

Emotional Intelligence and Its Role in Maintaining Academic-Personal Life Balance Among Nursing Students at Taif University.

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Emotional intelligence (EI) has become one of the key aspects of nursing education since it facilitates the process of emotional control, stress management, resilience, and well-being among students. Nursing students are usually exposed to academic, clinical, and personal pressures, which may influence their readiness to balance positive academic and personal lives.

Methods: A quantitative descriptive-correlational cross-sectional design was utilized for this study. A total of 209 undergraduate nursing students from the College of Nursing at Taif University were included in this study and selected through convenience sampling. An online questionnaire was used to collect data that included demographic characteristics, an adapted 10-item version of the Schutte Self-Report Emotional intelligence test and an adapted 9-item version of the School-Life conflict scale. Reliability testing reflected high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.902 and 0.861 for emotional intelligence and academic-personal life balance, respectively.

Results: The findings identified that the emotional intelligence of nursing students was high (mean = 3.51, SD = 0.85), while their academic-personal life balance was moderate (mean = 3.40, SD = 0.82), reflecting that students experienced some challenges in balancing academic and personal and social responsibilities. In contrast, academic-personal life balance differed significantly according to GPA ($p = 0.039$). Furthermore, a moderate positive relationship was identified between emotional intelligence and academic-personal life balance ($r = 0.559$, $p = 0.001$). Regression analysis showed that emotional intelligence explained 30.9% of the variance in academic-personal life balance, implying that students with higher EI are better able to handle academic pressure while still maintaining emotional and personal well-being.

Discussion/Conclusion: The research concluded that emotional intelligence is a meaningful positive indicator of academic-personal life balance in nursing students. The results suggest the necessity of considering the development of emotional intelligence through educational programs, stress-management strategies, and counseling support.

INTRODUCTION

Nursing education poses significant academic and emotional challenges, with heavy workloads and clinical responsibilities impacting students' performance and well-being. Developing emotional intelligence can aid students in managing these issues effectively. Emotional intelligence (EI) is the capacity to perceive, understand, and manage one's own emotions and those of others (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Nursing students often face academic pressure, emotional burdens, and challenges balancing university and personal life. Such imbalance may lead to depersonalization, reduced effort, and poor performance (Alharbi, 2025; Almutairi, 2025). In Saudi Arabia, students face additional demands from academic pressures, cultural adaptation, clinical training, and the rapidly changing healthcare landscape. Few studies have investigated the role of emotional intelligence in maintaining academic-life balance among Saudi nursing students, highlighting the need for research at Taif University.



Problem Statement

Failure to balance academic and personal life may cause emotional exhaustion, poor academic performance, stress, and reduced well-being among nursing students. Despite the recognized role of emotional intelligence in adaptation and coping, evidence about its role in academic–personal life balance in Saudi nursing students is insufficient.

Research Aim

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic–personal life balance among nursing students at Taif University.

Research Objectives

1. To determine the level of emotional intelligence among nursing students at Taif University.
2. To determine the level of academic–personal life balance among nursing students at Taif University.
3. To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic–personal life balance.
4. To investigate differences in emotional intelligence and academic–personal life balance according to demographic characteristics among nursing students.
5. To provide evidence-based recommendations for promoting EI-focused and improving Academic–personal life balance among nursing students.

Hypotheses

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic–personal life balance among nursing students at Taif University.

H0: There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic–personal life balance among nursing students at Taif University.

Significance of Study

This study highlights the importance of emotional intelligence for nursing students in managing academic stress and maintaining well-being. It suggests the creation of training programs in emotional intelligence, contributing valuable evidence to nursing education in Saudi Arabia and serving as a reference for future research on balancing academic and personal life.

Definition of Terms

Emotional Intelligence: The ability to recognize, understand, regulate, and use emotions effectively.

Academic–Personal Life Balance: The ability to manage academic duties while maintaining personal, social, and psychological well-being.

