



HEMŞİRELİK ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN AĞRI ALGILARI: BİR METAFOR ANALİZİ ÇALIŞMASI

PAIN PERCEPTIONS OF NURSING STUDENTS: A METAPHOR ANALYSIS STUDY

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Özet

Giriş: Bu çalışma hemşirelik öğrencilerinin ağrıya ilişkin metaforlarını belirlemek amacıyla yapılmıştır.

Gereç-Yöntem: Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma desenlerinden biri olan olgu bilim yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma hemşirelik öğrencileri ile Google Forms üzerinden oluşturulan online anket yöntemi ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Öğrencilerden "Ağrı ... gibidir, çünkü ..." cümlesini tamamlamaları istenmiştir. Nitel verilerin değerlendirilmesinde betimsel ve içerik analizi yöntemleri kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular: Araştırmaya toplam 249 öğrencinin verileri dahil edilmiştir. Araştırmada katılımcıların verdikleri cevaplar doğrultusunda işaret/uyarı, suçluluk, tutsak, dersini almak/ders çıkarmak, mücadele, düşman, işkence, arapsaçı, bilmece, gözdağı, tehdit/tehlike, denge ve sonsuz boşluk kategorileri oluşturulmuştur.

Sonuç: Öğrenciler ağrıyı farklı açılardan açıklamışlardır. Bazı öğrenciler vücuda faydalarından bahsetmiş ve vücuda uyarı verdiğini belirtmiştir. Diğerleri ise nedenine odaklanmış, ceza olduğunu belirtmiş ve suçluluk duygusundan bahsetmiştir. Ağrı deneyimlerken yaşadıkları şiddetli semptomlara odaklanan öğrenciler bu semptomların kendilerine işkence ettiğini belirtmiştir. Bu eziyet verici deneyim düşmana benzetilmiştir ve aradaki durum bir mücadele olarak tanımlanmıştır. Öğrencilerin ifadelerinden acının karmaşık ve çok boyutlu yapısını görmek mümkündür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Metafor, Hemşirelik, Ağrı.

Abstract

Objective: This study was conducted to determine the metaphors of nursing students about pain.

Material- Methods: In this study, the phenomenology method, which is one of the qualitative research designs, was used. The research was carried out with the nursing students with the online survey method created through Google Forms. The students were asked to complete the sentence "Pain is like ... because ...". Descriptive and content analysis methods were used to evaluate the qualitative data.

Results: The data of a total of 249 students were included in the study. The categories of signs/stimulus, guilt, captive, learn one's lesson/take a lesson, struggle, enemy, torment, tangle, riddle, intimidation, threat/danger, balance and infinite space were created in line with the answers given by the participants.

Conclusion: The students described pain from different perspectives. Some students mentioned its benefits for the body and stated that it gives a warning to the body. Others focused on the reason, said it was punishment, and talked about feelings of guilt. Focusing on the severe symptoms during pain, students reported that these symptoms tortured them. This tormenting experience was likened to an enemy and the situation was described as a struggle. It is possible to see the complex and multidimensional nature of pain in the students' statements.

Keywords: Metaphor, Nursing, Pain

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INTRODUCTION

Pain is a subjective experience that originates from individual experiences early in life (1). International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) defines pain as “an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such damage” (2). Pain, a clinically significant issue, affects approximately 20% of the world population (3). Pain is not all in the body or all in the mind, a physical and emotional experience. It also occurs in response to actual or potential tissue damage. Although pain is a global experience, the nature of this experience is unique to the individual. Pain is formed according to the type of pain experienced, its psychosocial meaning and the response to pain (4). Pain is influenced by personal history, including biological, psychological and social factors (2,5). A painful stimulus of the same intensity may cause pain of varying intensity from person to person, and may even cause pain of different intensity in the same person under different conditions (6).

