



A STUDY TO ASSESS THE LEVEL OF PERCEIVED STRESS AMONG FOURTH YEAR B.SC. NURSING STUDENTS DURING THEIR MATERNITY NURSING CLINICAL POSTING IN A SELECTED COLLEGE OF NURSING, THRISSUR

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

Nursing students face not only academic stress but stress at work during their training period.

Aim: The study aims to assess the level of perceived stress among fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students during their Maternity Nursing clinical posting.

Methods: The descriptive study was conducted among seventy fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students of Westfort College of Nursing, Thrissur. Perceived Stress Scale was used to collect data from the students at the end of one week of their clinical posting.

Results: Among the seventy students, 31.43% were having low level of stress, 61.43% were having moderate level of stress and 7.14% were having severe level of stress. The factors showed that stress from teachers and nursing staff was the highest stress factor.

Conclusion: Measures should be taken to reduce the level of stress among nursing students during their clinical posting.

KEYWORDS

Stress, stress factors, nursing students

INTRODUCTION

Stress refers to a dynamic interaction between the individual and the environment. In this interaction, demands, limitations and opportunities related to work may be perceived as threatening to surpass the individual's resources and skills. In case of disarrangement, this interaction may lead to cognitive, emotional and behavioural alterations. Nursing students face not only academic stress but stress at work during their training period. One focus of interest in research on stress at work is the sources of stress, or stressors, which interact and contribute to the onset of stress in organizational settings. Some of the most common stressors are time pressures, workload, making decisions, continuous changes and economic mistakes at work. Stress is a psychological factor that influences the academic performance and welfare of nursing students. This has led to the development of a large body of research aimed at determining the levels and sources of stress in the training of future nurses. Three main groups of stressors have been identified: (i) academic stressors (testing and evaluation, fear of failure in training, problems with workload, etc.), (ii) clinical stressors (work, fear of making mistakes, negative responses to the death or suffering of patients, relationships with other members of the organization, etc.), and (iii) personal/social stressors (economic problems, imbalance between housework/schoolwork, etc.)⁽¹⁾

Statement of the problem

A study to assess the level of perceived stress among fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students during their Maternity Nursing clinical posting in a selected College of Nursing, Thrissur.

Objectives of the study

- To assess the level of perceived stress among fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students during their Maternity Nursing clinical posting.
- To associate the level of perceived stress among fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students with their selected demographic variables.

Operational Definitions

- Assess: In this study, assess refers to estimate the level of stress among fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students.
- Perceived stress: In this study, perceived stress means a reaction to the stimulus in the clinical environment that disturbs physical or mental equilibrium.

Research Approach: The research approach used for the study is quantitative approach.

Research Design: The research design used for the study is descriptive design.

Setting: Westfort College of Nursing, Thrissur.

Sampling: The study was conducted on all students of fourth year B.Sc. Nursing in Westfort College of Nursing.

Inclusion criteria

Sampling criteria are the characteristics essential for inclusion in the target population. For this study, inclusion criteria are as follows.

Fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students during Maternity Nursing clinical posting.

Exclusion criteria

Students with any existing disease conditions that can affect their clinical learning.

Students unwilling to participate in the study.

Sample size: Seventy fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students.

Development and description of tools

Section I Socio demographic data sheet developed by the investigator

This section deals with demographic characteristics which cover seven aspects such as age, basic educational qualification, socioeconomic status, source of payment of fees, academic excellence in previous years, reason to join nursing and accommodation. This section primarily focuses on to assess the demographic factors that can influence the psychological and physical states of the fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students and to associate its effects on the study results. The data was collected by the investigator herself with the help of questionnaire filled by the subjects.

Section II Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) (Sheila Sheu et al, 2002)

To examine nursing students' stress levels and types of stressors, the PSS was utilized. This instrument was developed by Sheu et al in 2002. It is a five-point Likert-type scale that consists of 29 items grouped into six factors, labeled as follows:

'Stress from taking care of patients' (8 items), 'Stress from teachers and nursing staff' (6 items), 'Stress from assignments and workload' (5 items), 'Stress from peers and daily life' (4 items), 'Stress from lack of professional knowledge and skills' (3 items), and 'Stress from clinical environment' (3 items). Each item is rated on a five-point Likert scale (0=never, 1=almost never, 2=sometimes, 3=fairly often and 4=very often). Usually, both total scores and individual subscale scores are measured. Higher scores indicate higher level of stress. To determine the level of stress, the following scaling was used;

2.67 – 4.00 for Severe Stress,
1.34 – 2.66 for Moderate Stress, and
0 – 1.33 for Mild Stress.

This instrument showed internal-consistency reliability and test-retest reliability with a statistical value of 0.87. (Cronbach's alpha)

Data Collection Process

After obtaining ethical clearance and permission from the setting, 70

subjects fulfilling the inclusion and exclusion criteria was selected. The investigator obtained written consent from all the subjects before collecting data. Data was collected by asking subjects to fill up socio-demographic data sheet and perceived stress scale at the end of first week of their clinical posting. Then the data is analyzed.

Data Analysis

The data obtained was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Descriptive statistics

Frequency
Percentage

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Among the seventy students, 31.43% were having mild stress, 61.43% were having moderate stress and 7.14% were having severe stress.

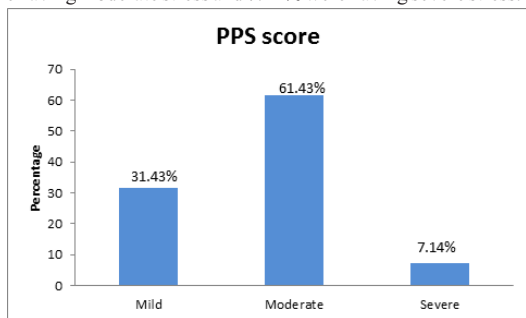


Fig.1: Level of stress according to PPS scores

The researcher analyzed the factors that influence the perceived stress among students and the results are as follows.

Table. 1: Frequency and percentage of levels of stress among nursing students

Stress factors	Mild		Moderate		Severe	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Stress from taking care of patients	37	52.86	20	28.57	13	18.57
Stress from teachers and nursing staff	19	27.14	35	50	16	22.86
Stress from assignments and workload	31	44.29	34	48.57	5	7.14
Stress from peers and daily life	29	41.43	35	50	6	8.57
Stress from lack of professional knowledge and skills	22	31.43	42	60	6	8.57
Stress from clinical environment	40	57.14	18	25.72	12	17.14

The students were experiencing highest level of stress from the stress factor, stress from teachers and nursing staff. This may affect their learning experience negatively.

CONCLUSION

The study shows light to the fact that our nursing students are experiencing stress during their clinical posting due to several factors. Certain modifications should be made to different factors that leads to stress in order to facilitate clinical learning experience. Teachers and nursing staff remains the highest sources of stress among students and this is a very sad reality. We have to act at the earliest to revert the situation and to make the clinical learning experience a pleasant one.

Recommendations

More research studies should be conducted to find out the measures to reduce the level of stress among nursing students. As teachers and nursing staff act as the highest sources of stress among students, any alternative methods should be introduced to enhance the learning experience such as any preceptorship models of clinical teaching.

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