



Stress and Coping among the under Graduate Nursing Students A Cross Sectional Study

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Stress among nursing students is an area of growing concern. Nursing students during their professional life undergo stress which may result in psychological distress, physical complaints, behavior problem, and poor academic performance. This study was undertaken to assess the level of stress and coping among the nursing students'.

Material and Methods: A Descriptive Cross Sectional study was carried out in the year 2015 among 346 nursing students in a selected college at Chidambaram taluk, Tamil Nadu. Data were collected by using demographic profile and Modified Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and Coping Questionnaire for Adolescents (CQA) to assess the stress and coping level of the participants. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

Results: The findings revealed that the overall stress level among nursing students, were under mild stress(27%), moderate stress(65%) and high stress (8%) and also the coping level among nursing students, had poor coping (4%), mild coping (43%), moderate coping (45%) and good coping (8%).

Conclusion: From this study, the researcher highlights that an effective intervention strategies have to be taught to the B.Sc. nursing students to relieve stress by developing good coping mechanism during their training period to promote stress free life.

Keywords: Nursing students, Stress, Coping

INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization, stress is a significant problem of our times and affects both physical as well as the mental health of people. Stress is defined as a situation where the organism's homeostasis is threatened or the organism perceives a situation as threatening. Stress coping methods are the cognitive, behavioral and psychological efforts to deal with stress (4). Stress in nursing students is an area of growing concern. Nursing students during their professional life undergo stress due to various stressors and it may result in psychological distress, physical problems & behavior problem, which in turn leads to poor academic performance. Nursing students are valuable human resources. Detection of potential stress among nursing students is crucial since stress can lead to low productivity, low quality of life, and suicidal ideas. Identifying factors affecting stress among nursing students can help nursing educators to find ways to decrease stress. (1) Therefore, the researcher had special attention in exploring the stress and coping level experienced by the B.Sc. nursing students during their course of study.

1.1. Objectives:

1. To assess the stress and coping level among the B.Sc nursing students.

Limitation:

The study is limited to

- Assess the stress and coping level of the undergraduate nursing students

- Only those who were present during the time of data collection were included for the study.

Methods:

Design and Sampling:

A quantitative approach with descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted during the year 2015. By using convenient sampling technique, 346 under graduate students' nurses from four years were selected as samples from the selected college at Chidambaram taluk, Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu. The samples who were not willing as well as who availed leave during the time of data collection were excluded from the study.

Instruments:

The demographic data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire. (Section A), Modified Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) (Section B) developed by Sheu et al.,(2002) to assess the stress level of the subject was used. It is a five-point likert scale that consisted of 29 items .Each item was scored on a scale of 0(never), 1(almost never), 2(sometimes), 3(fairly often) and 4(very often).

Level of Stress	Mean Scores	Score	%
High Stress	2.67- 4.00	88-116	76-100
Moderate Stress	1.34- 2.66	59-87	51-75
Mild Stress	0 -1.33	0-58	01-50

The scaling was used as follows by using the mean score and Coping Questionnaire for Adolescents (CQA) (Section C) was developed by Schweitzer et al (1995). It consisted of 32- items self- report questionnaire with 4-point likert scale, designed to assess the thinking and means used by the subjects to cope with stressful situations. The rating scale was scored as 0- I did not use, 1- I used this some of the time, 2- I used this quite a bit of the time and 3- I used this almost all of the time. The following scaling was used

Level of Coping	Percentage	Score
Poor Coping	01-25%	<24
Mild Coping	26-50%	25-48
Moderate Coping	51-75%	49-72
Stay Happy & Good Coping	76-100	73-96

Data collection and Analysis:

The study was conducted after obtaining approval from the Institutional Human Ethical Clearance. After seeking permission from the authority, written informed consent was obtained from all the participants before the data collection. The self administered questionnaire was distributed to all the samples without disturbing their class schedule for 10-15 minutes and then collected. Confidentiality was ensured.