There are many factors that distinguish nurses from other team members and make them important in pain control. These include nurses being with the patient for a long time, learning the patient's previous pain experiences and coping methods and utilizing these when necessary, providing guidance, administering the planned treatment, monitoring its effects and results, and having an empathetic approach to the patient (7). As nurse educators, it is our responsibility to adequately prepare nursing students for pain management before they become nurses. Nursing students should obtain comprehensive information about pain and pain management before completing their undergraduate education (8). Nursing students must be able to carry out responsibilities independently and communicate with other health professionals as a team to provide the highest quality care to patients (9). Therefore, nurse educators need to understand nursing students' information and attitudes about pain and the factors associated with it in order to

identify facilitators and barriers in pain education. This information is necessary for the preparation of nursing students, who will be the nurses of the future, in accordance with their roles in clinical practice (8). Nurses should have sufficient knowledge, skills and experience about the mechanism, assessment and control of pain. To achieve this, it is necessary to ensure that nursing students receive adequate education on pain and to raise awareness in all aspects. Therefore, the meaning students attribute to pain will guide us in defining and managing pain.

Metaphor means transferring some properties of something to something else (10). “Metaphor is a sign, meaning or conceptual expression formed in individuals. It is viewing and understanding process. It is more significant and strong mental production than finding the meaning of a concept through another concept elementarily for individuals” (11). Age, gender, culture, the meaning of pain for the individual, attention, anxiety, fatigue, previous experiences, coping methods used, family and social support are factors that affect the individual's perception of pain (12). Therefore, it is thought that the meaning that nursing students attribute to pain will be effective in managing their pain process. It is thought that the results to be obtained from this research will be guiding in terms of learning nursing students' perceptions of pain and misconceptions on this subject.

MATERIAL-METHODS

Aim

This study was conducted to determine the metaphors of nursing students about pain.

Study design

In this study, the phenomenology method, which is one of the qualitative research designs, was used. Phenomenology design was used to reveal the individual perceptions, experiences and perspectives of nursing students regarding pain in detail and to understand the current situation (13). Phenomenology is a research design that

reveals situations and phenomena that we are aware of but do not have detailed insights into through the experience of the individual (14).

Participants

The study population consisted of undergraduate nursing students enrolled in nursing departments throughout Türkiye. According to the calculation made with 0.05 sampling error, effect size=0.2 and power=0.80 to determine the sample of the study, it was calculated that at least 197 nursing students should be included in the study. Snowball sampling method was used to reach the sample of the study. The inclusion criteria of the study are: (1) being an undergraduate nursing student living in Türkiye, (2) experiencing pain at least once in their lifetime. (1) Participants who did not experience any pain before, (2) did not have a metaphor expression, (3) did not explain the reason for the metaphor, and (4) students who did not agree to participate in the study were excluded from the study. A total of 278 students participated in the study. However, 29 students who did not have metaphor expressions in their answers were excluded from the study and the research was completed with the participation of 249 students. Of these students, 23.7% participated in the study from the Central Anatolia Region, 14.8% from the Southeastern Anatolia Region, 16.1% from the Eastern Anatolia Region, 7.2% from the Aegean Region, 11.2% from the Marmara Region, 12.9% from the Mediterranean Region and 14.1% from the Black Sea Region.

Data collection

The data were collected using the Descriptive characteristics and Pain Perception Form. In the descriptive characteristics form contained questions such as age, gender, chronic diseases and pain experiences of the participants. In the Pain Perception Form, nursing students were asked to complete the sentence 'Pain is like ... because ...' in order to express their metaphorical descriptions of the concept of pain. According to Saban (2008), in studies using metaphor as a research tool, the concept of "like" was used to reveal the connection between the subject of the metaphor

and its source, and the concept of "because" was used to provide participants with a logical basis or reason for metaphor definitions (15). Metaphors constitute the main data source of the research.

