

Stressors among Basic B.Sc Nursing Students of a Selected College

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Abstract: Background: Basic BSc Nursing course is a demanding training which requires the ability to withstand stressful situations like death and emergencies. It also needs good academic knowledge and skills, as well as dedication to the profession. The nursing students perceive variable amount of academic, clinical, interface and personal stressors throughout their training which results in growing cases of anxiety, depression and adjustment issues leading to dropouts among student nurses. Aim: to assess the stressors among Basic BSc Nursing students in a selected college. Methodology: 120 students were selected by stratified random sampling from each of 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year. A structured questionnaire was administered comprising of two sections, Section A consists of 6 items to collect information regarding demographic data and Section B consists of 34 items to assess the stressors. Results: The maximum contribution to stress was of Clinical and Academic stressors followed by Interface stressors. The difference between mean percentage stress score (5.96) of the age group 17-20 years and that of age group 21-24 years was significant which proves that nursing students with younger age have less stress in comparison to others. The difference between mean percentage stress score (8.57) of students who had their fathers working in defence services and other occupations, is statistically significant. It confirms, the students from a defence background perceive more stress than others. Conclusion: the students are mainly encountered with clinical and academic stressors and age of the students and father's occupation have an association with the higher perception of stress. Hence the study strongly suggests that, Nursing faculty should create caring and supportive learning environments that facilitate students' coping and persistence, perceived self- efficacy, and success in nursing.

Keywords: BBSc Nursing students, Stressor, Demographic variables

1. Introduction

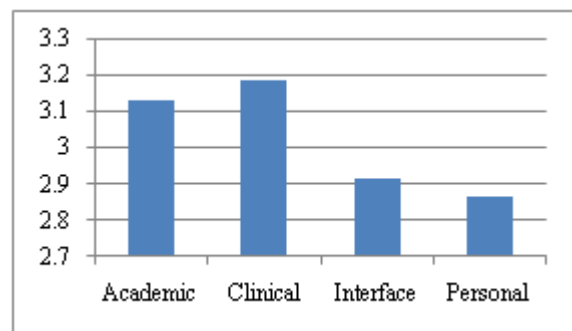
Nursing is a demanding profession which requires good academic knowledge and skills, dedication to the profession, good time management. It also requires the ability to be on the feet while on duty, withstand sleepless nights, cope with death and emergencies, and handle difficult situations by staying calm and providing support and care to patients and their families and all these facets have to be acquired during the training period. Because of the psychological stressors, there are growing cases of anxiety, depression and adjustment issues leading to dropouts among student nurses.³. In the first half of 2000s, nurses, midwives, health visitors and student nurses topped the league table for female suicide.⁶

2. Materials and Methods

The population for the present study constituted of students undergoing Basic BSc Nursing Course in a selected college. As per the inclusion criteria, 30 students were selected by stratified random sampling from each of the four batches namely 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year BSc Nursing to make a total sample size of 120. The students were made to sit in their own classroom. The willingness for participation in the study was sought and written informed consent was obtained in the language they understood. A structured questionnaire was administered consisting two sections –Section A –6 items to collect information regarding demographic data – Age, geographical region student belongs to, baseline qualification before joining nursing, father's occupation, mother's occupation and the reason for joining nursing. Section B –34 items to assess the stressors and level of stress to be self – reported through a 5 point likert scale.

3. Results

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The mean stress score varies from a maximum of 3.1866 for Clinical, followed by Academic stressors (3.1324), Interface stressors (2.9176) to a minimum of 2.8647 for Personal. Mean stress due to Academic is lower than that of Clinical stressors with P- value of 0.563 which is statistically not significant. Whereas it is much higher than mean stress score generated by Interface and Personal stressors with a significant P-value of 0.023 and 0.0001 respectively. The difference between mean stress of Interface and mean stress due to Clinical is 0.2680 (P – value = 0.001) is highly significant. Difference between mean stress due to Personal and Clinical is 0.3281 (P –value = 0.0001) has very high statistical significance. The difference between mean stress due to Personal and Interface stressors is 0.0529 (P – value = 0.486) is statistically not significant.



Graph 1: Comparison between Mean Stress Scores due to different stressors

The difference between mean percentage stress score (5.96) of the age group 17-20 years and that of age group 21-24 years is with a statistically significant P value of 0.049, whereas the difference between the age group 21-24 years and 25-28 years are statistically not significant.

The difference between mean percentage stress score (8.57) of students who had their fathers working in defence services and other occupations, is statistically significant with a P value of 0.020, whereas the difference between any other government service or business with defence service or other occupation is not significant.

Table 1: Frequency, Mean %score and Standard Deviation against Age (n=119)

| Level | Freq | Mean | St Dev |
|------------|------|-------|--------|
| 17 – 20yrs | 58 | 57.65 | 12.23 |
| 21 – 24yrs | 58 | 63.61 | 13.71 |

Table 2: Frequency, Mean %score and Standard Deviation against Occupation of Father (n=119)

| Level | Freq | Mean | St Dev |
|-----------------|------|-------|--------|
| Defence Service | 50 | 64.17 | 11.69 |
| Govt. Service | 21 | 62.66 | 14.98 |
| Business | 18 | 57.19 | 15.65 |
| Others | 30 | 55.6 | 11 |

4. Discussion

This study confirms that Clinical issues were the biggest stressors to student nurses, narrowly followed by academics, whereas personal and interface issues did not generate much stress for the samples. Majority of the respondents (52.1%) thought attending classes in the day following a night of clinical duty is the most stressful in context to clinical area, whereas 37, (31.09%) considered huge number of assignments as the biggest stressor in academic area. Attitude of nursing assistants towards student nurses is most stressful among the interface worries, and inadequate free time is most stressful in personal stressors as reported by as much as 64.71% respondents.

The study also revealed, that the mean percentage stress score of the age group 17-20 years is much less than other age groups, that is 21-24 years and 25 – 28 years.

An interesting finding noted is that the students whose fathers are working in defence services, has reported higher perception of stress than others.

Similar findings were brought out in a a systematic review of 23 quantitative studies on scientific literature on stressors in nursing students comprising of the articles published at the end of 2010 in Europe, had revealed the most common sources of stress were found to be academics and clinical sources.⁵

A cross sectional study conducted among 59 nursing students in an Indian city revealed that Academic load (23.9), pattern of interpersonal interactions in college and

home environments (16.5) were the major source of perceived stress¹⁰.

5. Conclusion

This was a descriptive study to assess the stressors among Basic BSc Nursing students in a selected college of nursing. This study brought out that the students are mainly encountered with clinical and academic stressors and age of the students and father’s occupation have an association with the higher perception of stress.

Hence the study strongly suggests that, Nursing faculty should create caring and supportive learning environments that facilitate students’ coping and persistence, perceived self- efficacy, and success in nursing.

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