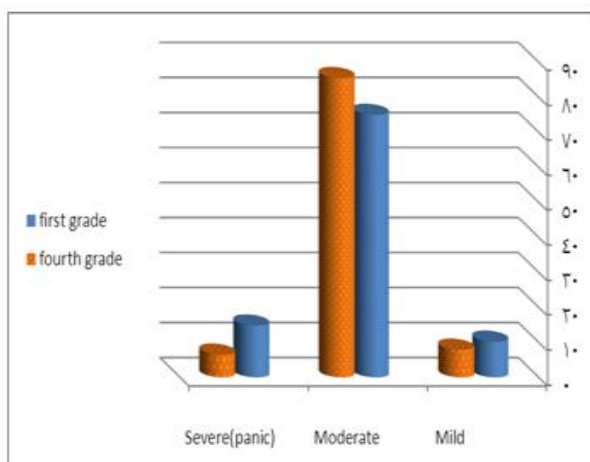


Figure 2. Fear of negative evaluation

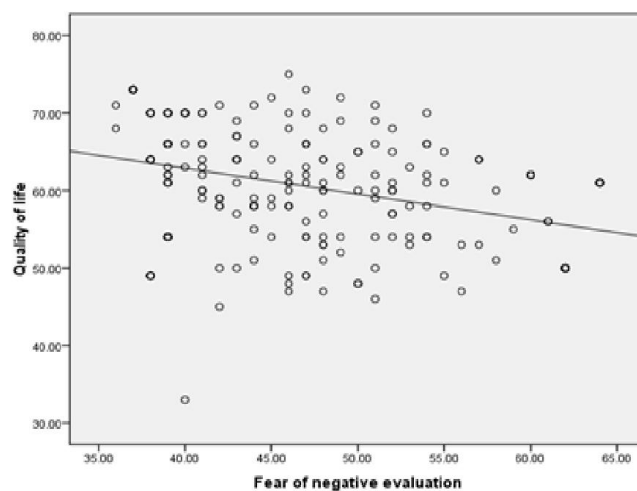


Figure 3.

Social performance situations are commonly encountered by students in higher education at lectures, seminars, group projects, and work experience and employment interviews. They are expected to speak in front of large groups of unfamiliar students in a lecture is not unusual and in seminars to discuss their subject with knowledgeable authority figures as the tutor. Socially anxious students miss out on learning opportunities by avoiding interaction, physically or psychologically. Attention to academic information may be distracted by an excessive focus on their anxieties (Backes and Nietzsche, 2002). The ability to monitor and modify communication with colleagues and tutors may be distorted by fear of negative evolution (Wang and Yan, 2010). An undergraduate nursing student as university students is a human being that chose to take care of and help other human beings: to be born and live in a healthy manner, to overcome health problems, to deal with disabilities and to find a meaning in this experience, and to die with dignity. During the process of preparation to perform these different activities that are part of their job taking into consideration technical knowledge, communication skills and political matters, these students have to face suffering situations that can contribute either to make them more or less sensitive.

(Burnard *et al.*, 2008) reported that the factors that contribute to the quality of life as personal satisfaction, self-esteem, performance ability, comparison with others, previous knowledge/experience, economic status, general health and emotional status. During undergraduate nursing students training at the university, they go through processes that can generate learning difficulties, problems with personal relationships and social withdrawn. In addition to their routine as university students, other aspects of their lives can also have an impact on their quality of life and professional future (Junious *et al.*, 2010) reported some professors' concerns regarding the students, such as learning, interest, motivation, suffering related to financial problems, family difficulties, health problems and worries related to the specific routine of the future profession, which were made worse due to their familiarity with the pain and death of the patients who seek health care services. Many authors have increasing interest on the term quality of life and they emphasize the necessity and the relevance of evaluating it, even in the health care field

(Luo and Wang 2009). Furthermore, the perception of quality of life can be different according to different people, and it is a dynamic concept for each individual (Watson, 2005). (Mahat, 1998) reported that World Health Organization (WHO), defined quality of life as: "the individuals' perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns."

Significance of the study

Evidence reveals that adolescence is more vulnerable to social anxiety as fear of negative evaluation, especially universities students. Nursing students experience a variety of stresses during their nursing education programme. First year of the baccalaureate nursing programme is proved to be a period of stressors and anxiety as they face a situation of being new in the nursing profession. Persistence of anxiety for a prolonged time can adversely affect the quality of life. The relationship between fear of negative evaluation and the quality of life has to be explored.

Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to explore the impact of fear of negative evaluation among undergraduate nursing students on quality of their life. This aim will be achieved through the following objectives:

- Assessing the level of fear of negative evaluation fear of negative evaluation among undergraduate nursing students.
- Assessing the level of quality of life among undergraduate nursing students.
- Determining the correlation between fear of negative evaluation and quality of life among undergraduate nursing students.
- Investigating the differences between first and fourth academic year students.

Hypotheses

H₁: There is a significant association between the state fear of negative evaluation and selected socio demographic variables (age).

H₂: There is a significant association between quality of life and selected socio demographic variables (age).

H₃: There is a significant relationship between fear of negative evaluation and quality of life.

H₄: There is the difference between first academic year and those in fourth academic year 2012-2013.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Design

This study demonstrates a non-experimental, descriptive, correlational cross – sectional, design was used to test the research hypotheses.

Study variables

Dependent variable: quality of life

Independent variable: fear of negative evaluation

Setting:- The study was conducted in Faculty of Nursing, Menoufia University Menoufia Governorate, Egypt

Subjects

A convenience sample of participants comprised students enrolled in the first and fourth years of the undergraduate nursing students who accepted to answer the questionnaire for data collection. Thus, of the (176) students enrolled in the first year, and (138) students enrolled in the fourth year. Their total number was 314 students enrolled in the above mentioned setting in the academic year 2012-2013.

Tools

In order to fulfill the aim of the study, two tools were used for data collection.

Tool one: an interview questionnaire sheet was developed by the researchers based on relevant literature includes two parts:

Part I:- This part includes socio demographic data for undergraduate nursing students as name's code, age, gender, academic year (first - fourth).

Part II: - Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale

This tool was developed by (Watson, and Friend, 1969) in (Abdul –Naby, 2012). It consisted of a 24 items, using a three point Likert scale. The scale has five domains include: 1. Avoidance of evaluation situations (4 items), 2. Anticipate negative evaluation from others (one item), 3. Feeling of upset and anxiety (13 items), 4. Anxiety about social relationship (2 items), and 5. Feeling of low self esteem (4 items). Students are instructed to respond to the items on a 3-point scale (completely applied 3, sometimes applied 2, not applied 1). Total scores were ranged from (24-72). Negative items were reversely coded before the actual calculation that for (Q3, Q5, Q6, Q9, Q10, and Q11). Score ranged from (48- to72) high degree of fear of negative evaluation. Score ranged from (35- to 47) moderate degree of fear of negative evaluation. Score ranged from (24-to 34) low degree of fear of negative evaluation.

Tool two: Quality of Life Scale

This tool was developed by (Yucha *et al.*, 2009, Jimenez *et al.*, 2009, and Sheu *et al.*, 2002) in (Abdul –Naby, 2012). It consisted of a 25 items, using a three point Likert scale. The scale has five domains include: 1. Quality of health (4 items), 2. Quality of Psychological status (7 items), 3. Quality of Social and family life (7 items), 4. Quality of economic life (2 items), and 5. Quality of educational life (5 items). Students are instructed to respond to the items on a 3-point scale (agree 3, unsure 2 disagree1). Total scores were ranged from (25-75). Score ranged from (50- to75) high degree of quality of life.

Score ranged from (31 to 49) moderate degree of quality of life. Score ranged from (25-to 30) low degree of quality of life.

Methods

- Written approval: An official letter clarifying the purpose of the study was obtained from the faculty of nursing to conduct the study and collect the necessary data.
- Tool development: An interview schedule was developed by the researcher after extensive review of related and recent literature. The tools were revised for content validity by five juries, who were expert in nursing field (one professor of psychiatric nursing, one professor of community nursing and two professor of nursing administration and one professor of pediatric nursing) to ascertain tools relevance and completeness.
- Reliability of the tools was done to determine the extent to which items in the tools are related to each other by Cronbach's alpha co-efficiency for tools ($\alpha = 0.98$). Pearson correlation co-efficiency was done to test the internal consistency ($r = 0.01-0.98$) for all items of the tools.
- Consent was obtained from the participants. The researcher explained to students the objectives of the study orally, informed confidentiality and anonymity being assured.
- A pilot study was carried out with 10 nursing students from each academic year who not included in the present study. It was done to test the clarity of the study tools. The necessary modification was done. The average time needed to complete the questionnaires I ranged between 10-15 minutes and questionnaire II ranged between 10-15 minutes.
- The collection of data was started at February 2013 and ended on 30 April, covered three months.