The study data were collected online. The questionnaire form was transferred to the online environment with the help of Google Forms, and then the URL link required to access the questionnaire was sent to the students from social media groups (WhatsApp, instagram, etc.). First of all, the researchers organized a group of students known to them to represent each region of the country. The link to the study was shared with these students. The students were asked to send the research link to students at other universities. In addition, each student participating in the study was asked to forward the research link to other nursing students. IP address limitations were set so that each student could participate in the study only once. When the participants clicked on the link, they first encountered the informative text about the study, and they were able to complete the online questionnaire form after the informed consent form approval. In addition, it was stated that the participants could contact the researcher regarding any question or problems they might encounter during the practice. The word cloud was used to show the responses given by the students to the pain expression (Figure 1) (16).

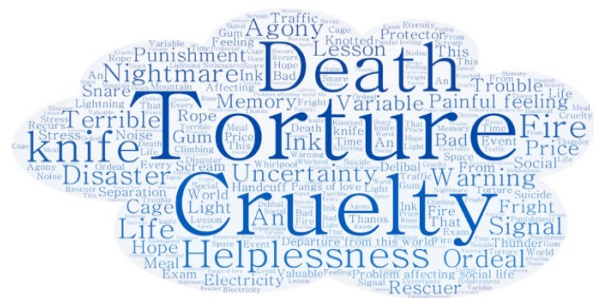


Figure 1. Word Cloud

Data analysis

Descriptive and content analysis methods were used in the evaluation of qualitative data. Frequency and percentage were used in the analysis of descriptive characteristics. The process of analysis and understanding of metaphors by the researcher includes the

following stages. First, the metaphors produced by the students were temporarily listed in alphabetic sequence. During the sequence, it was checked whether the students clearly expressed the metaphor. In addition, participants who were left blank and did not contain any metaphors were excluded from the analysis. Second, the valid metaphors produced by the students were reviewed and organized in alphabetical sequence, and then sample metaphor expressions were selected to represent each metaphor. The purpose of this is to help categorize the metaphors and interpret the data. After the sample metaphors were identified, valid metaphors were grouped according to their similarities. Third, the validity and reliability of the study were determined. To determine the validity of this research, it was also ensured that the metaphors in the categories created in the research were analyzed by experts to see whether they represented the relevant category. In this context, the metaphors produced by the students and the categories developed by the researchers were sent to two experts as a list. The experts were asked to write the metaphors in the relevant category, and then the experts and researchers compared the groupings. The rationale for the metaphor produced was also taken into consideration while creating the category. The reliability of the research was decided according to the number of consensus and disagreements obtained from the comparison. Reliability was calculated according to the formula of Miles and Huberman (1994) $\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{Number of same decisions}}{(\text{Sum of same and different decisions})}$ (17). As a result of this calculation, the reliability of the research was calculated as 98%. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the desired reliability should be at least 90% (15).

Ethical statement

Ethical permission was obtained from the University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee (2023/116) for this research. In the research link sent to the students, the aim of the

research was explained firstly and the participants were informed about the research. Students who wanted to participate in the study were asked to continue the study by checking the box "I agree to participate in the study".

RESULT

The data of a total of 249 students were included in the study. 82.7% of the participants were female and their mean age was 20.2 ± 1.24 . When the pain experienced by the participants was examined, it was determined that 45.7% had dysmenorrhea, 28.1% had headache and 11.2% had back pain. The reported that the mean of the last pain they experienced was 7.65 ± 1.52 (Table 1).

Table 1. Introductory Characteristics of the Participants

Characteristics	n(%)
Gender	
Female	206(82.7)
Male	43(17.3)
Age (Mean\pmSD)	20.2 \pm 1.24
Location of previous pain	
Dysmenorrhea	114(45.7)
Headache	70(28.1)
Toothache	27(10.8)
Backache	28(11.2)
Joint pain	24(9.6)
Fracture/sprain pain	13(5.2)
Neck pain	11(4.4)
Stomach ache	21(8.4)
Other*	14(5.6)
Intensity of previous pain (Mean\pmSD)	7.65 \pm 1.52

*Post-operative pain, throat pain, kidney pain

In this research, in line with the answers given by the participants, the categories of signs/stimulus, guilt, captive, learn one's lesson/take a lesson, struggle, enemy, torment, tangle, riddle, intimidation, threat/danger, balance and infinite space were created (Table 2, Table 3).