Nursing Students: Undergraduate students enrolled in the College of Nursing at Taif University.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Framework: The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Academic-Personal Life Balance Among Nursing Students at Taif University

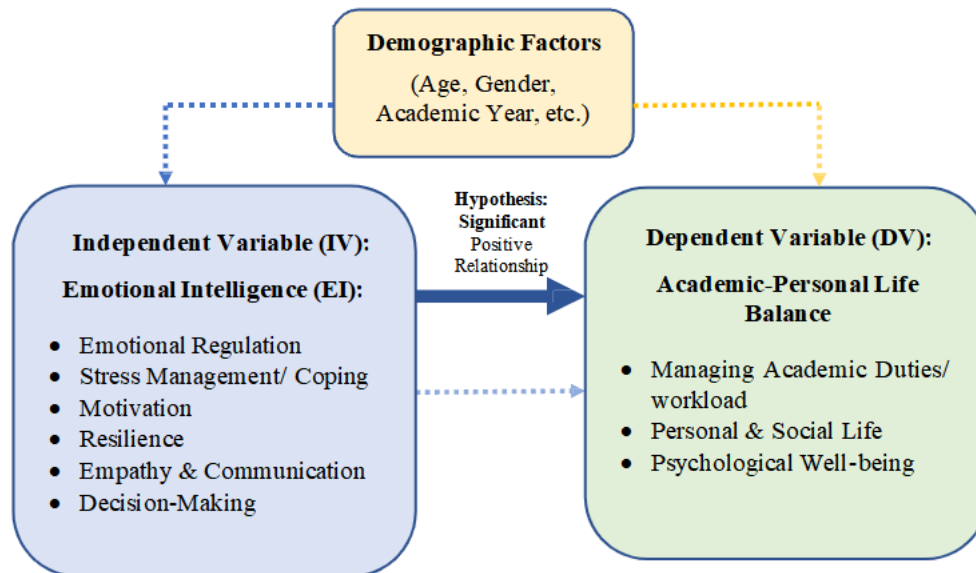


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework Showing the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence, Academic-Personal Life Balance, and Demographic Factors for Nursing Students.

The conceptual framework outlines the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Academic-Personal Life Balance among nursing students. Based on Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer's Emotional Intelligence Theory, it suggests that higher EI enables students to better manage emotional and personal demands, thereby improving their balance between academic and personal lives. Supported by School-Life Conflict Theory, the framework uses validated measurement tools for EI and School-Life Conflict to empirically test this positive relationship.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Approach

A quantitative cross-sectional descriptive-correlational design was used to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic–personal life balance among nursing students at Taif University.

Research Setting

The study was conducted at the College of Nursing, Taif University, involving students from different academic levels.

Population of the Study

The target population included undergraduate nursing students enrolled during the academic year 2025–2026. The total population consisted of 600 students.

Sample, Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The study included 209 participants selected using convenience sampling. Sample size was calculated using Slovin's formula with a 6% margin of error.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = population size

e = margin of error

Convenience sampling was used to recruit undergraduate nursing students from all academic levels at Taif University, allowing for the inclusion of readily available respondents within the study timeframe.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Participants were undergraduate nursing students from all academic levels at Taif University; incomplete responses were excluded.

Data collection

Data were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire composed of three sections.

Section I: Demographic characteristics, including the age, gender, academic year and self-reported GPA.

Section II: Emotional intelligence level was measured using an adapted version of the Schutte Self-report Intelligence Test. The instrument originally with 33-item scale was reduced to 10 questions relevant to the objective of the study.

Section III: Academic-personal life balance was measured using an adapted version of the school-life Conflict Scale (SLCS) The 14-item scale was reduced to 9 items to reduce respondents' burden and improve clarity.

Study tool

The instrument consisted of: Partial adoption of the original scales was implemented. The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT, 33 items) was reduced to 10 items, and the School-Life Conflict Scale (SLCS, 14 items) to 9 items to ease response and reduce burden. The original SSEIT uses a 5-point Likert scale, and SLCS a 7-point scale; both were adapted to a uniform 5-point agreement scale (1 = Disagree, 5 = Agree).

Procedure

After obtaining the necessary approvals, the questionnaires were distributed to participants. Clear instructions were provided on how to complete the questionnaire.

Statistical analysis

Data were evaluated utilizing the statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted to answer research objectives and assess relationship between emotional intelligence and academic-personal life balance among nursing students at Taif University. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Descriptive statistics, were utilized to describe participants' demographic characteristics (age, gender, academic year, and GPA) involving frequencies and percentage.

