



## A STUDY TO ASSESS THE LEVEL OF STRESS AND COPING STRATEGIES OF PROGRESSIVE MUSCULAR RELAXATION THERAPY AMONG STUDENT NURSES DURING THEIR INITIAL CLINICAL PRACTICE.

**Prof. Shihabudeen  
M H**

Research scholar, Malwanchal University, Indore, M.P.

**Dr. Payal Sharma**

Research Guide, Department of Nursing, Malwanchal University, Indore, M.P.

### ABSTRACT

This descriptive study investigated the level of stress and coping strategies of progressive muscular relaxation therapy on student nurses during their initial clinical practice. The sample consists of 120 nursing students selected by using non-probability convenient sampling from Selected Nursing College, Bhopal District. The Stress Response Check list was used to assess the level of stress during initial clinical practice. This was completed from various tools like Depression Anxiety Scale [DASS] and the Personalized Stress Inventory [PSI]. The Stress coping rating scale was used to assess the level of coping during initial clinical practice. In study findings revealed that student nurses level of stress during their initial clinical practice. 13.3% of the student nurses are having mild stress and 70 % of them having moderate stress and 16.6% of them having severe stress. Student nurse's level of coping, during their initial clinical practice are 81.7% of the student nurses are having inadequate coping and 18.3% of them having moderate coping and none of them having adequate coping.

**KEYWORDS :** Stress; Coping strategies; Student Nurses; Initial clinical practice

### INTRODUCTION

The nurse plays an important role in health team along with other health professionals. She strives for the prevention of disease, promotion of health and prolonging the life of the individuals and of the community.

Stress has been defined as a process which causes or precipitates individuals to believe that they are unable to cope with the situation facing them and the feeling of anxiety, tension, frustration and anger which results from the recognition that they are failing in some way and the situation is getting out of control. When students are put in contact with practical learning to develop certain procedures they learned in theoretical classes, they display insecurity and fear, and can even manifest signs of stress. During the process of acquiring and demonstrating skill competencies and passing written examinations, the students undergo a considerable amount of stress.

The clinical setting is fundamental to the nursing students learning because it offers opportunities for them to work with 'real' clients with ideal problems. It is only in the clinical setting that student nurses can use knowledge in practice, develop competency in psycho-motor skills and become socialized in their future role. The clinical practice stimulates students to use their critical thinking skills for problem solving.

In study done by Hart and Rotem stressful events for nursing students during clinical practice have been studied. They found that the initial clinical experience was the most anxiety producing part of their clinical experience. The sources of stress during clinical practice have been studied by many researchers.

Progressive muscle relaxation is a systematic technique for achieving a deep state of relaxation. It was developed by Dr. Edmund Jacobson discovered that a muscle could be relaxed by first tensing it for a few seconds and then releasing it. Tensing and relaxing various muscle groups throughout the body produces a deep state of relaxation, which Dr. Jacobson found capable of relieving a variety of anxiety and stress related conditions.

Therefore, based on the above life experience and ground-fall evidences, the researcher took interest in exploring the stress experienced by first year BSC nursing students during the initial clinical practice. Here the researcher tries to help the

student nurses to understand better about the phenomenon of stress, coping and adaptation. The researcher also tries to help nursing educators to understand the difficulties of nursing students and based on individual difference assist them individually in order to promote the quality of clinical practice.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### Purpose:

To assess the level of perceived stress and coping strategies of progressive muscular relaxation therapy used by the student nurses during their initial clinical practice.

#### Population:

Population comprised of student nurses in selected nursing colleges at Bhopal District.

#### Sample:

Student nurses in the age group of 18-26 years studying in plus one at selected nursing college at Bhopal District.

#### Sampling technique:

non-probability convenient sampling.

#### Research approach:

Descriptive approach

#### Research design:

Descriptive design

#### Tool:

Demographic Performa, Stress Response Checklist tools like Depression Anxiety Scale [DASS] and the Personalized Stress Inventory [PSI].

#### Data analysis:

Descriptive and Inferential statistics

### RESULTS

#### Section 1: Description of sample characteristics

- Based on the age, 88.3 % (106) were between 18-20years and 11.7%(14) were between 21-23 years.
- Based on the gender, 90 % (108) were females and 10 % (12) were males.
- Based on the religion, 36.7 % (44) were Hindus, 56.7 % (68) were Christians and 6.7% (8) were Muslims.
- Based on the educational qualification, 96.7 % (116) came

from plus two and 3.3 % (4) came after completing their degree course.