Table 2. Metaphors of participants related to pain

Metaphors	n(%)	Metaphors	n(%)
Rescuer	3(1.2)	Lesson	3(1.2)
Protector	2(0.8)	Vhopealuable	1(0.4)
Signal	5(2.0)	A bad meal	1(0.4)
Warning	6(2.4)	Memory	4(1.6)
Traffic light	1(0.4)	Climbing a mountain	1(0.4)
Scream	1(0.4)	Hope	2(0.8)
Thunder/ lightning	1(0.4)	Exam	1(0.4)
Punishment	6(2.4)	Thanos	1(0.4)
Price	3(1.2)	Knife	8(3.2)
Handcuff	1(0.4)	Trouble	10(4.0)
Problem affecting social life	6(2.4)	Torture	53(21.4)
Cage	1(0.4)	Nothingness	1(0.4)
Snare	1(0.4)	Agony	5(2.0)
Knotted rope	1(0.4)	Ordeal	5(2.0)
Gum	1(0.4)	Helplessness	14(5.7)
Pangs of love	2(0.8)	Fire	3(1.2)
Separation	2(0.8)	An event that recurs every time	1(0.4)
Whirlpool	1(0.4)	Variable	4(1.6)
Stress	1(0.4)	Uncertainty	8(3.2)
Fright	3(1.2)	Electricity	4(1.6)
Painful feeling	6(2.4)	Nightmare	9(3.6)
Noise	1(0.4)	Disaster	7(2.8)
Delibal	1(0.4)	Cruelty	17(6.9)
Ink	1(0.4)	Eternity	1(0.4)
Life	1(0.4)	Space	1(0.4)
Departure from this world	5(2.0)	Death	15(6.1)
Suicide	1(0.4)		

1.1.Sign/ Stimulus

Participants who described pain using metaphors such as rescuer, protector, signal, warning, traffic light, scream and thunder described pain as a signal, a warning for their bodies. Participants who stated these metaphors stated that pain was an indicator of something wrong in their bodies and warned them. It has been stated that pain is a rescuer because it warns the individual. In addition, one participant likened pain to a traffic light and said that it gave information about where to stop and where to take action. Another participant described it to a scream and explained it as the body's call for help. Another participant resembled it to thunder and stated that just as thunder is a harbinger of rain, pain is a harbinger of things going wrong in the body.

- It is like a traffic light, it indicates where I should stop and where I should take action.
- Because it informs what will come next. Just as thunder announces it will rain. Pain indicates that something is wrong with the body.

1.2. Guilt

Some participants stated that pain is the punishment, the price of a crime or what they did.

- Pain is like punishment for me. You commit a crime and end up with a transaction that you are not happy with, or it is the same with pain. Pain is a punishment to my body, it makes me feel restless and unhappy.
- Every time I experience pain, I think of it as the price of my actions.

Table 3. Categories of participants related to pain

Categories	Metafor	Categories	Metafor
1 Sign/ stimulus	Rescuer Protector Signal Warning Traffic light Scream	8 Tangle	Gum Pangs of love Separation Whirlpool Stress
	Thunder/ lightning		An event that recurs every time Variable Uncertainty
2 Guilt	Punishment Price	10 Intimidation	Fright Terrible Painful feeling
3 Captive	Handcuff Problem affecting social life Cage Snare Knotted rope		Noise
	Lesson Valuable A bad meal Memory	11 Threat/danger	Electricity Trouble Scourge Nightmare Disaster Cruelty
4 Learn one's lesson/Take a lesson	Climbing a mountain		Delibal
5 Struggle	Hope Exam	12 Balance	Ink Life
	Thanos Knife		Eternity Space Death
6 Enemy	Trouble Torture	13 Infinite space	Departure from this world Suicide Nothingness
	Agony Ordeal Helplessness Fire		

1.3. Captive

While some participants stated that pain was a problem affecting their social lives, some participants stated that pain made them feel prisoner. Participants who felt like a prisoner explained this with metaphors such as being handcuffed, being in a cage, being snared, and being wrapped with a rope.