Validity and reliability

Internal consistency

Table 1: Internal consistency of the “Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test” scale

Item number	Pearson correlation	Item number	Pearson correlation
1	0.733**	6	0.669**
2	0.774**	7	0.786**
3	0.651**	8	0.721**
4	0.791**	9	0.767**
5	0.674**	10	0.814**

** correlation is significant at $\alpha = 0.01$ or less

As shown in Table 1, the correlation coefficients between each item of the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test scale and the total scale score are statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 2: Internal consistency of the “School-Life Conflict” scale

Item number	Pearson correlation	Item number	Pearson correlation
1	0.696**	6	0.733**
2	0.713**	7	0.766**
3	0.706**	8	0.563**
4	0.786**	9	0.598**
5	0.687**		

** correlation is significant at $\alpha = 0.01$ or less

As presented in table 2, the correlation coefficients between each item of the school-Life Conflict scale and the total scale score are statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 3: Cronbach's alpha

No	scale	No. items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence	10	0.902
2	School-Life Conflict	9	0.861

Reliability of the research instrument: Cronbach's alpha for the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence was 0.902, and School-Life Conflict was 0.861.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the university and College of Nursing (Application No. 47-153, 2026-02-02). Participants provided electronic informed consent before completing the questionnaire.

Results

Introduction

In this chapter, the findings are presented in accordance with the research objectives. It starts with the demographic attributes of the respondents, the content of emotional intelligence and academic-personal life balance, and the variation across demographic attributes. Table 4: Demographic Characteristics (N = 209)

Variables	Categories	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	From 17 to 20 years	114	54.5
	From 21 to 23 years	88	42.1
	From 24 to 26 years	2	1
	27 years or more	5	2.4
Gender	Male	58	27.8
	Female	151	72.2
Academic Year	First year	56	26.8
	Second year	66	31.6
	Third year	49	23.4
	Fourth year	38	18.2
Current GPA	Less than 2	4	1.9
	From 2 - 2.49	15	7.2
	From 2.50 - 2.99	37	17.7
	From 3.00 - 4.00	153	73.2

Table 4 provides an overview of the respondents' demographic profile. From a total of 209 nursing students at Taif University: approximately half (54.5%) aged 17 to 20 years, 42.1% aged 21 to 23 years, 2.4% aged 27 years or more, and 1% aged 24 to 26 years. Most of them (72.2%) were female, and 27.8% male. Regarding the academic year, 31.6% second year, 26.8% first year, 23.4% third year, and 18.2% fourth year. The majority (73.2%) had a GPA from 3 to 4, 17.7% from 2.5 to 2.99, 7.2% from 2 to 2.49, and only 1.9% less than 2.

Table 5: Level of Emotional Intelligence among Nursing Students at Taif University

No	Items	Mean	SD
1	I am aware of my emotions as I experience them	3.17	1.23
2	I can easily recognize my emotions when they occur	3.59	1.09
3	I understand why my emotions change	3.43	1.19
4	I am able to control my emotions in difficult situations	3.59	1.12

5	When I am in a positive mood, I find it easier to solve problems	3.76	1.11
6	When faced with obstacles, I recall past experiences that helped me overcome challenges	3.68	1.06
7	I motivate myself by imagining successful outcomes for the tasks I undertake	3.57	1.14
8	My emotions contribute positively to my overall quality of life	3.33	1.26
9	When I experience positive emotions, I know how to maintain them	3.71	1.10
10	I generally expect to perform well in the tasks I attempt	3.30	1.20
	Mean score	3.51	0.85

As shown in Table 5, the overall Level of Emotional Intelligence among Nursing Students was high, with a mean score of 3.51. The highest score was (When I am in a positive mood, I find it easier to solve problems) with a mean score of 3.76, and the lowest item score was (I am aware of my emotions as I experience them) with a mean score of 3.17. This indicates that while students demonstrate strong emotional functioning overall, self-awareness may be relatively less developed compared to other EI domains.