Statistical analysis

Data entry and analysis were done by using statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS Version (16.0)). Data was presented using frequencies, number and percentage, mean and standard deviation, chi square and Pearson's correlation. Level of significance was set as P-value < 0.05 .

RESULTS

Table (1): As shown in this table, the majority of the studied sample was undergraduate nursing students enrolled in the first grade (56.1%), female (98.09%), with mean values of age group was 19.35 ± 1.34 .

Table 1. Distribution of the studied nursing students according to the socio-demographic data (n = 314)

Variables	No	%
Academic year		
First grade	176	56.1
Fourth grade	138	43.9
Gender		
Female students	308	98.09
Male students	6	1.91
Marital status		
Married	11	3.50
Not married	303	96.49
Age (Mean \pm SD)		19.35 ± 1.34

Table (2): As evidence from the table, there was statistically significant negative correlation between age and fear of negative evaluation and statistically significant positive correlation with quality of life.

Table 2. Pearson Correlation between age and fear of negative evaluation and quality of life (n = 314)

Variables	Age	
	r	P value
Fear of negative evaluation	0.12-	$< 0.05^*$
Quality of life	0.233	$< 0.001^*$

(*) Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

Table (3): As evident from the table, there was a statistically significant difference among studied sample, the highest percentage of students who enrolled in first grade exhibit moderate fear of negative evaluation (68.7%) and enjoy moderate quality of life (56.2%) compared to students enrolled in fourth grade, the finding revealed that only (6.5%) of the students exhibit severe degree of fear of negative evaluation and the highest percentage enjoy high quality of life (66.7%).

Table 3. Distribution of the studied nurses according to level of fear of negative evaluation and degree of quality of life (n = 314)

Variables	First Grade n=176		Fourth grade n=138		Chi square	P value
	No	%	No	%		
Fear of negative evaluation						
Mild	19	11.1	11	7.9	13.98	$< 0.001^*$
Moderate	121	68.7	118	85.5		
Severe	36	20.2	9	6.5		
Quality of life						
low	8	4.5	21	15.2	49.4	$< 0.001^*$
Moderate	99	56.2	25	18.1		
High	69	39.3	92	66.7		

(*) Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

Table (4): As evident from the table, there was statistical significance difference and negative correlation between total fear of negative evaluation and total quality of life and each domains where $p < 0.001$ except with quality of educational state where $p > 0.05$

Table 4. Pearson correlation between total fear of negative evaluation and domains of quality of life among the studied sample (n = 314)

Variables	Total fear of negative evaluation	
	r	P value
Quality of health	0.221-	< 0.001
Quality of psychiatric health	0.388-	< 0.01
Quality of social health	0.273-	< 0.01
Quality of economic state	0.237-	< 0.001
Quality of educational state	0.06-	> 0.05
Total quality of life	0.355-	< 0.001

(*) Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

Table (5): As evident from the table, there was statistical significance difference and negative correlation between total quality of life and total fear of negative evaluation and each domains where $p < 0.001$ except with Feeling of upset and anxiety domain where $p > 0.05$

Table 5. Pearson Correlation between total quality of life and total fear of negative evaluation and each domains among studied sample (n = 314)

Variables	Total quality of life	
	r	P value
Avoidance of evaluation situations	0.301-	< 0.001
Anticipate negative evaluation from others	0.372-	< 0.001
Feeling of upset and anxiety	0.111-	> 0.05
Anxiety about social relationship	-0.349	< 0.001
Feeling of low self esteem	0.445-	< 0.001
Total fear of negative evaluation	0.355-	<0.001

(*) Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

Table (6): As illustrated from the table, there was statistical significance difference between total fear of negative evaluation and each domain where $p < 0.001$ among studied sample. Total mean score of fear of negative evaluation among first grade students' more than total mean score of fear of negative evaluation among students of fourth grade

Table 6. Mean value of total fear of negative evaluation and each domain among first and fourth grade nursing students (n = 314)