- The handcuff binds my hand and arm, I cannot move, it is the same with pain. You want to get rid of it, but you can't, it binds you.

- ...when I have pain, I feel like I'm locked in a cage, no matter what I do, I can't get out.

1.4. Learn One's Lesson/Take a Lesson

Some participants stated that pain was a lesson for them and taught them something. One participant likened the pain to a bad meal and

said that he should take the necessary precautions to avoid being exposed to the same pain again. One participant stated that the pain was a bad memory that he did not want to remember, another participant explained that pain made him feel how precious his life was. One participant said that pain is a valuable thing and helps to appreciate the pain-free times.

- ...every time when I experience pain, I learn a lesson from it. I think there are things I shouldn't do to avoid pain again. I learn something new every time.
- ...in my painful times, as if I had a bad meal, I think that I should never eat again, I try to take precautions to avoid being exposed to it.

1.5. Struggle

Some participants described pain as an experience to be struggled with and explained it with the metaphors of climbing a mountain, hope and testing. The participant, who likened the pain to climbing a mountain, talked about his belief that he would eventually reach the summit and that the pain would pass. One participant stated that he believed that he would get good results if he managed this struggle well.

- For me, pain is like climbing a mountain because I believe that eventually I will reach the summit, and therefore the pain will end.
- I feel like I am in an exam. If I manage well, it will be good, but if I manage badly, the results will affect me in every way.

1.6. Enemy

The participants, who compared pain to Thanos and a knife, explained that pain hurt like an enemy. One participant, who stated that he experienced knife-like pain, said that the pain made him miserable and it was an unforgettable experience.

- It's like THANOS, because it destroys me as well as IRONMAN.
- Pain is like a sharp knife. It injures everything it touches. When I had covid, I experienced pain like stabbing, it devastated me, I can't forget it

for the rest of my life. Just as the knife is the enemy of the cut objects, so is the pain for us.

1.7. Torment

Some participants explained pain with metaphors such as trouble, torture, agony, ordeal, helplessness and fire. They drew attention to the aspect of pain that leaves the person helpless and torments both the soul and the body.

- For me pain is helplessness, because after a while you can't do anything, you don't know what to do.
- Pain is like fire, when it catches fire, it is very difficult to stop, the flame envelops the whole body and torments the person.

1.8. Tangle

The participants, who draw attention to the complex aspect of the pain, explained this using gum, pangs of love, separation, vortex and stress metaphors. A participant stated that the pain was like a gum sticking to the hair, that it was difficult and affected the entire body. Some participants likened pain to the suffer the pangs of love, separation and stress, which complicates the feelings, causes them to disperse, and exhausts the person mentally and physically. Another participant likened the pain to a vortex that engulfs the person and hurls it from place to place.

- Pain is like gum sticking to the hair because the more you try to remove it from the hair, the more it disperses and sticks, and as a result, you have a tangled hair and you want it to pass, but it affects your whole body both physically and psychologically.
- Pain is likened pangs of love, it surrounds you both mentally and physically, your emotions and feelings become confused.

1.9. Riddle

The participants, who stated that there was uncertainty about when the pain would be experienced, how long it would last and how it would be felt, explained the pain with the metaphors of a recurring event, variable and uncertainty. While one participant stated that

this uncertainty destroyed people, another participant stated that no matter how much pain she experienced, she always felt as if she was experiencing it for the first time.

- For me, pain is like an event that recurs every time, because when a place hurts, the feeling of pain is familiar, but I feel as if I am experiencing it for the first time.
- ... uncertainty is not clear when it will end, or often when it will come, this uncertainty destroys people.

1.10. Intimidation

The participants, who drew attention to the painful, frightening aspect of the pain and required measures to prevent it from happening again, explained the pain with the metaphors of horror, terrible, painful emotion and noisy. Participants using these metaphors stated that pain forced the person to cope with himself, made him feel helpless, was like a nightmare, was mind-blowing, and condemned him to do anything to avoid experiencing it again.

