

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Effect of Emotional Freedom Technique to the Public Speaking Anxiety (PSA) among Nursing Students

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Public Speaking Anxiety is one of the problems faced by nursing students when in class, clinical and community settings. Anxiety, tension, and depression can all be reduced using Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT). EFT is a scientifically validated method of treating anxiety that involves acupoint stimulation. The goal of this study was to see if EFT could help nursing students overcome their fear of public speaking. **Methods:** This was a quasi-experimental study involving a pre-post test on one group. The sampling technique used total sampling. 87 nursing students from public speaking trainees in West Java and Banten joined this study. The Subjective Units of Distress Scale was used to assess public speaking anxiety. Paired t-test was used to assess the mean difference between pre and post-intervention. **Results:** EFT was helpful in lowering public speaking anxiety, with a substantial outcome (P value=0.000). **Conclusion:** Emotional freedom techniques can be an alternative to improve the soft skills of nurses, especially in public speaking and support the role of nurses as health educators.

Keywords: Anxiety, Public speaking, EFT, Nursing students

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is crucial competency for nursing students in the millennial era. In addition, the ability to communicate is needed for future competencies(1). It is hoped that nursing students will become professional nurses who can become good health models for the community in the next few years. Therefore, nursing students should communicate effectively with customers and the general public to explain concepts, provide answers, carry out procedures, and anything else connected to health. In the field of nursing, communication is crucial. Establishing effective communication with patients is typically an essential element of nursing care (2–4).

Nurses can use communication skills to assess a patient's healthcare needs, as having a meaningful dialogue with patients allows nurses to gain a thorough grasp of each patient and their unique characteristics (3–5). In addition, public speaking techniques are crucial in supporting student activities. Public speaking can boost academic and professional knowledge, as well as general communication abilities (3,6).

In truth, everyone, including students, suffers from Public Speaking Anxiety (PSA). According to preliminary research, nursing students frequently experience situations requiring them to speak in public, mainly when doing their tasks in a hospital or the community and being obliged to become health promoters (3). Most nursing students experience high levels of anxiety as a result of this. The interviews with nursing students revealed that they lacked confidence in speaking and that numerous individuals noticed them (3). They are frequently agitated and agitated, with a racing heart,

quivering legs and hands, and a heated and humid body. As a result, dealing with Public Speaking Anxiety among nursing students was necessary (3).

Anxiety can be beneficial or harmful, facilitating or hindering, boosting or crippling one's confidence or demotivating one's motivation. Anxiety is deserving because it affects one's perception of competence (7,8). EFT was much more successful in lowering hyperarousal, anxiety, and depression symptoms, with reductions lasting up to a year after therapy (9). EFT can also help with public speaking anxiety (PSA) (10). The objective of EFT is to eliminate bad emotions from a person's life and replace them with more positive ones. Additionally, the use of simple movements without the use of instruments enables students to practice at home (11).

Patterson (2016) study stated that EFT is another technique that can be used successfully to alleviate stress and anxiety in nursing students. This study demonstrates that tapping meridian points while concentrating on a fear or unpleasant emotion alleviates associated anxiety symptoms. Repetition of a proclamation of self-acceptance may assist in altering one's perception or assessment of the fear. EFT may also help nursing students feel less stressed and anxious, as well as provide them with a technique of coping or some sense of control over existing distress. The intervention to be examined in this study was a participants group with EFT technique to lessen the fear of public speaking, based on the difficulties listed above. By putting EFT techniques to the test, the researchers intended to determine how effective they are at reducing public speaking anxiety.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A quasi-experimental strategy was used in this study, including a one-group pre-post test. This study aimed to measure the difference in the mean PSA before and after the Emotional Freedom Technique intervention. The sampling technique used accidentally sampling from nursing students in Indonesia who enrolled and joined public speaking training activities. A total of 87 nursing students from diploma and bachelor degree joined the study.

General speaking anxiety was assessed using the Subjective Units of Distress Scale (SUDs), a self-assessment tool on a scale of 0-10. Rating 0 denotes peace, serenity, and complete relief. There is no longer any anxiety about any situation. Rating 10 means you're beside yourself, out of control, as if you're having a nervous breakdown, overwhelmed, and at the end of your rope. You may be so distraught that you refuse to speak because you don't think anyone could comprehend your distress (12). The validity of this instrument has been measured through convergent and discriminant validity, predictive validity, and concurrent validity approaches.

It revealed a significant connection with the SCL-90-R PSDI (Spearman rho =.50, p.001), indicating a moderate contemporaneous validity with symptomatic distress. Additionally, a significant association with the IES-R (Spearman rho =.46, p.001) indicated that the IES-R had a moderate contemporaneous validity with the amount of distress associated with traumatic or stressful situations (13).

The intervention carried out in this group was the Emotional Freedom Technique. The technicality for implementing EFT is as follows: the first step is to measure the scale of perceived anxiety (Pre-Test), then did EFT step by step by following the guidance (used affirmations and tapping to Meridian point), and the final step is re-measure the scale of perceived anxiety (Post-Test). This intervention was carried out once in an online public speaking training with a zoom platform.

To compare mean differences before and after the intervention, a paired t-test was utilized. Data were transferred to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 20 (SPSS) for data analysis. This research has been through ethical approval from the centre of research and community services STIKep PPNI Jawa Barat No. II/001/KEPK-SLE/STIKEP/PPNI/JABAR/VI/2021. This letter showed ethical approval for the research protocol of the Emotional Freedom Technique.

