

Stress and its Associated Factors among Students in Selected Nursing Institutes in Guwahati, Assam: An Exploratory Study

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Abstract: ***Introduction:** Stress in nursing education is acknowledged as one of the most important issues in the modern world. The aim of this study is to find out the level of stress in nursing students, the factors associated with stress. **Material and Methods:** This exploratory study was conducted in selected Nursing Institutes in Guwahati, Assam. 198 nursing students were selected for the study. **Results:** The findings revealed that majority (70.2%) had moderate stress. With regard to factors related to hostel: poor quality of food (63.13%), academic: too many assignments (93.43%), examination: difficulty in remembering the topics (82.32%), clinical duty: too many assignments to write. (88.38%), personal matter: missing family members (69.70%), not getting proper sleep (69.70%). **Conclusion:** The findings of the study confirm that nursing students experience moderate level of stress. For this reason, there is need for proper stress management technique.*

Keywords: stress, nursing, nursing students, stress factors

1. Introduction

Nursing can be described as both an art and a science; a heart and a mind. At its heart, lies a fundamental respect for human dignity and an intuition for a patient's needs.¹ B. Sc Nursing course focuses on imparting knowledge to students on critical care, and advanced analytical skills, and helps them inculcate values that are necessary for becoming professional nurses as per the National Health Policy 2002. This program is designed to help students address the healthcare sector's needs of the nation, society, and individuals. During these 4 years students have to complete tons of assignments, seminars, presentation, clinical exposure, field visits, and college and university examination. Stress in nursing education is acknowledged as one of the most important issues in the modern world.²

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. Stress is any physical or psychological stimulus that disturbs the adaptive state and provoked a coping response.³

Stress in nursing education is acknowledged as one of the most important issues in the modern world. The students also face a lot of stress due to imbalance of academic, social performances and time management for extra - curricular activities from education. Academic stress in the students who are unable to maintain balance between their academic activities, social, emotion and family.⁴

In today's highly competitive world, students face various academic problems including exam stress, disinterest in attending classes and inability to understand the subject. Academic stress is the feeling of anxiety or apprehension over one's performance in the academic activities. It can lead

to students being unable to perform to the best of their abilities in examinations.⁵

Objectives:

- To assess the level of stress among the nursing students in a selected nursing institutes in Guwahati, Assam.
- To find the association between stress and the selected demographic variables.
- To find out the factors causing stress among the nursing students.

2. Material and Methods

The study was conducted at five selected nursing institutes namely Dispur Nursing Institute, Army Institute of Nursing, Pratiksha College of nursing, CPMS college of nursing, Rahman institute of Nursing and Paramedical science, in Guwahati, Assam from 22nd November to 20th December 2022. Total sample consists of 198 B. Sc nursing first, second and third year students.

After getting permission the investigator visited the college on the given dates and was introduced to the students who fulfilled the pre - determined selection criteria. The purpose of the study was explained and a written informed consent was taken from the students. The data was collected by using self administered questionnaire. It comprised of Socio - demographic profile, and a factor checklist of stress of five areas, (hostel, academic, examination, clinical duty, personal matter)

A standardized numerical rating scale (PSS) from 0 - 4 score in which 0= Never 1= Almost Never 2 = Sometimes 3 = Fairly often 4 = Very Often. 0 - 13 = low stress. 14 - 26 = moderate stress. 27 - 40 = high perceived stress. This scale measures the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful. Items were designed to tap how unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloaded respondents

Volume 12 Issue 7, July 2023

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find their lives. The scale also includes a number of direct queries about current levels of experienced stress. The questions in the PSS ask about feelings and thoughts during the last month

3. Results

Section - I: Analysis of demographic characteristics of the respondents

The result revealed that most of the students, 125 (63.1%) were aged between 21 – 22 years, 181 (91.4%) were female, 154 (77.8%) belonged to nuclear family, 106 (53.5%) were residing in rural area, 56 (28.3%) had family monthly income between 27654 - 46089, 80 (40.4%) were studying 2nd year B. Sc. Nursing, 81 (40.9%) were Hindus and 134 (67.7%) had previously stayed in hostel.

Section II: Assessment of level of stress among students

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of level of stress among students, n=198

Stress	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low stress (0 - 13)	6	3.0
Moderate stress (14 – 26)	139	70.2
High perceived stress (27 – 40)	53	26.8

The data presented in table 1 depicts the frequency and percentage distribution of level of stress among students. It shows that, 139 (70.2%) had moderate stress, 53 (26.8%) had high perceived stress and 6 (3%) had low stress.