Variables	First Grade	Fourth grade	T test	P value
Avoidance of evaluation situations	7.49 ± 2.35	6.07 ± 2.06	4.75	< 0.001*
Anticipate negative evaluation from others	1.90 ± 0.69	1.64 ± 0.66	2.88	< 0.01*
Feeling of upset and anxiety	31.30 ± 3.59	26.52 ± 1.98	12.42	< 0.001*
Anxiety about social relationship	3.67 ± 1.38	2.84 ± 1.27	4.63	< 0.001*
Feeling of low self esteem	7.57 ± 2.01	6.12 ± 1.84	5.59	< 0.001*
Total fear of negative evaluation	51.95 ± 7.99	43.21 ± 5.63	9.47	< 0.001*

(*) Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

Table (7): As illustrated from the table, the highest mean scores were for the quality of psychological state domain (17.10 ± 2.77) for the students from the fourth year than who those in first grade. The other mean scores were nearly the same in both groups. There was no statistical significance difference between total quality of life and each domain among students of first and fourth grade.

Table 7. Mean value of total quality of life and each domains among first and fourth grade nursing students (n = 314)

Variables	First Grade	Fourth grade	T test	P value
Quality of health	9.59 ± 1.52	9.74 ± 1.87	0.636	> 0.05
Quality of psychiatric health	16.64 ± 2.51	17.10 ± 2.77	1.27	> 0.05
Quality of social health	16.67 ± 2.16	16.75 ± 3.52	0.198	> 0.05
Quality of economic state	5.42 ± 0.86	5.46 ± 1.27	0.264	> 0.05
Quality of educational state	11.89 ± 1.88	11.57 ± 2.15	1.17	> 0.05
Total quality of life	60.23 ± 6.93	60.63 ± 8.19	0.391	> 0.05

Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ *

DISCUSSION

This cross-sectional descriptive study had included 314 students, with the aim of explore the impact of fear of negative evaluation among undergraduate nursing students on quality of their life. Fear of negative evaluation is termed as social anxiety or social phobia; it is characterized by persisting self-

devaluations and fear that others will scrutinize a person's actions in social or performance situations (Leichsenring *et al.*, 2007). The findings of the study indicated that there was statistical significance difference and negative correlation between overall scores fear of negative evaluation and overall scores quality of life. (Selami Aydin 2008) suggested that there is a negative correlation between achievement and anxiety. Also (Rodebaugh, 2012) reported that fear of positive evaluation is best interpreted as a separate construct from fear of negative evaluation. Regarding to socio-demographic data: - In terms of gender, the finding of present study revealed that all studied sample were female (98.09%). This finding is in accordance with (Magnussen and Amundson, 2003) who found that more than half of the studied subjects were female (90.7%) agree with have demonstrated the prevalence of female in Nursing college, with percentages ranging from 89% to 97.8% (Kleehammer *et al.*, 1990). This profile was also confirmed in a the literature regarding the historically established relationships between female and the task of providing health care, and the socially established relationships between female and the choice to attend nursing schools and college (Reutter *et al.*, 1997).

Also, the finding of the present study revealed that the majority of studied sample are enrollment in first grade (56.1%). This might be explained by fact that nursing colleges are becoming in increasing numbers of students enrollment. Additionally, the finding of the present study revealed that the studied sample 'mean age was 19.35 ± 1.34 and age statistically significant negatively correlation with fear of negative evaluation and statistically significant positively correlation with quality of life. The results of the present study was in accordance with (Levett-Jones *et al.*, 2007) who study the influence of socio-demographic variables on quality of life of undergraduate nursing students from first and fourth years: and reported that students' mean age was (21.2 ± 4.3), and age statistically significant positively correlation with quality of life. A similar finding was found in a study about depression involving 99 nursing students from the first to the fourth years from the Medical School of UNESP, São Paulo, among undergraduate nursing students who participated in a study about their knowledge on alternative/supplemental therapies from public and private universities, the mean age was 24.3 years old (Del Prato, 2010). The reason for the enrollment of young students might be the fact that universities require full-time availability, what makes it difficult or even impossible for the students to have a job.