Table 6: Level of Academic-personal life balance among Nursing Students at Taif University

No	Items	Mean	SD
1	I often feel overwhelmed by my academic workload	3.51	1.07
2	I experience high levels of stress due to academic responsibilities	3.57	1.09
3	Academic stress negatively affects my mood and overall well-being	3.41	1.22
4	Balancing academic demands and personal life impacts my mental well-being	3.14	1.15
5	I frequently sacrifice personal time to meet academic deadlines	3.08	1.26
6	My academic commitments limit the time I spend with family and friends	3.17	1.23
7	I find it difficult to balance academic responsibilities with social activities	3.52	1.23
8	I have limited time to participate in extracurricular activities due to academic demands	3.61	1.20
9	I miss social events or gatherings because of academic obligations	3.58	1.15
	Mean score	3.40	0.82



Table 6 shows the Level of academic-personal life balance among Nursing Students at Taif University was Moderate, with a mean score of 3.40 (SD=0.82). The highest mean score was (I have limited time to participate in extracurricular activities due to academic demands) with a mean score of 3.61, and the lowest mean score was (I frequently sacrifice personal time to meet academic deadlines) with a mean score of 3.08 Table 7: Differences in Emotional Intelligence According to Demographic Characteristics among Nursing Students at Taif University

Characteristic	Categories	Mean	Test	Statistics	P-value
Age	From 17 to 20 years	3.49	ANOVA	0.066	0.978
	From 21 to 23 years	3.54			
	From 24 to 26 years	3.40			
	27 years or more	3.50			
Gender	Male	3.60	Independent sample t-test	0.948	0.344
	Female	3.48			
Academic Year	First year	3.68	ANOVA	1.855	0.138
	Second year	3.35			
	Third year	3.45			
	Fourth year	3.63			
Current GPA	Less than 2	3.33	ANOVA	0.642	0.589
	From 2 - 2.49	3.38			
	From 2.50 - 2.99	3.67			
	From 3.00 - 4.00	3.49			

As shown in table 7, no statistically significant differences in emotional intelligence according to demographic characteristics (age, gender, academic year, or current GPA) among nursing students at Taif University, with all p-values exceeding 0.05.

Table 8: Differences in Academic-Personal Life Balance According To Demographic Characteristics Among Nursing Students At Taif University

Characteristic	Categories	Mean	Test	Statistics	P-value
Age	From 17 to 20 years	3.38	ANOVA	0.087	0.967
	From 21 to 23 years	3.42			

	From 24 to 26 years	3.33			
	27 years or more	3.51			
Gender	Male	3.38	Independent sample t-test	-0.170	0865
	Female	3.40			
Academic Year	First year	3.42	ANOVA	0.074	0.974
	Second year	3.37			
	Third year	3.43			
	Fourth year	3.38			
Current GPA	Less than 2 ^{a, b}	3.50	ANOVA	2.835	0.039
	From 2 - 2.49 ^b	3.01			
	From 2.50 - 2.99 ^a	3.69			
	From 3.00 - 4.00 ^{a, b}	3.36			

* Different lowercase letters indicate significant differences between groups based on the Tukey post hoc test. As shown in table 8, a significant difference in academic-personal life balance among nursing students based on current GPA ($F = 2.835$, $p = 0.039$). Students with a GPA of 2.50–2.99 demonstrated higher academic-personal life balance than those with a GPA of 2.00–2.49.

Table 9: The relationship between emotional intelligence and nursing students' academic-personal life balance

r	R ²	F	P-Value
0.559	0.309	94.21	< 0.001
Independent variable	β	t	P-Value
Emotional intelligence	0.539	9.71	< 0.001

As shown in table 9, a significant moderate positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic-personal life balance among nursing students ($r = 0.559$, $p < 0.001$). Regression analysis revealed that the model was statistically significant ($F = 94.21$, $p < 0.001$), and that emotional intelligence significantly predicted students' academic-personal life balance ($\beta = 0.539$, $t = 9.71$), explaining 30.9% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.309$). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected. The findings indicate that students with higher emotional intelligence tend to maintain better academic-personal balance. No significant differences in emotional intelligence were found based on demographic characteristics.

DISCUSSION

This section discusses the key findings from the study and interprets the results in the context of the existing literature and emotional intelligence theory.