Section III: Association of level of perceived stress among B.Sc nursing students with their selected demographic variables

Table 2: Association of level of stress with their selected demographic variables, n= 198

Demographic variables	Low (f)	Moderate (f)	High (f)	Fisher Exact test p - value	Remarks
Age in years					
17 – 18	-	-	-	p=0.061	NS
19 – 20	1	28	5		
21 – 22	4	90	31		
>22	1	21	17		
Gender					
Male	1	14	2	p=0.216	NS
Female	5	125	51		
Family type					
Joint family	1	32	9	p=0.805	NS
Nuclear family	5	105	44		
Extended family	0	2	0		
Area of residence					
Rural	3	75	28	p=1.000	NS
Urban	3	64	25		
Family monthly income in rupees					
≤9226	2	8	5	p=0.204	NS
9232 - 27648	0	27	8		
44427654 - 46089	3	41	12		
46095 - 68961	1	30	11		
68957 - 92185	0	15	10		
92, 191 - 184, 370	0	15	3		
≥184, 376	0	3	4		
Year of study					
2 nd year B. Sc. nursing	3	56	21	p=0.933	NS
3 rd year B. Sc. nursing	2	45	15		
4 th year B. Sc. nursing	1	38	17		
Religion					
Hindu	4	62	15	p=0.003**	S
Muslim	0	43	10		
Christian	2	20	19		
Others	0	14	9		
Previously stayed in hostel					
Yes	2	94	38	p=0.171	NS
No	4	45	15		

*p<0.05, S – Significant, p>0.05, N. S – Not Significant

The table 2 shows the association of level of perceived stress among B. Sc Nursing students with their selected demographic variables.

It was observed that the demographic variable religion had statistically significant association with level of perceived

stress at p<0.01 level. The other demographic variables did not show statistically significant association with level of perceived stress.

Section - IV: Factors associated with stress

Table 3: Frequency and percentage distribution of stress associated factors among b. Sc nursing students, n= 198

SL. No.	Factors	Yes		No	
		F	%	F	%
A	Related to hostel				
I	Room not clean	62	31.31	136	68.69
II	Poor quality of food	125	63.13	73	36.87
III	Water problem	74	37.37	124	62.63
IV	Inadequate water supply	60	30.30	138	69.70
V	Interrupted power supply	51	25.76	147	74.24
VI	Poor ventilation				
a)	Very hot	83	41.92	115	58.08
b)	Very congested room	112	56.57	86	43.43
B	Related to academic				
I	Very hectic /so many subjects	158	79.80	40	20.20
II	Too many assignments	185	93.43	13	6.57
III	Limited time to complete assignments	160	80.81	38	19.19
IV	Very strict teachers	106	53.54	92	46.46
V	Lectures are not understandable	53	26.77	145	73.23
VI	Unavailability of books	62	31.31	136	68.69
VII	Unfamiliarity with the different apps in mobile which are used for academic purpose	57	28.79	141	71.21
VIII	Lack of technical skills to make slides	59	29.80	139	70.20
IX	Unavailability of computer lab	95	47.98	103	52.02
X	Poor connectivity e. g. Wifi or internet	119	60.10	79	39.90
C	Related to examination				
I	Strict evaluation system	138	69.70	60	30.30
II	Biases in evaluation system	96	48.48	102	51.52
III	Frequent class test	91	45.96	107	54.04
IV	Less time for study leave for final exam	160	80.81	38	19.19
V	Difficulty in remembering the topics	163	82.32	35	17.68
D	Related to clinical duty				
I	Too many patient assignments	170	85.86	28	14.14
II	Very strict duty schedule	171	86.36	27	13.64
III	Lack of experience	108	54.55	90	45.45
IV	Lack of cooperation from staff	120	60.61	78	39.39
V	Too many assignments to write	175	88.38	23	11.62
VI	Too many presentations	145	73.23	53	26.77
VII	Strict supervisors	132	66.67	66	33.33
VIII	Inappropriate supervision	79	39.90	119	60.10
IX	Unavailability of teacher in clinical area	51	25.76	147	74.24
X	Lack of demonstration and return demonstration in the college	100	50.51	98	49.49
XI	Different views regarding the procedure by different teachers	138	69.70	60	30.30
E	Related to personal matter				
I	Missing family members	138	69.70	60	30.30
II	Conflicts with friends	80	40.40	118	59.60
III	No close friends to share feelings	57	28.79	141	71.21
IV	Financial problem	105	53.03	93	46.97
V	Not getting proper sleep	138	69.70	60	30.30
VI	Less number of outing days	133	67.17	65	32.83
VII	No time for self grooming	108	54.55	90	45.45
VIII	Restricted hours for use of mobile.	62	31.31	136	68.69
IX	Lack of co - operation from seniors	79	39.90	119	60.10

4. Discussion

The analysis revealed that majority of nursing students i. e.70.2% had moderate stress, 26.8% had high perceived stress and only 3% had low stress with mean 23.20±5.54 and SD 5.54. This study is supported by the study done by Mushtaq B, Ahmad J, Onaisa M, Mushtaq A.

Mushtaq B, Ahmad J, Onaisa M, Mushtaq A. (2021) conducted a descriptive study on stress level among 40 nursing students in Saura, Srinagar, Kashmir. The result shows majority out of **40 i. e.25 (62.5%)** had moderate stress, 15 (37.5%) had high perceived stress and no subjects had low stress level.⁶

The factors which caused most of the stress are: factors related to hostel: poor quality of food (63.13%), academic: too many assignments (93.43%), examination: difficulty in remembering the topics (82.32%), clinical duty: too many assignments to write. (88.38%), personal matter: missing family members (69.70%), not getting proper sleep (69.70%). Analysis of the hypothesis showed that stress had statistically significant association with religion.

5. Conclusion

The study concluded that majority of the students had moderate level of stress. Identifying the factors and teaching

correct coping mechanism can help students manage their stress.

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