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic variables and to assess the stress and coping level of the nursing students. The inferential statistics like mean and standard deviation, ANOVA and LSD post HOC test were used to investigate the association between stress and coping level with demographic variables. The probability value $p < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Results:

The study revealed that, the majority of the subjects were 27% in the age group of 18- 18.9 years, 27% were in 4th year, 59.8% were living in the hostel, 46.5% were born as 1st child, 68.8% had own choice in selection of course, 44% with less than Rs.5000 as family monthly income, 52.6% of subjects spent 3-5 hours for studying/ day, 39% of subjects had more than 8 hours sleep/day.

Table 1: Overall Stress Level of the Under Graduate Nursing Students

N: 346

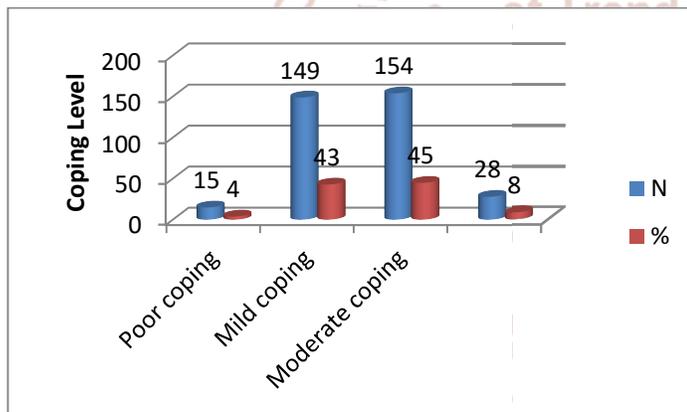
S.No	Level of Stress	N	%
1.	Mild Stress	92	27
2.	Moderate Stress	225	65
3.	High Stress	29	8

Table 1: depicts the overall level of stress of the under graduate nursing students, Out of 346 subjects, 65% had moderate stress, 27% had mild stress and only 8% were highly stressed

Table 2: Coping Level of the Under Graduate Nursing Students

S.No	Level of Coping	N	%
1.	Poor coping	15	4
2.	Mild coping	149	43
3.	Moderate coping	154	45
4.	Good coping and Stay happy	28	8

Table 2 depicts the coping level of the under graduate nursing students. Among 346 subjects, the study revealed that the coping level among the subjects were 154(45%) had moderate level of coping, 149(43%) had mild level of coping, 28(8%) had good level of coping and stay happy and 15(4%) had poor level of coping.

Fig. 1. Coping Level of the Undergraduate Nursing Students**Discussion:**

In **table 1** the present study showed that, 65% had moderate stress, 27% had mild stress and 8% had high stress among the nursing students which were consistent with the findings of studies conducted by Anu Jose M. J. (2016) to assess the level and factors contributing to stress among the nursing students. The results elicited that 68% had moderate stress, 27% had mild stress and only 5% had severe stress (6). Further findings quoted by Sharma, N. & Kaur, A. (2011) revealed that 97% of the subjects had moderate level of stress whereas 3% had severe stress (7) which was also congruent with the findings of the present study.

The **table 2** showed that out of 346 subjects, 45% had moderate level of coping, 43% had mild level of coping, 8% had good level of coping and stay happy, and 4% had poor level of coping..The present study results correlated with the findings of Khater WA et.al., (2014) revealed that most common coping behavior utilized by the students was problem solving among nursing students in Jordan. Further results showed by Shiferaw HN et.al (2015) quoted that unhealthy coping strategies ($p<0.005$) were used by students irrespective of ethnicity, marital status and educational levels.

Conclusion:

Therefore, stress is common among the nursing students during their course of nursing education. The researcher highlights that an effective intervention strategies involving aerobic exercises, yoga, counseling etc. may be helpful for the nursing students to overcome from their stress during their professional life to make them to be productive and effective.

“The key is to find an activity that you enjoy and valuing yourself enough to take the time to engage in that activity,” said Mariela Gabaroni, associate director of Student Health Services. “It is all relative to the individual, their time management and the choices they make that can facilitate their learning process.”(2)

“No one can calm the ocean’s waves, but by stress management techniques one can learn to surf the ocean”

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