

# Stress Among General Nursing Students and B.Sc. Nursing Students from Selected Nursing Institutes in Lucknow

Jomet George

*Research Scholar, Department of Nursing, Shri Venkateshwara University, Lucknow, India*

**Abstract:** This paper presents an overview on stress among general nursing students and B.Sc. nursing students from selected nursing institutes in Lucknow.

**Keywords:** Stress, Nursing Students

## 1. Introduction

Stress is common among people under pressure and busy people like managers and students who are expected to maintain standards and meet deadlines. College students especially freshmen are a group particularly prone to stress and this is due to the transitional nature of college life. They must adjust to being away from home for the first time, maintain high level of academic achievement, adjust to heavy workload in limited time, crowded lecture halls, harsh learning conditions as well as to a new social environment.

Past research has shown that stress affect everyone. This is because everything, good or bad can produce stress if it in some way present us with a challenge. Anything that makes one adjust, adapt, or change is stress. Most of the literature on stress consistently attest to the fact that life changes or transition can predispose a person to stress and that both negative and positive events in our lives such as failing an examination, having problems with roommates, illness in the family, getting married or divorce, getting promoted or fired, moving to a new locality or going to the university can produce stress. Life changes, daily hassles, home life and acculturation - the process of adapting and becoming integrated with a new cultural environment, have therefore been identified as sources of stress. If stress affects everyone, it implies that students, teachers, parents, children, business people among others live with stress.

There has also been an increased interest in stress research in recent times in developing countries among students and workers. The soaring interest in stress research is probably because we live in a world that includes many stressful circumstances and stress has been tagged a global phenomenon. It has become an integral part of life and is said to be the price we all pay for the struggle to stay alive. According to the American Academy of Family physicians, two- thirds of office visits to family doctors are for stress related problems. The training of nursing students are unique and mainly involves

clinical training at the hospitals in addition to the academic training they receive on campus. They may therefore experience unique stressors. Most past studies have also focused on nurses and not nursing students. For example, Past research reports that stress is intrinsic to nursing which is a high demanding job with poor support, rapidly changing circumstances, shortage of resources and staff. This is despite the fact that previous research in western countries have found high levels of stress among nursing students due to the clinical experience and exposure to unfamiliar circumstances leading to low confidence. In addition, nursing students are exposed to sources of stress such as separation from home, financial worries, regular clinical and educational assessment and frequently changing clinical environments.

## 2. Methodology

### A. Research setting

This study was conducted at the selected Nursing institutes in Lucknow. Many number Colleges and schools of nursing are running in Lucknow, thus enroll a large number of students from all over the state to study towards the award of diploma in General nursing or degree in nursing.

### B. Sample and sampling technique

The stratified random sampling technique was used to select a total sample of 273 nursing students (136 B.Sc. Nursing students and 137 GNM students) from selected college and school of nursing from Lucknow.

### C. Research design

The cross-sectional survey method was used to gather data since it is the most appropriate technique in assessing the stress experienced by the students.

### D. Instrument

Data collection was done using self-constructed survey questionnaire. The Questionnaire consisted of two main sections. Section A consisted of items on demographic data such as age, gender, marital status, academic discipline (course type) and year of study. Section B consisted of 21 structured items on variables causing stress among students.

### 3. Procedure

Permission for the conduct of the study was first sought from the principals of the selected college and nursing schools. Teachers from the colleges who some of the researchers know then assisted the researchers with the selection and data collection process. Students who were selected were then made to complete the questionnaire some minutes before their classes began for immediate collection by researchers and assistants. It took respondents about twenty minutes to answer the questionnaire.

### 4. Results

The first hypothesis stated that the students will report severe level of stress. Various levels of stress reported among students varied depending on the type of stressor. Respondents reported severe levels of stress for both Academic ( $M = 13.76$ ,  $SD = 3.60$ ) and Personal ( $M = 14.29$ ,  $SD = 3.94$ ) Stressors while for Social Stressors it was moderate ( $M = 12.32$ ,  $SD = 3.64$ ). There was also severe Overall Stress among them ( $M = 13.45$ ,  $SD = 2.87$ ).