- Pain is as fright as its name. It is a situation that forces the person to cope with himself and requires effort so that it does not happen again.
- Pain is like a disturbing noise. Because pain, just like noise, blows my mind and I don't want to live.

1.11. Threat/Danger

Participants, who drew attention to the dangerous aspect of pain and stated that it was a threat, explained pain with metaphors such as electricity, trouble, nightmare, disaster and cruelty.

- When I have pain, it shakes me as if I had been electrocuted. It says just as it is dangerous in electric fields, do not approach it. It should be said that it is dangerous in pain, stay away.
- It's like a nightmare, it's like you had a nightmare and you want to wake up or you want to get rid of the pain.

1.12. Balance

Some participants, who stated that pain should be in balance in the body, explained pain

with metaphors such as delibal, ink and life. One participant, who argued that the body needs pain just as the pen needs ink, said that pain that exceeds the balance and is severe harms the body. Similarly, another participant likened the pain to "DELİBAL (honey collected from poisonous flowers or made by bumblebees, which are known to be unruly and aggressive)" and mentioned that few of them benefit the body and most of them harm the body, and that when the pain is too much, it harms the body. The participant who likened pain to life stated that pain should be in balance like life.

- Pain is like Delibal for me. Like the Delibal plant, it can be beneficial for the body when it is used less, and when it is more than necessary, it can make you unbearable. Pain is just like that, less is more.
- For me, pain is like ink, because just like a pen needs ink, our body also needs pain, but if you put too much ink on the pen, the pain will hurt us as it gets worse.

1.13. Infinite space

Some participants explained pain with metaphors of eternity, space, death, detachment from the world, suicide and nothingness. Participants who stated that pain meant eternity evaluated pain as the beginning of something and described it as an endless void. Some participants, who likened pain to death, expressed pain as the death of the lower units of the body, the migration of cells, the end of life, leaving the world and leaving the world's beauties. One participant, who described the pain as suicide, explained the pain as the body's suicide by leaving itself in the void. One participant, who described pain as nothingness, stated that everything loses its meaning in the presence of pain and it has an aspect that distracts the individual from everything.

- It is like space, because there is no end to pain. It is definitely the beginning of something and there is no end.
- Because pain is like the body letting itself go into space, that is, it commits suicide. The body leaves itself to an endless void.

DISCUSSION

Pain is a personal experience that affects the individual's quality of life and is affected by many biological, psychological and social factors (2,18). In this study, in which students' metaphors about pain were examined, students explained pain as a problem that affects their daily lives and prevents them from many activities, and they stated that this situation restricts them as if they were in captivity. Pain causes a decrease in quality of life and causes individuals to have difficulty in daily life activities due to its effects and reactions in the body (19).

Students expressed pain as a response of the body and a sign or stimulus for problems. One participant explained pain as an experience of the body that needs to be acted upon, like a traffic sign. In the study of Leake et al. (2021), it is stated that pain is a stimulus, protects us, and provides our security against certain things, similar to our study (20). Bullo and Hearn (2021) stated in their study that endometriosis pain is an experience that stimulates the individual such as car alarms and loud noises (21). Pain is a complex protective mechanism. It is an important part of evolution that protects the body from danger and harm. It serves as an alarm system that protects the organism from tissue damage (22).

In this study, the students stated that they learned a lesson from the pain they experienced and realized that life and health are valuable. In a study in which the perceptions of nurses working in intensive care were determined, it was stated that pain is a physiological response and a valuable symptom for the body (23). Pain experiences are important because they will affect the individual's next pain response and behavior (2). This is related to individuals' past pain experiences, how they feel in this experience, what they experience and how they manage the process (24).

