



## EFFECT OF PERCEIVED STRESS ON PHYSIOPSYCHOSOCIAL RESPONSE AMONG FOURTH YEAR B.SC. NURSING STUDENTS DURING THEIR MATERNITY NURSING CLINICAL POSTING IN A SELECTED COLLEGE OF NURSING, THRISSUR

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### ABSTRACT

Stress is a psychological factor that influences the academic performance and welfare of nursing students.

**Aim:** To evaluate the effect of perceived stress on physiopsychosocial response 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 (PSS) and PhysioPsychoSocial Response scale (PPSRS) were 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 mild stress, 61.43% were having moderate stress and 7.14% were having severe 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, physiopsychosocial response, nursing students

### Introduction and background of the study

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. In recent decades, research on health in work environments has evolved from a focus on the prevention of physical risks to a global approach. In this context, emergent psychosocial risks, such as job stress, are of particular interest. Among the negative effects of stress on the individual are physical, psychological and behavioural disorders. In turn, stress is associated with organizational-level issues, such as increased absenteeism, decreased quality of work and decreased productivity.<sup>(1)</sup>

Stress has a detrimental effect not only on the physio-psychosocial health of an individual but as well being as a whole. Researchers have shown that excessive stress can be harmful to a student's academic performance, welfare, and could interfere with learning a complex, psychomotor skill. Furthermore, stress could result to deleterious symptoms such as alcoholism and drug dependence, eating disorder, indiscriminate use of illegal substances, sleep disorder, suicide, absenteeism, mental health disorders, and even psychological symptoms. Thus, the undergraduate years for student nurses is considered as one of the most sensitive period in their lifespan since learning during these years may be compromised due to stress reactions produced.<sup>(2)</sup>

### Statement of the problem

Effect of perceived stress on physiopsychosocial response among fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students during their Maternity Nursing clinical posting in a selected College of Nursing, Thrissur.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the level of perceived stress among fourth year

B.Sc. Nursing students during their Maternity Nursing clinical posting.

2. To evaluate the effect of perceived stress on physiopsychosocial response among fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students during their Maternity Nursing clinical posting.
3. To associate the level of perceived stress among fourth year B.Sc. Nursing students with their selected demographic variables.

### Operational Definitions

1. Effect: In this study, effect implies the relation between perceived stress and physiopsychosocial response.
2. Perceived stress: In this study, perceived stress means a reaction to the stimulus in the clinical environment that disturbs physical or mental equilibrium.
3. Physiopsychosocial health: Refers to overall health status of nursing students in physical, mental, emotional and social aspects during their maternity nursing clinical experience.

### 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 West fort 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)

Section III Physio-psycho-social response scale (PPSRS) (Sheila Sheu et al, 2002)

Responses to stress were assessed using the PPSRS developed by Sheu et. al. The PPSRS describes nursing students' responses to and emotions caused by stress in clinical practice. It also measures the physio-psycho-social health status of students during clinical practice. The PPSRS consists of 21 items and each item is rated on a five-point Likert-type scale (0=never, 1=almost never, 2=sometimes, 3=fairly often and 4=very often). The PPSRS contains 21 items which are divided into three subscales: 'Physical symptoms', 'Emotional symptoms' and 'Social behavioural symptoms'. Both subscale scores and total scores are computed. A higher score means presence of more and serious symptoms reported and poorer physio-psycho-social health status. To determine the level of stress, the following scaling was used; 2.67 – 4.00 for Poor Health Status, 1.34 – 2.66 for Good Health Status 0 – 1.33 for Best Health Status.

Reliability and validity testing of the instrument was done by Sheu et al. (2002). In this study, the cronbach's alpha was 0.82. Both questionnaires were pilot tested before distributed to the participants enrolled in the investigation.

**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.

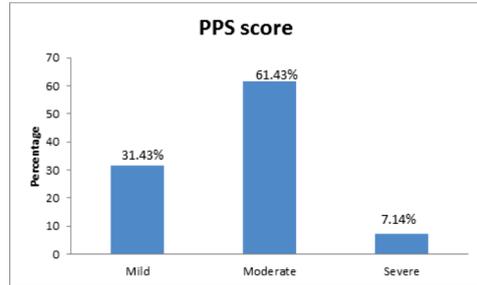
**Data Analysis**

The data obtained was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

*Descriptive statistics*

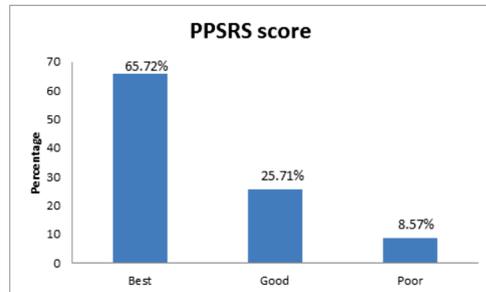
- Frequency
- Percentage

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**



**Fig.1: Level of stress according to PPS scores**

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



**Fig.2: Physiopsychosocial response according to PPSRS scores**

For physiopsychosocial response, 65.72% are having best response, 25.71% were having good response and 8.57% are having poor response.

Scores	Mean	SD	N	df	T value
PSS	1.61	0.72	70	69	7.2082***
PPSRS	1.09	0.82	70		

(\*\*\* p<0.0001)

**Fig. 3: Comparison of PSS and PPSRS scores**

By comparing the data, t value is 7.2082(p<0.0001) . By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant. The level of stress is statistically significant with the physiopsychosocial response. The study shows that the perceived stress among students will affect their physiopsychosocial response also.

**CONCLUSION**

The student nurses experience significant level of stress during their clinical posting. The stress levels affect their physiopsychosocial response and so it is very essential to take measures to reduce the level of perceived stress among students in order to enhance their clinical learning.

**Recommendations**

Clinical posting is the basis of nursing education. It is very essential to improve the quality of clinical learning for shaping future staff nurses. Perceived stress should be reduced for improving students' physiopsychosocial response and thus to enhance clinical learning. More research studies should be done to find measures to reduce perceived stress.

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