

Identification of Nursing Students' Anxiety and Readiness Facing Ners Competency Tests; Qualitative Study

Suzanna¹, Inne Yellisni^{2*}, Gunawan Irianto³, Arif Setyo Upoyo⁴

^{1,2} Department of Psychiatric Nursing, Institute of Health Science and Technology Muhammadiyah Palembang, Indonesia

³ Department of Community Nursing, University of Muhammadiyah Pringsewu Lampung, Indonesia

⁴ Department of Community Nursing, University of Jenderal Soedirman, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: yellisni@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Background: Having a registration certificate (STR) a nurse must take a competency test as a condition for ownership of the STR. For nursing students, competency tests are a big challenge and complex, so special preparation and attention are needed for students and universities. The implementation of the competency test can create feelings of concern, fear, tension, and anxiety for fear of not passing the competency test. The problem about low graduation rate for ners competency test is influenced by several factors. One of internal factor consist of anxiety and fear facing ners competency test.

Purpose: This study identified the perception and experience anxiety dan readiness of few nursing students facing competency test.

Method: The study design is qualitative and study was conducted using semi-structured interview. Recruitment of partisipants for the interview was based on purposive sampling methods. Interview were conducted with a maximum 14 participants with saturation data. Analisis in this study with content analysis.

Results: This study explored the perception and experience anxiety dan readiness of few nursing students facing competency test. The current study identified four themes : deep feeling of fear, extreme anxiety, unpreparedness within, surrender and pray.

Conclusion: The feelings of anxiety, fear and worry felt by students whether they are taking an exam for the first time or those who are repeating it. In fact, this feeling has quite an impact on the psychological condition, which is also compounded by the student's unpreparedness facing ners competency test.

Keywords: anxiety, ners competency test, nursing students, readiness

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BACKGROUND

Currently, the classic complaint about STR (Registration Certificate) will continue to occur because natural selection will apply, whoever is able to carry out the process well will graduate as a competent nurse. The other complaints was regarding the difficulty of obtaining a STR are often submitted by graduate nurses because many nurse graduates do not pass the competency test. Competency Test is one of the mandatory instruments by the government to ensure quality graduates. In the implementation of the competency test there is a process to measure the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of health workers in accordance with professional standards. Competency test is part of the assessment of student learning outcomes in the health sector. Based on the Circular issued by the Directorate General of Higher Education, this competency test can be carried out at the final stage after completing all stages of education as a exit exam where it must pay attention to the importance of a professional academic environment (Kemenristek, 2019). According data 2018 there were 50,058 competency test participants with a passing rate of 50.38% (Kemenristek, 2019). The problem about low graduation rate for competency test nurses is influenced by several factors, including: try out followed before joining the UKOM, cumulative achievement index (GPA) and student learning styles (Anwar & Djudiyah, 2021; Syah, 2018). In addition, not focusing on learning, confusion and anxiety in dealing with competency test, and ignorance of the CBT work system (computerized based test) is also an obstacle to the graduation of competency test participants (Tri Kurniawati, Citra Kusumaningsih, 2015). Other opinions also say result try out Nationally, academic GPA and student activity also affect the graduation of ukom ners (Syah, 2018). Guiding students to prepare optimal results in the competency test, one of which is mentoring. Mentoring aims to prepare prospective graduates who will face a competency test at the final stage of graduation (Masfuri, 2017). The preparation must start by getting students used to reading the questions vignettes, time discipline and focus on problem solving. In applying this, the lecturer who becomes mentoring must have qualified knowledge such as having attended training development items and review items (Bintang, 2018).

The results of previous research that students who will take the Competency Examination experience a moderate level of anxiety. The impact when anxiety arises in students if it is not handled properly can disrupt the learning process, decrease enthusiasm in learning, learning achievement will decrease and even students can withdraw from the environment (Zheng et al., 2023). The anxiety that arises will greatly affect the improvement of the sympathetic nervous system so that it can cause changes that occur in the response of the human body (Anwar & Djudiyah, 2021). Based on the case above, the author is interested in conducting research related to anxiety responses in students who will carry out the Competency Examination. Research objective this study to identified the perception and experience anxiety dan readiness of few nursing students facing competency test.

METHOD**Study Design**

This study used an empirical phenomenological approach to obtain an overview of the perceptions of and identification of Nursing Students' Anxiety and Readiness Facing Ners Competency Tests.