- Based on academic percentage of marks in the previous examination, 30.0% (36) were distributed in 50-60% marks, 60.0% (72) were distributed in 60-70% marks and 10% (12) were distributed in above 70% marks.
- Based on the type of family, 86.7% (104) were from nuclear family, 13.3% (16) were from joint family.
- Based on the family background, 20.0 % (24) came from urban area, 80.0 % (96) came from rural area.
- Based on the family income per month, 6.7% (8) were distributed in 3000-5000, 70.0 % (84) were distributed in 5000-10,000 and 23.3% (28) were distributed in 10,000-20,000.
- Based on economic support for the study, 18.3 % (22) were supported by parents, 81.7 % ( 98) were supported by educational loan.
- Based on the mode of admission, 91.7 % ( 110) were by management quota and 8.3% (10) were by merit (Govt) quota.
- Based on place of stay during course, 91.7 % ( 110) were distributed in hostel, 8.3 % ( 10) were distributed in home.
- Based on whether nursing selected as first choice, 58.3 % ( 70) were distributed in yes, and 41.7 % ( 50) were distributed in no.
- Based on the reason of choosing the nursing course, 11.7 % (14) took admission by chance, 5.0 % ( 6) came by compulsion from parents, 80.0 % (96) students adopt nursing due to increased job opportunities, and 3.3% (4) came with intention in service.
- Based on the previous concept about nursing, 5.0 % ( 6) were distributed in caring profession, 48.3 % ( 58) were distributed in deals with blood, needles and transmitting diseases, and 46.7 % ( 56) were distributed in always need to spent time in wards.

**Section 2: level of perceived stress in student nurses during their initial clinical practice**

- Student nurses have 64% of stress during their initial clinical practice. It means more moderate stress among nursing students during their initial clinical practice.
- Student nurses stress score during their initial clinical practice are None of them between 0-42 score, 13.3% of them between 43-84 score, 70% of them between 85-126 score and 16.7% of them between 127-168 score.
- Over all stress score during initial clinical practice are 13.3% of the student nurses are having mild stress and 70% of them having moderate stress and 15.7% of them having severe stress.
- Student nurses percentages of Stress coping during their initial clinical practice are 44%. It means less percentage of coping among nursing students.
- Student nurses stress score during their initial clinical practice are none of them between 0-60 score and 181-240 score. 76.7% of them were between 61-120 score and 23.3% of them were between 121-180 score.
- Over all stress score coping during initial clinical practice are 81.7% of the student nurses are having inadequate coping and 18.3% of them having moderate coping and none of them having adequate coping.

**Section 3: Relationship between level of stress, coping strategies of progressive muscular relaxation therapy and initial clinical practice**

- There is a Poor fair agreement between student nurses level of stress and level of coping strategies of progressive muscular relaxation therapy. In coping 98 students are having inadequate coping and 22 students are having moderate coping. In stress 16 students are having mild stress and 84 students are having moderate stress and 20 students are having severe stress. Out of 98 inadequate coping, 18.4% of them having severe stress and 71.4% moderate stress 10.2% of them having mild stress. When

coping increases, their stress level will decrease. Agreement between stress and coping was calculated using weighted kappa agreement statistics.

**Section 4: Relationship between the level of stress and selected demographic variables**

- Age, Gender, Educational qualification and Academic performance are significantly associated with their level of stress. These types of association are statistically significant and it was calculated using Pearson chi square test.
- Age, family background and family income are significantly associated with their level of coping. These types of association are statistically significant and it was calculated using Pearson chi square test.

**Table 1**

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION AND PERCENTAGE OF STRESS AND COPING AMONG STUDENT NURSES								
COPING	STRESS							
	Mild stress	%	Moderate stress	%	Sever stress	%	Total	%
Inadequate	10	10.2	70	71.42	18	18.4	98	81.7
Moderate	6	27.3	14	63.63	2	9	22	18.3
Adequate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	16	13.3	84	70	20	16.6	120	100

**DISCUSSION**

In study findings revealed that student nurses level of stress during their initial clinical practice. 13.3% of the student nurses are having mild stress and 70 % of them having moderate stress and 16.6% of them having severe stress. Student nurse's level of coping, during their initial clinical practice are 81.7% of the student nurses are having inadequate coping and 18.3% of them having moderate coping and none of them having adequate coping.

Clinical instructors should create an atmosphere in which nursing students express their skill in conducting procedures without fear of instructors' judgment, and in which instructor's support students in the process of gaining professional competency. Also in a study by Dadgaran et al, the development of practical skills was recognized as one of the ways of gaining professional competency by nursing students. Therefore, nursing students need to be trained on patient safety and risk management as a preventive coping, before entering to the clinical setting.

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