The second hypothesis stated that there will be a significant difference in the reported levels of the various categories of stress among the students. The categories of stress include Academic, Personal and Social stressors. A One-Way Repeated ANOVA was used to test this hypothesis. There was a significant difference in the reported levels of the various categories of stress,  $F(2, 271) = 33.83$ ,  $P < .0005$ , eta squared = .20. A post hoc pairwise comparison using Turkey's HSD reveals that a significant difference exists between Academic and Social stressors and between Personal and Academic stressors. In terms of ranking, the highest stressors were Personal, followed by Academic and finally Social stressors. This implies that students experienced more Personal stressors compared to the other categories of stressors.

The third hypothesis stated that there will be a significant difference in the level of stress with regards to Academic discipline or Course type. This hypothesis is concerned with whether the reported levels of stress would vary among the respondents with regards to the course they offer.

A One – Way ANOVA was used to compare the differences in the mean levels with regards to the academic discipline. There was no significant difference in the various categories of stress with regards to academic discipline. Students offering General Nursing reported similar levels of the various categories of stress as compared to those students from Lucknow. There was also no significant difference in overall stress with regards to discipline. The scores for SRN students ( $M=39.32$ ,  $SD=6.79$ ) is similar to that of BSc Nursing ( $M=41.24$ ,  $SD=9.41$ ) and GNM ( $M=39.11$ ,  $SD=8.64$ ), [ $F(2, 270) = 1.801$ ,  $P = .167$ , two-tailed]. Therefore, students of all disciplines reported similar level of overall stress.

The fourth hypothesis to be tested stated that there will be a significant difference in the level of stress among male and female students. This hypothesis is concerned with whether the

reported levels of stress would vary among the respondents with regards to their gender. The Independent Sample t- test was used to compare the differences in the mean levels of the categories of stress and the overall stress among male and female respondents.

There was no statistically significant difference in the reported levels of the various categories of stress among male and female students. There was also no significant difference in overall stress among the two groups. The stress scores for Males ( $M=39.32$ ,  $SD=6.79$ ) is similar to that of females ( $M=41.24$ ,  $SD=9.41$ ), [ $t(271) = -.314$ ,  $p = .754$ , two-tailed].

The final hypothesis to be tested stated that there will be a significant difference in the level of stress with regards to marital status. This hypothesis is concerned with whether the reported levels of stress would vary among the respondents with regards to their marital status. A One – Way ANOVA was used to compare the differences in the mean levels of stress among the three groups, that is Single, Married and “Other” respondents. The “other” group consist of respondents who were separated/divorced or widowed.

Married respondents reported significantly higher levels of academic stress ( $M = 15.49$ ,  $SD = 4.27$ ), [ $F(270) = 1.11$ ,  $p = .042$ , two-tailed] as compared to single ( $M=13.65$ ,  $SD = 3.51$ ) and “other” respondents ( $M = 13.89$ ,  $SD = 3.37$ ). The effect size was .006. There was however no significant differences in personal and social stressors as well as overall level of stress among the respondents with regards to marital status.

### 5. Discussion and conclusion

Stress is a global phenomenon and affects everyone. The incidence of stress among students can have serious and negative effects on their health and studies. Knowledge of the stressors and their severity among nursing students in the nursing training colleges can be helpful in effective management and counselling of the students on how to cope and adapt to stressors. Researchers are therefore interested in assessing level of stress among various categories of students.

The first objective of the study was to examine the level of stress in terms of its severity among the students. The results indicated that the students generally experienced or reported severe levels of stress thus supporting the hypothesis.

The second objective was to examine which type or category of stress was reported more by the students. The stress categories are Academic, Personal and Social stressors. The results show that students experienced or reported significantly higher Personal stressors compared to the other categories of stressors.

The third objective was to examine the differences in the levels of stress with regards to academic discipline or Course type. The findings showed that there was no significant difference in the various categories of stress with regards to academic discipline or course type.

The final objective was to assess the differences in level of stress with regards to the biographical variables of Gender and

Marital status. The findings indicate that there was no statistically significant difference in the reported levels of the various categories of stress among male and female students. There was also no significant difference in overall stress among the two groups. Based on the above findings, recommendations were made for stakeholders and future researchers

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