Participant characteristics and sampling procedures

This study was conducted using semi-structured interview. The data were collected through direct interviews at a mutually agreed time between team and the informants. Recruitment of partisipants for the interview was based on purposive sampling methods.

Interview were conducted with a maximum 14 participants. The sampling size was determined by data saturation, the point at which no more new data or themes related to the informant's experiences emerged.. Analisis in this study with content analysis. The inclusion criteria for the selection of participants based on the following criteria. The inclusion of students who experience anxiety after being measured, students who want to be respondents and mentored, students who follow the research process to completion.

Implementation procedure

The study team explained the purpose of the study and gave informed consent to the participants. They also requested approval and a contract to conduct in-depth interviews at an agreed time. The data collection was carried out from the first week of May 2022 till the first week of August 2022. With the permission of all informants, the interviews were recorded using a voice and audio recorder. The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim within 24 hours of the interview and the accuracy was reviewed by the interview team.

Data credibility/validity

The data analysis was conducted through Haase's adaptation of the Colaizzi method used to analyze the transcripts. The analysis process began with reading the transcripts multiple times to gain an understanding of the meaning conveyed, identifying important phrases, and repeating them in general terms. This was followed by formulation and validation of the meaning through team discussions to reach a consensus. The final stage involved identifying and grouping themes into clusters and categories and fully developing them into a theme description (Cresswell, 2013; Sargeant, 2012). Strategies used to ensure data accuracy or trustworthiness were credibility and transferability. Furthermore, two authors independently analyzed the transcripts by bracketing data on several preconceived ideas and systematically following an adaptation of the Colaizzi method. The results were compared and discussed by the team until agreement on themes, theme groups (domains), and categories (coding) were reached. Transferability was carried out by considering the variation in participant characteristics and the numerous quotes obtained from in-depth interviews. The team analyzed the results of the in-depth interviews, starting with the selection of quotations that were combined into groups, as a basis for the formation of coding for further formulation of categories, domains, and themes. Throughout the study, the team followed standardized reporting guidelines for qualitative study. They also conducted a quality assessment of the qualitative study using various methods including the Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research (COREQ), which consists of 32 criteria (Cresswell, 2013).

Ethical Considerations

The ethical eligibility of study was obtained from the Ethics Committee, the Faculty of Health Science University of Aisyiyah Yogyakarta No.2210/KEP-UNISA/VII/2022. Participants signed informed consent before participating and data confidentiality was also guaranteed during collection by using numbers instead of names with quotation codes (Participant number) and removing identifying information from transcripts. All audio recordings and transcripts were stored with computer password protection.

RESULTS

Nursing students agreeing to participate in the study were asked to thoroughly read the information sheet, besides delivering detailed additional oral briefings on the points in the information sheet and then they were asked to sign in the consent form prior to the conduction of interview. Interviews were conducted with a maximum of 14 participants or until the point of saturation has reached. Interviews were recorded, transcribed and read

exhaustible on the day of conducting the interview in order to not to miss on any minute details.

Characteristic of participants consist of gender, age and status of competency test (Table 1). The results of in-depth interviews were analyzed by selecting quotations that were combined into groups, as a basis for coding to formulate categories, domains, and themes. Based on the themes formed, there was a sequence of events starting Identification of Nursing Students' Anxiety and Readiness Facing Ners Competency Tests . Table 2 showed the process of theme formation, which began with quotations from the in-depth interviews with 14 Nursing students as participants.

Table 1. Study population characteristics

	N= 14	N (%)
Gender		
Female		13 (93%)
Male		1 (7%)
Age		
22-24 years		10 (71%)
>24 years		4 (29%)
Status of competency test		
First taker		13 (93%)
Re –taker		1 (7%)

Table 2. Results of Theme Analysis

Result	Identification of Nursing Students' Anxiety and Readiness Facing Ners Competency Tests	
Theme 1	“The deep feeling of fear facing Ners Competency Tests”	
Quotation	"... Mixed feelings of fear, failure, sadness because of the exit exam "(P8)	" When alone, deep fear is sometimes present " (P3)
	"Failure, fear is the dominant feeling" (P4).	"There is no choice..scared for sure but have to take the test”(P6).
	“Our fear is disproportionate to our motivation” (P2)	“Because I once failed an exam, so the feeling of failure and fear came back” (P13)
Theme 2	“Extreme and severe anxiety”	
Quotation	"Honestly, I feel anxious, nervous when I hear the word ners competency test” (P1)	“Severe anxiety, dizziness, restlessness when discussing examination” (P9)
	“We feel anxiety ranging from moderate to severe” (P7)	“It seems that all students feel extraordinary anxiety over stage exams” (P10)
	“The anxiety we feel is truly extraordinary and full of	“Extreme anxiety and worry about the exam that will be taken” (P14)