Regarding to distribution of studied sample according to level of fear of negative evaluation and degree of quality of life, the finding of the present study revealed that the highest percentage of students who enrolled in first grade exhibit moderate fear of negative evaluation (68.7%) and enjoy moderate quality of life (56.2%) compared to students enrolled in fourth grade, the finding revealed that only (6.5%) of the students exhibit severe degree of fear of negative evaluation and the highest percentage enjoy high quality of life (66.7%). This result is inconsistent with (Wilson, 2004) who reported that 59% of the student's self-reported stress was highest at the beginning of first year of the baccalaureate nursing programme is proved to be a period of stressors and anxiety as

they face a situation of being new in the nursing profession. In another study (Koralp, 2005) aiming to investigate the anxiety levels of students and to determine the relationship among different types of anxiety, it was discovered that there is a positive correlation between test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. A descriptive study by (Begley, 2003) was conducted among 72 Irish nursing students to identify the changing self-esteem and fear of negative evaluation during their pre-registration programme in the first intake of in two general nursing schools in Southern Ireland. The study results revealed that student's reported self-esteem increased to 67% as they neared the end of their education programme and their fear of negative evaluation decreased; however, their overall self-esteem levels at their highest were only average. The fear of negative evaluation may not be mentioned directly but many studies seemed to assume that different personality traits such as shame, worry, and shyness could be closely related to fear of negative evaluation. Although all the students knew that the evaluation process in class room is necessary and unavoidable, a majority felt that they were constantly being judged and evaluated and their stress affected thinking processes and memory, but in most cases it did not affect their ability to perform clinical skills (Clark, 2008).

Regarding to the relation between fear of negative evaluation and quality of life among studied sample, the finding of present study revealed that there was statistically significant negative correlation between fear of negative evaluation and quality of life. This result is in agreement with (Marchiondo *et al.*, 2010) who reported that other aspects in addition to their routine as university students, of their lives can also have an impact on their quality of life and professional future, such as learning, interest, motivation, suffering related to financial problems, family difficulties, health problems and worries related to the specific routine of the future profession, which were made worse due to their familiarity with the pain and death of the patients who seek health care services, in addition to the type of system that is prevalent in the undergraduate teaching institutions. The fear of negative evaluation can affect whether a person has a healthy expression of perfectionism. These studies indicated that fear of negative evaluation was correlated more strongly to unhealthy forms of perfectionism and would likely correlate more with those who scored high on the concern for mistakes subscale (Taylor, 2006) and (Jimmieson *et al.*, 2010).

Meanwhile, (Aston and Molassiotis, 2011) found that there were strong relationships between the fear of negative evaluation, shyness, and worry, all of which played a part in determining whether one would become a perfectionist. However, another study found that although fear of rejection seems to be central to shyness, shyness in and of itself was found to be uncorrelated to perfectionism. Researchers have recently attempted to explain why students often decline to participate in certain classroom activities (Frankel, 2009). Students may be afraid of making mistakes in public fear is surely negative evaluation in the form of the real or imaged ridicule of their peers. They do not seem to mind quite as much being negatively evaluated for other types of classroom performance, for example, poor attendance. In fact, some students will gladly accept the certainty of negative evaluation

in the form of low grades for poor attendance, or class participation, rather than risk the possibility of being negatively evaluated by their peers for making a public mistake (Papastavrou *et al.*, 2010). The most obvious is that students who fear negative evaluation will tend to avoid doing things that will cause them to be negatively evaluated (Papp *et al.*, 2003), also who took the different types of perfectionism into consideration, found that socially-prescribed perfectionism was correlated with several psychosocial adjustment problems including loneliness, shyness, and fear of negative evaluation. Regarding to total mean score of fear of negative evaluation among studied sample, the present study revealed that total mean score of fear of negative evaluation among first grade students more than total mean score of fear of negative evaluation among students of fourth grade and there was statistically significant between them. Regarding to total mean score of quality of life among studied sample, the present study revealed that total mean score of quality of life nearly the same among first grade students and fourth grade students, except quality of psychological health was among fourth grade students more than first grade students, and there was no statistically significant between them.

Conclusions

These study concluded that fear of negative evaluation was negatively correlated to quality of life. There was statistical significance difference between first and fourth grade students regarding fear of negative evaluation and quality of life, this statistical difference related to the students became familiar with daily activities and understand the natural and advantage of work.

Recommendation

The following recommendations are suggested:

- Professors follow the students most of the time since they enter the university until their graduation in order to ensure that negative aspects of their quality of life experienced during their academic education do not have a negative impact on their professional career.
- Designing and implementing an educational program about fear of negative evaluation for nursing students.
- Further research could be looking to see if the students' attributions affect the fear of negative evaluation.
- Further research to study the effect teachers' role on allays anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among faculty nursing students.

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