Some of the participants stated that pain is the punishment given to the body, the price of what they have done. They called the pain they experienced as torment and stated that it leaves the person helpless, torture, suffering and ordeal. Some participants stated that they felt

guilty about this punishment and the troubles they had experienced, and that that they perceived pain as an enemy and likened it to the metaphor of a damaging object. Bullo and Hearn (2021), in a study conducted with women on endometriosis pain, compared the pain to a sharp material like a knife and stated that it causes physical damage to the body, and that pain has an overwhelming power that makes it incapacitating (21). Similarly, in a study by Munday et al. (2020) on chronic pain, participants defined pain as a sharp, blunt object that causes physical damage (25). The word "pain" is derived from the Greek "poine" and Latin "poena" meaning punishment. In ancient times, pain was thought to be the wrath of the gods and the price of sins (6,26).

Participants stated that they experienced uncertainty about when the pain would be occur, how long it would last and how it would be felt, and that the pain was variable and uncertain. Considering the concepts expressed by individuals, the concept of pain means struggle and war for a group, while it means threat/danger for a group. Some participants likened pain to climbing a mountain, hope and struggle. They stated that it would be good if they managed this process well. If the process is managed well, this is an opportunity to understand the body's reactions or to prevent a worse situation. Some participants stated that pain is a disaster and that, just like people with problems, pain cannot be resolved on its own. Leake et al. (2021) conducted a mixed-method study in which they evaluated the pain perceptions of individuals experiencing pain. In that study, "pain does not mean my body is damaged and I can retrain my overprotective pain system" was among the themes (20). It is thought that when the uncertainty and unknown situation become inextricable, it becomes confused and puts the individual in a dead end. Some participants used the tangle metaphor of this obscurity and uncertainty. They likened pain to a situation that makes the feelings confused, causes the individual to disperse, and exhausts the person mentally and physically, the pang of love, separation and stress. Pain is subjective and changes with life experiences, and the concept of pain is learned with this

experience (2). Chronic pain interferes with different aspects of an individual's life and may negatively affect their activities of daily living, physical and mental health, family and social relationships, and interactions in business life (19). These problems can lead individuals into complexity, make the situation unmanageable, and in this case lead individuals into uncertainty. Uncertainty and unknown situation frighten individuals and can be exhausting for individuals (27). This uncertainty experienced by individuals results in danger and opportunity as in Mishel's uncertainty theory (28).

The participants stated that pain leads the individual to nothingness, death, and the feeling of being in a void. Some studies have also reported that pain evokes the feeling of death in individuals. Bullo and Hearn (2021) stated in their study that endometriosis pain is a pain that brings people face to face with death and that it affects all senses such as vision and hearing negatively (21). In the study conducted by Munday et al. (2020), the participants described that they felt painful body parts as if they were not a part of themselves or that they could not control their own bodies, and stated that it was something like death (25). It is thought that this situation arises from the pain experience that individuals have experienced before and that they do not want to experience the same pain process again. In addition to the physiological effects of pain, psycho-social behaviors such as pain beliefs, attitudes, fear of pain and experiences, and individual coping methods should be evaluated as well as the response to pain (29). Difficult pain experience and poor management of pain causes fear of pain in individuals (30). Fear of pain not only causes pain avoidance behaviors, but can also affect the individual's daily life activities and cause the pain intensity to be perceived incorrectly (31). Fear of pain and the state of uncertainty also cause death anxiety (32).

Limitations

The limitation of this study is that an equal number of participants from each university in each region could not be reached.

CONCLUSION

The students explained pain from various perspectives. Some students mentioned its benefits for the body and stated that it gives a warning to the body. Others focused on the reason, stated that it was punishment, and talked about feelings of guilt. Some students, on the other hand, focused on the severe symptoms they experienced while experiencing pain and stated that these symptoms tortured them. They attributed this tormenting experience to the enemy and described the situation as a struggle. It is possible to see the complex and multidimensional structure of pain from the expressions of the students. For this reason, while explaining pain to nursing students, its multidimensional structure should be explained. Students should be guided so that they can understand the individual experiencing pain and be able to intervene effectively.

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Ethical statement

Ethical permission was obtained from the University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee (2023/116) for this research. In the research link sent to the students, the aim of the research was explained firstly and the participants were informed about the research. Students who wanted to participate in the study were asked to continue the study by checking the box "I agree to participate in the study"

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