	uncomfortable feelings” (P3)	
Theme 3	“Students' unpreparedness in facing Ners Competency Tests”	
Quotation	“We really didn't have much preparation” (P2)	“The study time was short, so we weren't ready” (P9)
	“Even though I am re-examined, I still didn't feel ready” (P7)	“There are a lot of tasks in our profession, we are not ready” (P3)
Theme 4	“Some effort to study, pray and surrender”	
Quotation	“Our efforts to study together and pray”(P9)	“Just surrender after learning” (P2)
	“The try out has been completed, just pray” (P11)	“Study a lot, pray a lot, that's enough” (P6)

DISCUSSION

This study explored the perception and experience anxiety dan readiness of few nursing students facing competency test. The current study identified four themes : The deep feeling of fear facing Ners Competency Tests, Extreme and severe anxiety, Students' unpreparedness, Some effort to study, pray and surrender. According the concept about academic anxiety is a common phenomenon among students in various study programs, including nursing students. This anxiety arises due to pressure to achieve high academic achievement, strict curriculum demands, and self-expectations to succeed in exams and clinical practice (Kumar, 2022). This study describes students who feel anxious and unprepared in facing competency exams range from feelings of pressure, lack of motivation, unpreparedness, lack of studying, and only praying as a last effort. Anxiety is discomfort feeling or worry accompanied by an autonomic response and often originates from things that are not specific or unknown to the individual (Zheng et al., 2023). Anxiety is normal, if this anxiety can support a person's adaptive behavior to prepare themselves to face what they fear. The competency test pass rate is one of the parameters for assessing the level of efficiency and effectiveness of the teaching and learning process of an educational institution. Achievement of passing the competency test is influenced by several factors, both internal and external. Internal factors that very significantly influence the results of the graduate competency test are intelligence, psychological condition (anxiety), physical condition, exam readiness and learning achievement. Unpreparedness to take a competency exam can cause anxiety (Szpak & Kameg, 2013).

Other nursing students also experience feelings of anxiety, worry and dizziness regarding exam problems, as long as these anxiety problems can still be controlled by the students this is considered normal situation (Irmak Vural et al., 2019). The results of previous reviews regarding academic anxiety felt by students, feelings of academic anxiety must still be able to be identified by students so that they do not become a big problem that hinders the learning process (Sari et al., 2023). Many studies described that nursing students are experiencing higher level of test anxiety as compared to students of other discipline. This may be due to stressful academic sessions, bad enviroiment, lack of support system (Driscoll et al., 2009). The same situation, nursing students academic performance can be directly affected by the presence of test anxiety, they also sum up as test anxiety is one of the pertinent issues among average nursing students (Kanthamani & Vijayalakshmi, 2019).

On the other hand, anxiety will become something abnormal if it is responded to excessively. This can cause discomfort, interfere with daily life functions, cause distress, or avoid social situations that cause stress for the individual. The stress and anxiety nursing students experienced in the initial period of facing competency test was increased of anxiety feeling, fear, worried and unpreparedness. This condition same with the previous study (Kumar, 2022; Zheng et al., 2023). Students also feel feelings of fear and anxiety, but sometimes they reach a state of panic, irritability and extraordinary fear, these feelings are quite torturous for students (Livana et al., 2023). Based on the description above, the feelings of anxiety, fear and worry felt by students whether they are taking an exam for the first time or those who are repeating it. In fact, this feeling has quite an impact on the psychological condition, which is also compounded by the student's unpreparedness to take the examination

CONCLUSION

According from the data explored the perception and experience anxiety dan readiness of few nursing students facing competency test. The current study identified four themes : The deep feeling of fear facing Ners Competency Tests, Extreme and severe anxiety, Students' unpreparedness, Some effort to study, pray and surrender. The feelings of anxiety, fear and worry felt by students whether they are taking an exam for the first time or those who are repeating it. In fact, this feeling has quite an impact on the psychological condition, which is also compounded by the student's unpreparedness facing ners competency test.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author (S) declare there is no conflict of interest.

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