Key Findings

This paper explored the impact of emotional intelligence on the academic-personal life balance of nursing students at Taif University. Findings revealed that participants had high emotional intelligence and moderate balance in their academic and personal lives. Emotional intelligence emerged as a significant positive predictor of this balance. While no major differences in emotional intelligence were observed across age, gender, academic year, or GPA, discrepancies in life balance were noted based on GPA. The results suggest that emotional intelligence is a crucial asset for nursing students in managing academic and personal pressures.

Nursing profession necessitates students to cope with academic pressures, emotionally demanding circumstances, clinical responsibilities and interpersonal communications. Hence, emotional intelligence may contribute to the ability of the students to overcome stress, regulate emotions, and adapt to challenging academic and clinical environments.

The research findings support the emerging evidence that EI is highly associated with psychological well-being, resilience, and academic adjustment in Nursing education.

Level of Emotional Intelligence among Nursing Students

One of the major conclusion of the current research was the fact that nursing students of Taif University indicated a great degree of emotional intelligence. This finding aligns with past Saudi research conducted to nursing students reported the respondents have moderate to high levels of emotional intelligence (Almansour, 2023; Almegewly et al., 2022). It coincides with the findings that emotional intelligence is prevalent among nursing students, as the study and clinical setting they must study and work in demand empathy, emotional control, communication, and self-awareness (Alharbi, 2025; Baghdadi et al., 2024). Students in nursing are subjected to rigorous academic assignments, emotionally charged clinical cases, and interpersonal contact with other people on a regular basis, which combined with time may lead to the emergence of emotional intelligence skills. The result in this research was relatively high and can thus be attributed to the personalities of the nursing students as well as the nursing curriculum. Among the emotional intelligence items, students got the highest score on the statement related to problem-solving during positive emotional states. This finding may mean that positive emotions contribute to students' confidence, motivation, and ability to think more effectively when facing academic or personal challenges. On the other hand, the lowest mean score was related to emotional awareness during emotional experiences, demonstrating that some students may still experience difficulty fully recognizing and understanding their emotions in stressful situations.

These findings shed light on the importance of continuing emotional intelligence development within nursing education through reflective learning activities, stress-management programs, counseling services and supportive learning environments

Level of Academic-Personal Life Balance among Nursing Students

Students reported a high level of stress related to academic responsibilities and constrained participation in extracurricular and social activities due to academic pressures. These suggest that nursing students persist in experiencing challenges in balancing academic responsibilities with personal and social life. Similar findings have been reported in previous nursing education studies, where academic load and clinical duties were determined as major contributors to emotional exhaustion, stress, and imbalance among nursing students.

The moderate level of academic-personal life balance noted in this study may suggest that while students have established some coping strategies, they still need additional institutional and emotional support to cope up with stress effectively. Offering academic counseling, supportive educational policies and stress-management



workshops, may help students attain healthier balance and improve their overall well-being.

Relationship Between Emotional intelligence and academic–personal life balance

The most important finding of this research study The research study found a moderate positive correlation between emotional intelligence and academic–personal life balance, explaining 30.9% of the variance in this balance. Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in helping students manage their lives, with literature supporting its association with improved psychological well-being, self-regulation, resilience, and stress coping in school (Shengyao et al., 2024; Xu et al., 2023).

The study hypothesis was tested using Pearson correlation and simple linear regression analyses to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic–personal life balance among nursing students at Taif University. The findings revealed a statistically significant moderate positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic–personal life balance ($r = 0.559$, $p < 0.001$). In addition, emotional intelligencesignificantly predicted academic–personal life balance ($\beta = 0.539$, $t = 9.71$, $p < 0.001$), with the regression model explaining 30.9% of the variance in the dependent variable ($R^2 = 0.309$).

Based on these findings, the alternative hypothesis (H1) was accepted, and the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected. The results revealed that nursing students with higher levels of emotional intelligence were more capable of sustaining healthier balance between academic pressures and personal life demands. These findings support the premise that emotional intelligence has a crucial role in helping nursing students regulate emotions, manage stress, and respond more effectively to academic and personal challenges.