RESULT

A total of 87 nursing students enrolled in this study. Despite the fact that the mean score for public speaking anxiety fell following the intervention, from 6.86 (SD:1.84) to 3.14 (SD:1.36), according to paired t-test results, the P-value based on mean difference before and after the intervention is 0.00, indicating that there is a substantial difference in public speaking anxiety before and after EFT intervention (Table I)

Table I. A paired t-test result

Mean (SD) Pre	Mean (SD) Post	P-Value
6.86 (SD:1.84)	3.14 (SD:1.36)	0.00

DISCUSSION

For nursing students, interpersonal skills such as public speaking are crucial tools. Most people aspire to be good public speakers, and they are taught how to do so. When they are placed in situations where they are the centre of attention and must address an audience, they experience fear and anxiety, resulting in nausea and excessive sweating. Most of them want to avoid circumstances in which they must act or speak in front of an audience, but they must do so when it is inevitable (14). Public speaking can be described in a variety of ways. In general, it is a sort of interpersonal

communication that involves giving a speech in a formal or informal setting to inform, persuade, or entertain a large group of people. Because of various considerations, this communication is one of the most challenging tasks a person faces: Language proficiency, a problem with speech content organization, and a lack of public speaking skills (15).

Student nurses have been reported as having severe stress and anxiety concerns during their schooling. According to multiple studies, nursing students are more stressed than medical students, degreed nurses, other non-nursing healthcare students and the general female population (11).

Many studies suggested the therapy or method reduce public speaking anxiety. One of them is the EFT. EFT is a self-help therapeutic technique that has been shown to be effective in over 100 studies. However, information is scarce concerning EFT's physiological impacts (16). Nevertheless, EFT helps lower anxiety and enhance student performance. In addition, EFT has also been beneficial in lowering Public Speaking Anxiety (PSA) (17).

EFT is about mind and body. Hundreds of peer-reviewed research have demonstrated that relaxation response and mind-body therapies are clinically beneficial in treating a wide range of health conditions caused or exacerbated by stress (18). EFT has also been shown to help deal with stress and anxiety in nursing students (19). In addition to being quick, straightforward, and inexpensive, EFT is also simple to teach and implement among clients (11). The Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) sends signals to the brain by combining self-acceptance words with meridians tapping. Because tapping lightly with one or two fingertips at the acupuncture site is just as effective as stimulation in acupuncture treatment, EFT is sometimes referred to as needleless acupuncture. Meridian points are defined further as sites in the body's tissues that include dense tissue and are placed near nerve terminals. Meridian points have a higher electrical potential than other body locations (20).

Beats performed at a point of the body can elicit a response through sensory networks until they involve the central nerve. It is further explained that neural networks communicate with each other through neurotransmitters in synapses. Stimulation of nerve tissue in the peripherals will continue to the central through the spinal medulla of the brain stem to the hypothalamus and pituitary. Peripheral stimulation will be delivered to the hypothalamus brain, affecting the secretion of neurotransmitters such as β -endorphins, norepinephrine and enkefaline, 5-HT which act as an inhibition of pain sensations. The secretion of these neurotransmitters also plays a role in the immune system as an immunomodulator and improves the function of other organs such as in psychiatric diseases (11).

Meridian energy is the path of energy traffic in the body. As with traffic, in Meridianpun there are lanes, obstacles, intersections, starting points, endpoints, and so on. If the energy path is smooth, harmony will be created in the body and our bodies are able to fight disease. Conversely, if there is a barrier to the meridians, there will be a disruption to health. According to Iskandar the location of meridians in the body varies, depending on the path. There are meridian pathways that pass between bones, some are between muscles, and because of their unreal form there are also penetrated or enveloping organs (16).

There are even meridian pathways that appear close to the surface of the skin. In addition to the perceived physical benefits, EFT is also helpful to reduce anxiety. When tapping the karate point on the upper left or upper right of the chest is able to be a suggestion for the individual self to lower the anxiety experienced by one of the anxiety in public speaking. It will also ultimately affect the emotional intelligence of nurses in nursing decision-making (21).

Public speaking ability is required of nurses in order to listen to the patient's feelings and to explain the nursing operations. One of the ways nurses maintain good cooperation with clients in order to assist them in meeting their health needs, as well as with other health workers in order to assist clients in resolving client concerns, is through communication. Effective communication is advantageous and has a role in client rehabilitation, particularly when nurses collaborate with other health care professionals. It also has an effect on client and family satisfaction. Communication is critical in efforts to improve the quality of nursing care. Nurses who have the capacity and abilities to communicate effectively will have little difficulty establishing relationships with patients and families (22).

Through the use of public speaking in nursing, nurses will gain the capacity to select their position, when to talk, when to approach or withdraw, when to be in the middle, behind, or in front, and so on. Additionally, this communication will indirectly teach nurses to control their own tone and volume of sound, as well as how to use body language to motivate others. The ability of nurses to speak in public is also demonstrated in a variety of health-related activities, including counseling, lectures, and large-group health debates. This public speaking ability will help a nurse who serves as a communicator or source of information communicate effectively with a crowd. Nurses must have a thorough understanding of the patient group's health history, education, experience, social status, and knowledge in order to select and present information appropriately.

CONCLUSION

The study found that the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) effectively reduces Public Speaking Anxiety (PSA) among nursing students

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank their colleagues for their participation in and assistance with the study. They are also appreciative to all reviewers who gave constructive criticism on the piece and helped them finish it.

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