Differences in Emotional Intelligence and Academic – Personal Life Balance According to Demographic Characteristics Among Nursing Students

The findings indicated no significant differences in emotional intelligence across age, gender, academic year, and GPA among students, suggesting its relative constancy in this context. This aligns with previous studies highlighting that emotional intelligence may be more influenced by personal emotional growth, life experiences, and environmental support rather than demographic factors. (Shahin, 2020; Almansour, 2023). The study found no significant differences in emotional intelligence among students based on age, gender, academic year, or GPA, suggesting its consistency across these demographics. Emotional intelligence appears to be shaped more by personal experiences than demographic factors. It was noted that while academic–personal life balance showed nosignificant differences by age, gender, or academic year, GPA differences were significant—students with GPAs of 2.50-2.99 reported better balance than those scoring 2.00-2.49. This suggests that higher academic performance correlates with better study skills and coping strategies. Emotional intelligence is linked to both academic success and personal well-being, emphasizing its importance in nursing education, particularly in Saudi Arabia, where developing emotional maturity is crucial for thriving in demanding environments. Educational institutions are urged to integrate emotional intelligence into their curricula due to its association with caring behavior and clinical competence. (Almegewly et al., 2022; Abou Hashish et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORKS

Conclusion

Emotional intelligence significantly influences nursing students' academic and personal lives at Taif University, with a mean score of 3.51 indicating a high level of emotional skills developed during their training. The average balance between academic and personal life was rated at 3.40, suggesting ongoing challenges but reasonable competence in managing them. A positive correlation was found between emotional intelligence and academic–personal life balance, with emotional intelligence accounting for 30.9% of the variance. Notably, factors such as age, gender, academic year, and GPA did not affect emotional intelligence levels, but GPA impacted life balance. Enhancing emotional intelligence is crucial for nursing students' adaptation, emotional well-being, and overall performance in both academic and clinical settings.



Recommendations

The following are recommendations based on the study:

- Include emotional intelligence training in the nursing curriculum, via workshops, seminars and educational programs.
- Offer psychological services for stressed emotionally exhausted or overwhelmed nursing students.

Commitment to Not Using Artificial Intelligence in project Writing

We, the undersigned, Ashwaq Fawaz Alfaqih 44451562 Alaa Oqab Althaqafi 44450830 Layan Awad Al-talhi 44400312 Lena Jalal Alkhaidi 44451133 Rafa Saleh Aljuaid 44456659 Alhanouf Mansour Alotaibi 44450827 Refal Zaed Alharthi 44451771, Magdalena Oblefias, hereby commit that we will write our thesis independently, utilizing only our personal skills and understanding. We will not use any artificial intelligence tools or technologies (such as: ChatGPT, or any automated text generation programs) to write or develop any part of the thesis.

We confirm that we will rely solely on personal research, manual analysis, and consultation of reliable scientific sources. We pledge to submit an original work that reflects our own abilities and understanding of the subject matter.

In the event that any violation of this commitment is discovered, we agree to accept full academic responsibility and any consequences as stipulated by the academic regulations of the institution.

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First and foremost, we thank Allah for granting us the strength, patience, and perseverance to complete this research successfully.

This study is dedicated to our beloved parents, whose endless love, sacrifices, prayers, and unconditional support have been the guiding light throughout our academic journey. Their patience, encouragement, and constant belief in our abilities have given us the strength to overcome every obstacle and continue striving toward our goals.

We would also like to dedicate this work to everyone who inspired, supported, and motivated us during the completion of this research. Your kindness, guidance, and encouragement will always be deeply appreciated and remembered.

With sincere gratitude and love, we dedicate this achievement to all those who stood by us and believed in us every step of the way.

Dedication

We dedicate this study to our beloved parents, whose love, sacrifices, prayers, and unconditional support have guided us throughout our academic journey. Their patience, encouragement, and belief in our abilities have given us the strength to overcome challenges and continue striving toward our goals.

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With sincere gratitude and love, we dedicate this achievement to all those who supported us and believed in us every step of the way.

- Offer time-management and stress-management workshops to teach students how to prioritize study and manage their time.

- Provide nonacademic advice in addition to academic advice.
- Offer support to students with lower GPA, given the difference in academic-personal life balance between high and low GPA students found in this study.
- Introduce peer-support and mentoring programs to increase resilience, emotional adjustment and social integration among nursing students.
- Recommend future research with large samples from more universities in Saudi Arabia, and longitudinal or intervention studies.

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